



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Wendy Brown

Date comment received:

September 25, 2024 03:09 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

wendybrown@snowcrest.net

Location (if provided): Brookings, OR

Public comment:

I am writing to express my support for the proposed amendment to OAR 736-030-0020, which would extend the camping prohibition to include Brookings along Oregon's ocean shore.

Access for all : Beaches are intended for public recreation. Camping can restrict access to these areas for families and visitors.

- **Public facilities** were closed because needles were discarded in the toilets, damaging the sewage system. This forced visitors & campers to relieve themselves in public.

Protecting Our Children:

- **Witnessing beach campers exposing themselves** to defecate and urinate. Exposure to such actions can lead children to view inappropriate behavior as acceptable. Seeing unsafe or unsanitary conditions might make children feel that beaches are not safe places.
- **Stigmatization:** Children may develop biases or stigmas towards people experiencing homelessness, which can affect their empathy and understanding of complex social issues.

Safety:

- **Tidal Wave:** Several years ago, a long stretch of beach near Orick, California, introduced a new law prohibiting camping because the area is located within a tidal wave zone.
- **City trash cans overflowing,** These conditions can attract pests and contribute to the spread of disease.
- **Abandoned campfires,** hazardous materials, and debris created safety risks. Fires can spread, and broken glass or sharp objects can injure beachgoers, especially children.

Contaminated Water - Campers are unaware:

- "The Oregon health Authority issued a public health advisory, effective September 19, 2024, for unsafe levels of fecal bacteria in ocean waters at Mill Beach in Curry County. Unsafe levels of fecal bacteria can cause diarrhea, stomach cramps, skin rashes, upper respiratory infections, and other illnesses. Children, elderly and those with a compromised immune system should use extra caution as they are more vulnerable to illnesses from waterborne bacteria.
- **Exposure to contaminated water** can lead to serious health issues, including gastrointestinal illnesses,

skin infections, and respiratory problems. Campers may suffer from symptoms such as nausea, diarrhea, or more severe infections.

- **Uninformed Decisions:** Campers may engage in activities like swimming, fishing, or even washing dishes in contaminated water, inadvertently putting themselves at risk without realizing the danger.
- **Misleading Safety Perceptions:** If campers see others using the water without apparent consequences, they may mistakenly believe it is safe, leading to more people being affected by the contamination.
- **Trust in Public Resources:** Discovering that water was contaminated without their knowledge can lead to a loss of trust in local authorities and public health notifications.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Nicola Howarth

Date comment received:

September 26, 2024 09:46 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

nikki.brown7576@gmail.com

Location (if provided): , CA

Public comment:

Dear Oregon Parks & Recreation Department,

I support the proposed camping ban at Mill Beach in Brookings to protect public safety, environmental health, and recreational access. Camping on the beach, regardless of who does it, restricts public enjoyment and results in dangerous conditions such as litter, abandoned campfires, needles, and other hazardous debris. Such risks also expose governmental entities to liability for failing to protect the public from foreseeable harm. While homelessness is a complex issue, it cannot be solved by allowing camping on a small, fragile beach, which puts both the public and the ecosystem at risk. I urge the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department to adopt this important regulation. Please see the attached letter for more detailed comments.

Thank you for considering my comments. I appreciate your commitment to protecting Oregon's treasured coastal areas.

Sincerely,
Nicola



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Geoff Morneau

Date comment received:

September 29, 2024 03:06 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

76750.3110@compuserve.com

Location (if provided): Brookings, OR

Public comment:

I favor a camping prohibition on beaches in Brookings.

Mill Beach in Brookings is a gem but is just suitable for day use only.

For example, although there are public restrooms @ Mill Beach, the City of Brookings closed the vault toilets six years ago.

(
<https://www.koin.com/local/oregon-coast/overnight-camping-ban-considered-for-brookings-beaches/>
).

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Statement of Fiscal Impact that "individuals currently camping along the ocean shore will be displaced and seek shelter in another location that may create fiscal or economic costs in those locations." doesn't recognize additional incremental revenue that may accrue to OPRD at Harris Beach State Park, an ideal alternative location open for camping year-round with 59 tent sites PLUS a hiker/bike camp and flush toilets only one mile away.

Curry County Sheriff's Office has cut 19 positions, including 15 positions in Criminal/Civil Patrol.

(
https://www.kdrv.com/news/top-stories/curry-county-sheriffs-office-down-19-positions-after-budget-cuts/article_a6513218-3e34-11ef-a85e-871b74e77a50.html
).

A multi-agency approach Mill Beach Brookings City Councilor John McKinney said was needed for Mill Beach is unlikely: "I think the solution to this is a uniformed effort by Brookings PD (police department), OSP (Oregon State Police), Curry County Sheriff's Department in conjunction with the parks department to go down there and clean that beach up and keep it clean."

(https://www.currypilot.com/news_paid/no-change-to-mill-beach-camping/article_5005f1a8-4485-11ea-90c6-0b9289f46f56.html)

With apologies to legendary, long-distance runner and Coos Bay-native Steve Prefontaine, to do anything less than your best to preserve the treasure that is Mill Beach, "is to sacrifice the gift."

The letter I sent to Brookings Mayor Jake Pieper follows, below. Some of the material has been recycled since.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Geoff Morneau

Date comment received:

September 29, 2024 03:39 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

76750.3110@compuserve.com

Location (if provided): Brookings, OR

Public comment:

I favor a camping prohibition on beaches in Brookings.

Mill Beach in Brookings is a gem but is just suitable for day use only.

For example, although there are public restrooms @ Mill Beach, the City of Brookings closed the

vault

toilets six years ago.

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2 September 2019

The Honorable
Jake
[Pieper](#)

Mayor of Brookings,
Oregon

City of Brookings

898 Elk Drive

Brookings, Oregon 97415

RE: Mill Beach

Dear Mayor Pieper:

It's likely you'll remember my father, Bob Morneau. You two had discussions about Mill Beach when you were a Councilor. If it helps to place him further, a number of years ago our dads together rescued a young girl they found wandering on US 101; your dad reminded me about it when I was in the Hearth and Home store not long ago. Dad was far more memorable than I am but we met when you came around to tend to our fireplace. I pay taxes in Curry County for property I own located in Brookings.

Dad told me you were the driving force behind the improvements at Mill Beach. You succeeded in attracting more people to share what Dad said you knew to be such a spectacular place and you told me holds special memories for you. There's nothing better than hearing the squeals of little kids as they play on the beach and run out into the surf. Sadly, the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction and it seems the squeals are disappearing because the families you wanted to draw are abandoning Mill Beach because of deplorable conditions that have been allowed to develop there. What was once so special for you is being lost and Mill Beach is becoming better known for discarded hypodermic needles, general lawlessness, hostile atmosphere, human and other waste, illegal drugs, indecent exposure, mountains of trash, public drunkenness. Near as I can tell, the bathrooms have been permanently shuttered. The deterioration can largely be blamed on overnight camping. This from three months ago, conditions aren't lost on others camping at Mill Beach who

summarized:

Arrived yesterday evening and was told it's a beautiful place to camp. We found a place which was fine, as soon as the sun went down, homeless, tweakers, drunks, all started stumbling in. We were left to be worried all night as we were in the tent and couldn't see the ones around us. One drunk came out of no where around 11pm and started yelling outside our tent "have a light??" "you guys smokin bud?" my boyfriend asked him to leave. His girlfriend and him walked about 20ft away and continued to yell. We couldn't go to sleep. All night people were coming and going with dogs. We made it till morning and went to go use the bathrooms at the beach, all were locked. So we had to walk all the way to our car (we parked far away because you can't park overnight) and had to drive to Fred Myers. I don't recommend camping at this beach. As a day trip it would be pretty. At night it gets sketchy.

<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/oregon/mill-beach>

At least they

had the decency to go to Fred Meyer to use bathrooms there. I doubt the same can be said of most.

Overnight

camping on the ocean shore is prohibited within the city limits of several cities on the coast. The time has come for

Brookings to adopt an ordinance prohibiting overnight camping and then request amendment of Oregon Administrative Rule 736-030-0020 to include Brookings. They managed it in other cities and now Brookings should do likewise and then also enforce it.

Furthermore, Mill

Beach is the site of a potential flashpoint.

A copy of the letter I sent appealing for a fire ban is enclosed so you'll know what I've already asked of officials to minimize the likelihood another threat, the menace of a raging fire in town.

What can I

do? Thank you in advance for your attention, consideration, and time.

Sincerely,

Geoffry E. Morneau

enclosure

cc	The Honorable Court Boice	The Honorable Sue Gold	The Honorable Christopher Paasch
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Vice Chair	Commissioner	Chair
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Curry County Board of Commissioners	Curry County Board of Commissioners	Curry County Board of Commissioners
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4	94235 Moore Street, Gold Beach, Oregon 97444	94235 Moore Street, Gold Beach, Oregon 97444	94235 Moore Street, Gold Beach, Oregon 97444
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Mr.
Tony Baron

Public
Works & Developmental
Services Director

City of Brooking

Ms. Janell Howard
City Manager

City of Brooking

Ms.
Lauri Ziemer, for
distribution to Parks &
Recreation
Commissioners

PW/DS Planning Tech

City of Brookings



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Lee Nye

Date comment received:

September 29, 2024 09:36 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

pottage03.golf@icloud.com

Location (if provided): Brookings, OR

Public comment:

I am writing to support the proposed amendment to OAR 736-030-0020. A proposal to add Brookings to the group of cities and counties that prohibit camping on their beaches. Mill Beach is a very small local beach with limited access and only 8 parking spaces. These spaces coopted by campers would severely restrict parking for the general public. Without more parking (which is impossible due to a lack of space for expanding the parking areas) and restroom facilities, campers over burden this little beach. It is not designed for camping. The public restroom has been closed multiple times and currently remains closed and locked due to repeated damage by drug activity and vandalism. Most often this has been the result of groups camping on the beach to live, party, use drugs and evade the detection they would have in town doing the things that they do on the beach. This also has unfairly burdened the Park Service with the task and expense of having to clean up garbage, drug paraphernalia and abandoned items left by such campers. Historically, campers have caused manyL problems that have not yet been ameliorated including burning wood on the beach close to vegetation and residences then frequently leaving fires burning when they depart or go to sleep for the night. A number of such fires each year cause police and Fire Department resources to have to be deployed to put out dangerous fires. A month ago I walked the beach to count the number of visible campfire remains within 50 feet of hillside vegetation that were not buried or put out in some other manner. I counted over 30 on that day, several using large beach logs in addition to smaller driftwood. Obviously these were not fires from a single night but everyone would have to agree that such a number so close to residences and flammable vegetation is a dangerous and unacceptable hazard. In addition, I have witnessed drug and alcohol abuse, physical fights and public urination and defecation by people camping on the beach. It is not a place that I would feel safe to bring my children when there are campers there. I would encourage everyone to read the detailed and informative letters submitted by Gale Payne and Wendy Brown that clearly lay out the legal framework and public use considerations that support prohibiting camping on Mill Beach. ORD needs to bring Mill Beach into line with state regulation guidelines for the Oregon coastline, the Curry County regulation prohibiting camping on all beaches and waterway shores in Curry County and the Brookings Municipal Code prohibiting camping in all city parks including Chetco Point which is similar and abuts Mill Beach. I encourage everyone to support this proposed amendment.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

patricia sherman

Date comment received:

September 30, 2024 12:17 PM

Commenter email (if provided):

patsherman45@gmail.com

Location (if provided): roseburg, OR

Public comment:

I served as mayor of Brookings from 2005 to 2008 and lived in Brookings from approximately 2001 to 2009.

Illegal camping at Mill Beach has been a problem for a long time. It causes all the usual problems associated with illegal camping, including (but not limited to) fire hazards resulting from illegal campfires. Others have commented on the filth and other hazards.

I fully support a rule changes that would prohibit camping at Mill Beach.



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Maggie Rollins

Date comment received:

October 1, 2024 09:29 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

maggie0812r@gmail.com

Location (if provided): , OR

Public comment:

9-24-24

Re: Brookings, Oregon Beach Camping

We

have lived in Brookings/Harbor since 2016. We love this community, the people and the opportunity it provides to experience the outdoors.

Sadly, over the past few years, we have seen an increase in transient camping along the streets of Brookings, the beaches as well as camps taking over the north and south banks of Chetco River (the river that provides our municipal water supply) and banks of the Winchuck River.

Hiking and fishing in many of the areas we used to enjoy is no longer possible. Those areas are no longer accessible or safe due to the camps, garbage, human and animal feces, abandoned vehicles, drug paraphernalia - syringes, needles as well as aggressive behavior by some campers. Personal safety is a concern as we saw in the news in October, 2023, a camp near the Chetco River was used as a hiding place by a person arrested for the murder of a Del Norte County Sheriff Deputy.

Limiting the camping ban to beaches

located within the City of Brookings would be a start but please don't fail to look at the larger picture. Our waterways and beaches in the county are already being taken over and ruined. Banning camping on City beaches exclusively will push those camps out to beaches, waterways and private property in the county as well as place an additional workload on our recently reduced Sheriff and Curry County staff.

Please take the necessary steps now to put a county-wide ban in place to prevent camping on beaches and waterways .

Sincerely,

Maggie Rollins



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Dennis & Wendy Brown

Date comment received:

October 1, 2024 09:32 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

wendydennisbrown@gmail.com

Location (if provided): , OR

Public comment:

Dear Katie Gauthier,

Please

find attached our comments, and pictures, in support of prohibiting camping on Mill Beach in Brookings, OR. Thank you for accepting our document.

Dennis & Wendy Brown

Saturday, September 21, 2024

Subject: Support for Proposed Amendment to OAR 736-030-0020 to Prohibit Camping in Brookings

Dear Oregon Parks and Recreation Department,

I

am writing to express my support for the proposed amendment to OAR 736-030-0020, which would extend the camping prohibition to include Brookings along Oregon's ocean shore. During the live-streamed OPRD hearing on July 30, 2024, concerns were raised regarding the impact on the homeless population. While I acknowledge the complexity of homelessness, allowing camping on Mill Beach in Brookings does not offer a sustainable solution to this issue.

Consistency Across Oregon:

1.

There

is no justification for treating Brookings differently from other coastal areas where camping is prohibited. Mill Beach is unsuitable for camping due to its limited size, tidal conditions, and environmental sensitivity.

2.

No

restrictions on camping led to trash cans left overflowing, and public facilities were closed because needles were discarded in the toilets, damaging the sewage system. This forced campers to relieve themselves in public and depriving visitors of access to the closed city bathrooms due to camper abuse.

3.

Tidal

Wave Example: Several years ago, a long stretch of beach near Orick, California, introduced a new law prohibiting camping because the area is located within a tidal wave zone.

Observations and Personal Experience:

1.

Camping

on Mill Beach has significantly affected public use, with dangerous waste like needles and smoldering campfires creating safety risks for families and children. Abandoned campfires have sent embers into nearby bushes, and one even scorched the trunk of a large tree near the Mill Beach lumber yard. I have personally witnessed individuals using needles and exposing themselves while defecating and urinating in public.

Pictures attached:

1. Individuals using the beach as a restroom and exposing private areas.
2. Accumulation of beer cans and other trash on the beach.
3. Campfire hazards near beach vegetation and large driftwood.

Public Access and Recreation:

1.

Impact

on Recreation: Camping, regardless of who is doing it, restricts public access to the beach for recreational activities such as kite flying,

sports, sunbathing, and picnicking. This limitation affects everyone, not just those who camp.

2. Environmental and Safety Concerns: Camping has led to environmental degradation and safety hazards including:
 1. Campfires and abandoned embers
 2. Human waste and litter
 3. Hazardous materials like needles and broken glass
 4. Risks to marine life and public health

Legal and Regulatory Framework:

1.
State
Statutes: Oregon laws (ORS 390.640, 390.650, 390.605) prohibit structures like tents on the beach without OPRD permits, which are rarely issued to ensure public access.

2.
OPRD
Regulations: The OPRD has uniformly enforced camping prohibitions across Oregon's coast to maintain public access for recreation.

3.
Local
Regulations: Both Curry County and Brookings have ordinances prohibiting camping near waterways and in public parks, respectively, to preserve public recreational spaces.

Conclusion:

The public's right to access Oregon's beaches for recreation should be upheld without exceptions. Allowing camping on Mill Beach would not only undermine this right but also set a precedent that could lead to similar issues across the state. I urge the OPRD to consider the broader implications and uphold the proposed amendment to maintain the integrity and accessibility of our public beaches.

Thank you for your service and considering my comments.

Dennis & Wendy Brown



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Nicola Howarth

Date comment received:

October 1, 2024 09:33 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

nikki.brown7576@gmail.com

Location (if provided): , OR

Public comment:

Dear Oregon Parks & Recreation Department,

I support the proposed camping ban at Mill Beach in Brookings to protect public safety, environmental health, and recreational access. Camping on the beach, regardless of who does it, restricts public enjoyment and results in dangerous conditions such as litter, abandoned campfires, needles, and other hazardous debris. While homelessness is a complex issue, it cannot be solved by allowing camping on a small, fragile beach, which puts both the public and the ecosystem at risk. I urge the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department to adopt this important regulation. Please see the attached letter for more detailed comments.

Sincerely,

Nicola Howarth



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Corrine Gist Sills

Date comment received:

October 1, 2024 09:34 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

corypea56@gmail.com

Location (if provided): , OR

Public comment:

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you today regarding the upcoming public meeting regarding no camping on Mill Beach.

No other beaches allow overnight camping, and fires are also posted "no fires".

Why would Mill Beach continue this type of activity?

It is dangerous.

Parking is for day use only.

There are no bathrooms, although a deserted locked bathroom remains locked and in place. People have attempted to pry this door open and the vandalism is clearly visible.

As a community, at all costs, we must serve and protect our residents and visitors.

We are pleading with you to make the correct decision regarding health and safety.

Thank you.

Corrine Gist Sills



Submit a public comment on a rule

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Commenter name (if provided):

Penny Lassett

Date comment received:

October 1, 2024 09:37 AM

Commenter email (if provided):

tomlass@aol.com

Location (if provided): , OR

Public comment:

Dear Oregon Parks and Recreation Department:

I am writing to offer my public comment in favor of the proposed amendment to OAR 736-030-0020 to add Brookings to the list of cities and counties where camping is prohibited along Oregon's ocean shore.

Having owned property overlooking Mill Beach for more than 40 years, I have seen many changes. At first there was just a narrow paved road to the lower access of the condominiums. This morphed into a quasi beach access for 2 or three cars. That access was also shielded by willows and blackberries. That brought many undesirables to use the area for shelter and illegal activities.

When the City acquired the property for their park, they put in the restrooms and enlarged the parking. They also made access dawn to dusk. This encouraged more family and recreation activity on the beach, which in turn reduced the illicit activity.

Gradually, the hours where changed, and the restrooms closed. This seemed to encourage bad behavior again. While camping on the beach is not frequent, the lack of sanitation facilities and proper litter control causes unhealthy conditions for all beach users.

Please support this proposed amendment to bring this beach under the same restrictions as Oregon's other urban beaches.

Thank you,

Penny Lassett