

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
December 6, 2012

**CRYSTAL COVE STATE PARK
BEACH WHEELCHAIRS**

Project No. 12-046
Project Manager: David Hayes

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$14,200 to the Crystal Cove Alliance to provide beach wheelchairs for people with disabilities at Crystal Cove State Park.

LOCATION: Crystal Cove State Park, Orange County

PROGRAM CATEGORY: Public Access

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Location and Site Map](#)

Exhibit 2: [Photo of Beach Wheelchair](#)

Exhibit 3: [Project Letters](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31400 et seq. of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed fourteen thousand two hundred dollars (\$14, 200) to Crystal Cove Alliance to provide beach wheelchairs for people with disabilities at Crystal Cove State Park’s ‘Historic District’ and the newly opened El Moro Campground and Day Use Area, at Crystal Cove State Park, in Orange County, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to disbursement of any Conservancy funds, the Executive Officer of the Conservancy shall approve in writing a work plan to maintain the wheelchairs for their useful lifetime or five years, whichever is longer;
 2. The Executive Officer has approved in writing a signing plan to include signs bearing the Conservancy’s logo; and
 3. Crystal Cove Alliance shall provide in-kind services to store the wheelchairs, deploy them for public use and publicize their availability.”
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Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

“Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the current Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
 2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of Chapter 9 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding Public Access.”
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PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff seeks authorization to disburse up to \$14,200 to the Crystal Cove Alliance (CCA) to purchase four beach wheelchairs to be used at Crystal Cove State Beach. Since 2007, CCA has provided beach wheelchairs for the Crystal Cove Historic District, a 12.3 acre coastal portion within the 2,791 - acre Crystal Cove State Park. The chairs have been well used, and as a result four chairs have worn out and need to be replaced. The wheelchairs enable users to experience a wide variety of surface conditions, such as nature trails, beach sand, and the vintage coastal cottages in the Historic District.

These specially designed wheelchairs feature large balloon tires to traverse the sand, so that chairs can be pushed by any adult, and they are made with a stainless steel frame for durability. Conservancy funds will be used to acquire four beach wheelchairs and the Coastal Commission will fund the purchase of two wheelchairs. California State Parks and Recreation (State Parks) will maintain the chairs, and operate this service.

CCA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to restoration, education, and conservation of Crystal Cove Historic District. It is well qualified to undertake this project, as it has successfully completed the restoration of 22 historic cottages at Crystal Cove Historic District. In the past CCA received funding for the beach wheelchairs that are currently used by a growing population of visitors who want to access the Crystal Cove Historic District as well as ADA accessible trails and undeveloped beach areas.

Site Description: Crystal Cove State Park is located in Orange County between Corona del Mar and Laguna Beach. The Crystal Cove Historic District is a 12.3 acre coastal portion within the 2,791 - acre Crystal Cove State Park. This Federally listed Historic District is an enclave of 46 coastal cottages originally built in the 1920's and 1930's near the mouth of Los Trancos Creek. It is one of the last remaining examples of early 20th century Southern California coastal development. Crystal Cove State Park's Historic District also offers accessible beaches to disabled visitors, including ADA parking and trails to the beach. Beach wheelchairs are made available for use at the historic cabins and at beach access locations with ADA parking. In July 2011, the Moro Day Use Area was restored with ADA parking and trails, providing an additional access point for wheelchair users to 3.2 miles of beach.

Project History: In the summer of 2012, the California Coastal Commission approached the Conservancy for assistance because the demand for beach wheelchairs exceeded their funding

capacity. The Coastal Commission will provide two of the requested nine wheelchairs, and if authorized, Conservancy funds will provide four beach wheelchairs, totaling six new chairs for Crystal Cove State Park Historic District and the El Moro Campground and Day Use Area.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy	\$14, 200
Coastal Commission	<u>\$7,100</u>
Total Project Costs	\$21,300

The anticipated source of Conservancy funds is the fiscal year 2010-11 appropriation to the Conservancy from the California Beach and Coastal Enhancement Account, created in the California Environmental License Plate Fund by Vehicle Code Section 5067 (c). These funds may be used for coastal projects that are consistent with provisions of the Conservancy enabling legislation, Division 21.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed project would be implemented pursuant to Chapter 9 of the Conservancy’s enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code Sections 31400 et seq. Section 31400 establishes the Conservancy’s role in implementing a system of public accessways to and along the State’s coastline.

Consistent with Section 31400.1, the Conservancy may award grants to nonprofit organizations to operate lands for public use. The proposed project would provide funding to Crystal Cove Alliance to assist the Crystal Cove State Park with effectively providing all members of the public, including those with impaired mobility, access to the coast.

Also consistent with Section 31400.1, the proposed project would serve a need greater than the immediate local area. The beaches at Crystal Cove State Park and beach serve the residents from Orange County and both coastal and inland communities in the region, as well as visitors from throughout the State.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S 2007 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

Consistent with **Goal 2, Objective B** of the Conservancy’s 2007 Strategic Plan, the proposed project would increase public access opportunities for persons with physical disabilities.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy’s Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on November 10, 2011, in the following respects:

Required Criteria

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy’s statutory programs and purposes:** See the “Consistency with Conservancy’s Enabling Legislation” section above.
2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
3. **Support of the public:** The proposed project has support of the Crystal Cove State Park, partner organizations, and beach wheelchairs users (see Exhibit 3: Project Letters of Support).
4. **Location:** The proposed project would be located within the Coastal Zone.
5. **Need:** The Conservancy shares the goal of providing access to coastal resources for visitors with limited mobility. This project will ensure that ADA access needs at Crystal Cove Historic District and El Moro Campground and beach areas are met.
6. **Greater-than-local interest:** Crystal Cove State Park serves the needs of people from Orange County and throughout the State of California.
7. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** The beach wheelchairs are mobile and will be stored at an elevation equal to the Historic Beach Cottages foundations which are 12 feet above sea level. This elevation is 89 inches above projected sea level rise of 55 inches by the 2100.

Additional Criteria

9. **Urgency:** There is urgency in providing replacement beach wheelchairs as the existing wheelchairs have deteriorated and two wheelchairs are out of service. This shortage cannot meet the demand for their use and reduces the services to a public that would be unable to experience the Crystal Cove Historic Cottages and local beaches, if the beach wheelchairs are not authorized.
10. **Leverage:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
11. **Readiness:** Crystal Cove Alliance will immediately contract for the beach wheelchairs as soon as a grant agreement is finalized.
12. **Realization of prior Conservancy goals:** See “Project History” above.
13. **Cooperation:** Crystal Cove Alliance is a nonprofit Cooperating Association, and works closely with the Crystal Cove State Park District to assist State Parks to cope with wide variety special needs with the intent of enhancing public services, such as youth education programs and providing projects that benefit the disabled visitors to the Crystal Cove State Park’s Historic District, El Moro campgrounds and beaches.
14. **Minimization of greenhouse gas emissions:** The beach wheelchairs are non-motorized wheelchairs and thereby excluding greenhouse gas emissions concerns. Wheelchairs will be stored on site at two key locations (Historic Pier Cottages and near the El Moro Day Use Area) reducing the need for vehicular transport for use in the most visited beach areas with ADA accommodations.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:

This project furthers the policies identified in the Crystal Cove Historic District Preservation and Public Use Plan (PPUP) which was approved by the State Parks and Recreation Commission in 2003. The beach wheelchairs specifically implement one of its goals to provide general and varied access as feasible to park recreation opportunities and to as many cottages for visitors with diverse backgrounds, ages, and abilities.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it would involve the placement of minor and temporary apparatus (beach wheelchairs), not structures on existing beaches (14 California Code of Regulations, Section 15311). Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption for this project.