



City of Homer

www.cityofhomer-ak.gov

Office of the City Manager

491 East Pioneer Avenue
Homer, Alaska 99603

citymanager@cityofhomer-ak.gov

(p) 907-235-8121 x2222

(f) 907-235-3148

Memorandum 20-109

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
FROM: Rick Abboud, Interim City Manager
DATE: July 17, 2020
SUBJECT: Backup Information Concerning the City's Beach Policy

PARCAC reviews the City of Homer's Beach Policy every two years as part of their Commission activities. The next scheduled review of the document is November 2020. Should Council wish to revisit vehicular use on Homer beaches either sooner than what is scheduled or with a new management approach, a resolution of the City Council providing direction to PARCAC would be appropriate. Under *HCC 2.60.040 Duties and responsibilities of the Commission*, the Commission acts in an advisory capacity on matters involving public beaches. The City's Beach Policy currently in effect can be found online here: https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/city_clerk039s_office/page/6550/beach_policy_042516.pdf. This policy was developed in consultation with PARCAC; an abbreviated history of how this policy came to be is provided below.

History:

In June 2001, the Beach Policy Task Force made final recommendations to the City. These recommendations included limitations on where vehicles could travel on Homer's beaches, recognition of the importance of beach and storm berms, and new rules about driftwood harvesting. At the time, these were very large changes for public beach use and behavior. The recommendations were formatted into a Beach Policy document adopted by Council under Resolution 2001-44(A). Other actions included amending Homer City Code Title 7 regarding vehicles on beach areas, definitions, and the harvest of driftwood.

The 2001 policy was then reviewed in 2005 by PARCAC. From 2014 to 2016 under Council's direction, PARCAC again reviewed and made revisions to the beach policy in a yearlong public process. There was general public consensus that coal gathering was important, so Mariner Park Beach is open in the winter (only) for coal gathering.



Red = No vehicles

Yellow = Vehicles only under the terms of HCC 7.16,
Seasonal coal gathering



There was also consensus that if the eastern portion of Bishops' Beach were to be closed, then the western portion should be open both for coal gathering and to provide the ability to drive to Anchor Point or out the beach (as people have done here since the mining and homestead era). A gate was installed to block cars from traveling east to Beluga Slough.

Vehicles are allowed west from Bishop's Beach Park access, and prohibited to the east.

For the Kachemak Drive Area, it is still legal to drive on the beach, but there are no public access points. The state placed a gate at the top of the airport, and a key is available for land owners by request. Using the state access point also entails trespass on private property. It is not often used.



Below is a selected history of the 2014-2016 process.

https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/memo/4851/memo_15-102_beach_policy.pdf

https://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/memo/8904/memo_16-031_beach_policy_kbcha_legal_memo.pdf