



**Mayor**

Kevin Muldoon

**Mayor Pro Tem**

Marshall "Duffy" Duffield

**Council Members**

Brad Avery

Diane Brooks Dixon

Jeff Herdman

Will O'Neill

Scott Peotter

February 6, 2017

The Honorable Michelle Steel, Chairman  
Orange County Board of Supervisors  
10 Civic Center Plaza, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Santa Ana, California 92701

RE: Unincorporated area at the mouth of the Santa Ana River

Dear Madame Chair:

I write this letter today of my own accord, and am not speaking for the Newport Beach City Council. I want to bring you up to date on the status of the Santa Ana River so-called "dog beach" area. I believe that significant evidence and opposition has come forward in recent months in regards to this area at the mouth of the Santa Ana River that could and should preclude that area's use as an off-leash area for dogs. I say that as a loyal dog owner (40 years as golden retriever owners) who understands the desire to allow a dog to run free. My key concerns:

First, the area remains somewhat dangerous, as it is a flood control channel. Tidal flows can be very problematic for those who are not intimately familiar with the area, as witnessed by the tragic death of "Rupert" this past fall. The dog's owner also risked her life to try and save him.

Second, the environmental concerns raised by various non-profit groups (as well as agencies like California Fish and Wildlife and California Coastal Commission) as to potential damages to the nearby nesting and foraging areas for the California Least Tern and other birds are real concerns.

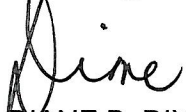
Third, the concerns of a passionate group of adjacent Newport Beach residents (approximately 100 and growing) involving unruly dogs, dog owners who violate our City's own leash laws and beach-time-of-use laws, and dog owners who do not appropriately pick up after their dogs are important, too. These are residents who assumed when they moved there that the City and County rules in the area would be enforced. I would have assumed that, too. As their elected representative, I am mindful and supportive of their concerns regarding the impact of unruly dogs on their property and to their neighborhood.

Finally, dog owners and dogs have other options, including area dog parks and the great dog beach just up Coast Highway in Huntington Beach. The Newport Beach City Council will be reviewing concept plans shortly for a city dog park across the street from Sunset Ridge park which would avoid the environmental, safety and residential community nuisance impacts of the river jetty area.

In conclusion, I would respectfully urge you to consider leaving the beach area at the Santa Ana River mouth under its current and longtime restrictions. The City will do its part to enforce our side of our city limit lines, and hopefully our residents' (canine and human) quality of life and the protection of the important bird species will continue to improve.

As always, I appreciate your concern for the Newport Beach residents and their property adversely impacted by the population of dogs now running leash-free at all hours. I greatly appreciate your continued good service to the people of Orange County and the 2<sup>nd</sup> District. Thank you, Michelle.

Best Regards,



DIANE B. DIXON

Council Member, City of Newport Beach, District #1

Copies to:

Mr. Dave Kiff, City Manager, Newport Beach

Mr. Bruce Boyd, Newport Beach resident

Mr. George Schroeder, President, West Newport Beach Association