

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

SOUTH CENTRAL COAST AREA
89 SOUTH CALIFORNIA ST., SUITE 200
VENTURA, CA 93001
(805) 585-1800



24 January 2008

Jim Thorsen
City Manager
City of Malibu
23815 Stuart Ranch Road
Malibu, CA 90265

Re: "No Overnight Camping" signs

Dear Mr. Thorsen:

As you are likely aware, there has been some public controversy and media attention lately regarding the City's "No Overnight Camping" signs posted at various entrances to the City. The Coastal Commission was contacted regarding this matter and Commission staff conducted a brief investigation. The signs that we observed read:

"No Overnight Camping or Sleeping in Vehicles within City Limits – MMC 4.1.11."

The public concern is that the ordinance cited on the signs prohibits overnight camping in Malibu in violation of the City Local Coastal Program (LCP). However, after reviewing the City's ordinances pertaining to overnight camping, Commission staff concluded that they do not prohibit overnight camping within city limits, but rather restrict overnight camping to designated campgrounds. Therefore, the signs, as currently written, are inconsistent with the City's ordinances, LCP, and the Coastal Act. An outright prohibition of overnight camping, as currently stated on the signs, would require an amendment to the City's LCP.

A simple way to resolve this matter would be to change the language of the signs to be consistent with the City's ordinances and LCP policies. We suggest something like:

"Overnight Camping Allowed Only within Designated Campgrounds."

By changing the sign language and posting new signs, the City would avoid further confusion, defuse the current controversy, and bring the signs into compliance with current City ordinances, the certified LCP and the Coastal Act. If you have any questions regarding this matter or if we can be of assistance, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Ainsworth".

John Ainsworth
Deputy Director