



California  
**STATE LANDS**  
Commission

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**Gavin Newsom**, *Lieutenant Governor, Chair*

**Betty T. Yee**, *State Controller, Member*

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August 17, 2017

## **State Lands Commission Approves Closure of Last Coastal Sand Mine in the Continental U.S.**

*Beach sand mine retirement plan agreed between CEMEX, state agencies, and local government*

San Diego, CA - Today, the State Lands Commission voted unanimously to approve an historic four-way settlement agreement with CEMEX that ends coastal sand mining in Monterey County and in the continental United States. The Commission's approval sets in motion the process that will end sand mining at this location and preserve the beach and restore public access.

"This end-of-an-era agreement is an historic victory for environmental conservation nationwide and I am proud to uphold these values for California, where our coast is cherished for its cultural, environmental, and economic importance," said Lt. Governor and State Lands Commission Chair Gavin Newsom. "It's also a shining illustration that grassroots advocacy is alive and well in California, where the passion and energy of the local community was instrumental in driving this agreement. The combined resolve and collaboration of community, industry, and government to dedicate these lands for future conservation exemplifies bottom-up, citizen-driven governance."

The parties to this milestone agreement, the State Lands Commission, California Coastal Commission, city of Marina, and CEMEX, the sand mine operator, worked assiduously to negotiate an agreement that averts protracted, expensive litigation and that results in shuttering the coastal sand mining operation. The core terms are that the sand mining will cease by December 2020, maximum sand extraction until then is limited to 240,000 tons per year—less than the current rate of 300,000 tons per year, all alleged violations by the Coastal Commission, the State Lands Commission, and the city of Marina are resolved, and CEMEX agrees to sell the site at less-than-market value to a nonprofit or governmental entity that will conserve the land and provide public access. The agreement also allows for the respectful transition of current employees at the operation to help secure their future and the future of their families.

“The agreement with CEMEX to terminate mining sand along the city of Marina coastline is an example of what can happen when a visionary public demands protection for our coastline and coastal economy,” said Bruce Delgado, Mayor of the city of Marina. “We appreciate the support of the State Lands Commission and the Coastal Commission to protect our economy, working families, and the environment.”

The State Lands Commission sent a letter to CEMEX last May stating that the sand mining operation adversely affects public trust resources, is a nuisance, and that the mineral conversion violates state law. In an accompanying statement, Lieutenant Governor and State Lands Commission Chair Gavin Newsom invited the company to “engage in a dialogue on the future of the operations.” The Coastal Commission also sent a letter earlier this year stating that CEMEX must shut down its sand mining or face cease and desist and restoration order proceedings and administrative penalties.

“We are so grateful to State Lands for their support to bring an end to the dredging and selling of California’s beach sand,” said Jack Ainsworth, Executive Director of the California Coastal Commission, which voted in July to approve a separate settlement agreement to close CEMEX. “We can’t afford to lose any more of this precious resource at a time when sea levels are rising and eating away at the public’s beaches.”

The city of Marina and CEMEX approved the settlement agreement this past June, and the California Coastal Commission approved it this past July. This consensus agreement is a victory for California and represents the kind of positive outcome that results when dedicated people unite to problem solve. It is a tribute to each party’s talent that we are now, with this milestone agreement, charting a path toward ending the last coastal sand mining operation in the nation. The public and local coastal groups have hailed the agreement and commended the parties for finding a way to amicably resolve the sand mining dispute and to preserve the beach and sand for the public to use and enjoy.

The State Lands Commission manages state-owned sovereign lands and resources. One of its responsibilities is championing public access and protecting coastal tidelands and submerged lands for public purposes, such as recreation and conservation. When the agreement terms are implemented, it will reaffirm and further these objectives.

“Today’s agreement will effectively end the mining of beach sand in the country and will stem the devastating erosion of one of our most treasured public beaches,” said State Controller and State Lands Commission member Betty T. Yee. “The collaborative solution avoids costly litigation while benefitting the coastal environment and habitat, recreation, and the local economy, and increasing public access to our coast.”

The settlement agreement between the State Lands Commission and CEMEX is [here](#) and the California Coastal Commission consent settlement with CEMEX is [here](#). The State Lands Commission agreement incorporates the California Coastal Commission consent settlement.

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