

Work

1. Gutter seep on Pacific that was “hot” has been fixed by installing a French drain under the sidewalk and diverting seeps to sanitary sewer. During summer impacts from seeps where eliminated by plugging the catch basin that this gutter drains to.
2. The storm drain manhole at end of Bay Street has had high bacterial levels. That manhole was plugged all summer and we followed up with more testing including human marker testing. Test results are inconclusive and the next step is to construct access to buried manhole in Bay Street West Cliff intersection to investigate.
3. The County and Stanford University are performing human marker testing at 10 locations throughout the summer and into the fall. Locations include Cowell’s Beach, several manholes on Neary-to-Cowell’s pipeline and several locations in Neary Lagoon. Test results are not yet completed.
4. We have received Costal and Army Corps of Engineers permits for installing a gate to shut off Neary Lagoon from the beach. We are still waiting for Fish and Game permit and railroad permissions. We hope to install the gates in December.

Data

Water quality data this summer at Cowell’s Beach is mixed. Overall the test results used by the “Heal the Bay” annual “Beach Report Card” report are better than last year when the Cowell’s Beach west of the wharf site was listed on the Report’s “Beach Bummer List.” As an example, single sample tests for enterococci exceeded posting limits 8 of 23 tests taken last summer or 35%. This summer the limit has been exceeded 11 times of the 46 tests or 24%. The Beach Report uses a complicated system to rank beaches so it is impossible to tell if the Cowell’s Beach west of the Wharf site will be off the “bummer” list but test results are better so Staff is hopeful.

Two graphs are attached. One shows E Coli results. The results vary dramatically but the geometric means are significantly lower than last year (40% lower for E Coli and 20% lower for enterococci). Results are better but need additional analysis to see what the trends are and can the varied results can be attributed to something that is controllable. Will attempt to compare to tides, swell, and San Lorenzo River breaching.

Next summer with the gates installed (item 4 above) and the fix to the gutter seep (item 1 above) should result in even better water quality at the beach.