



City of Malibu News

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Malibu Makes History with First Surfing-Based Listing on National Register of Historic Places

(Malibu, CA) – Malibu has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the first such listing centered on surfing history, in recognition of Malibu's contributions to the worldwide sport and culture of surfing.

"It's terrific news for our community when you can add a National Register property to Malibu," Councilmember, former Mayor and long-time surfer Skylar Peak said. "Surfrider Beach has long been a destination for beach goers and surfers alike while acting as the catalyst destination for the Southern California surfing community in shaping its surf and beach culture on the worldwide stage. This beautiful beach and cobble point-break, with the backdrop of the Malibu Pier, creates a perfect wave when the south swell is up and hosts millions of visitors on an annual basis. The district honors a generation who created surfing history here and whose legacy you see today surfing at Surfrider's First Point. I'm excited to celebrate the listing with our residents, other Angelenos, and the world community of surfing, Aloha!"

Malibu has helped shape and popularize the surfing sport, culture and lifestyle worldwide, starting in the years following World War II, from surfboard design and production to a distinct, relaxed style of surfing, to beach films such as "Gidget."

Michael Blum, Executive Director, Sea of Clouds, the organization which researched and authored the Malibu Historic District National Register nomination, announced the designation at the Malibu City Council meeting on February 12.

"From Barcelona's Camp Nou to Yosemite's Camp 4, people gathered together in sport have created places of history, culture, community, and tradition," Blum said. "A jewel of surfing like Malibu is no different. We're pleased to honor the women and men who helped make Malibu and made their names surfing there. This project documents a part of our broad coastal history, an indelible part of California's history, and certainly of surfing history itself. We think the history this National Register listing celebrates and the protections it secures establish a forward-looking conservation path centered on coastal places rich in story. We are excited to explore these ideas further in future projects."

Malibu Surfrider Beach was also declared the first-ever World Surfing Reserve in 2010. World Surfing Reserves (WSR) is a program launched in 2009 by the non-governmental organization Save the Waves Coalition aimed at protecting global surf habitats.

The 160-acre Malibu Historic District is entirely composed of public property and includes: the First Point, Second Point, and Third Point surf breaks, the Malibu Pier, and portions of both Surfrider and Malibu

Lagoon State Beaches. This area of eastern Malibu now has three periods of California's cultural history represented in the National Register: the Chumash Humaliwo village site, Stiles O. Clements' Adamson House, and now the Malibu Historic District.

The Malibu Historic District listing establishes a new pathway for coastal conservation, complementing established protections based on natural habitats or important species with protections based on historical and cultural significance. The listing is site-specific and secures protections in state and federal coastal project planning explicitly from the point of view of the area's significance, in this case surfing. The listing serves as a qualifying step for additional state protections based on historical significance.

"Never before has a surf spot been officially recognized as a historic place in our National Register," said Henry Stern, California State Senator (D-27), whose district includes Malibu. "Nowhere is more fitting to be first than First Point, and the magical place that is 'Surfrider.' The iconic wave, deep cultural roots dating back thousands of years, and timeless style have always made surfing Malibu historic. Now it's official."

In addition to the coastal planning protections secured through the National Register listing, the Malibu Historic District maintains existing public access, public safety, nearby private property rights, public property ownership, and the area's current uses, such as pier fishing, summer camps, special events and, of course, surfing.

The National Register of Historic Places was created through the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and is the nation's official list of properties worthy of preservation. More than 90,000 properties are listed in the National Register and represent 1.4 million individual resources.

Information on the Malibu Historic District and an updated schedule of community outreach events is online at www.seaofclouds.org. A dedication ceremony celebrating the Malibu Historic District listing will be scheduled for summer 2018.

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