

TEACH

sions to be held in the Bob Sikes Library in Crestview.

The format will offer a theoretical/practical approach to American politics with such topics as politics, politicians, financing politics, interest groups, lobbying, and the mass media's impact on American politics.

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THE ISLANDER

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DR. MORGAN FEARS DUNE DAMAGE IF PARKING INCREASES

Proposals to create additional parking areas off Ariola and Panferio prompted the following report by Dr. Jim Morgan, Environmental Advisor. Dr. Morgan has urged the Santa Rosa Island Authority not to create parking areas which would increase the traffic over the unstabilized dune system along the Gulf.

"It has come to my attention that the Island Leaseholders Association and the Operations and/or Development Committee of the Island Authority are considering various suggestions for stabilizing the north and/or south sides of Ariola Drive, adding parking areas at the ends of road right-of-ways or extending streets such as 19th, 20th or 21st from Maldonado to the beach. I would like to point out the negative environmental impact of such proposals.

A glance at the aerial photography of Pensacola Beach taken on September 14, 1979, immediately following Hurricane Frederic, (especially photos 49 through 59) shows a number of tongues of washover sand extending from the beach,

across the primary dune line into the center of the Island. Some of these washovers occurred where lease holders had removed the primary dune for improved beach access or view. Most of them, however, can be related to the road end right-of-way areas or the easements in the center of each block where excess pedestrian traffic had similarly cut a gap in the primary dune line. Foot traffic, by destroying the vegetative cover, allows strong winds to deflate the foot paths creating gaps in the dune line. These breaches of the primary dune are particularly bad at the Gulf ends of paved north/south streets which allow the strong north winds of winter an uninterrupted path across the heavily-trafficked road-end right-of-ways.

Following the hurricane, I strongly encouraged the Authority to place all excess sand back on the primary dune line at the ends of easements and right-of-ways. By doing so the dune line has been partially rebuilt, however, there is little or no natural vegetation capable of holding these dune sands. Continuous mainte-

nance will be necessary until a vegetative cover can develop. Any increase in pedestrian use of these areas will be detrimental to their natural recovery and should be discouraged to the degree possible.

Recommendations:

1. Continue maintenance of the road-end right-of-ways and mid-block easements by adding sand where necessary and preclude sand loss through the use of additional sand fencing, etc.
2. Commence planning for dune cross-overs at easements and right-of-ways and budget funds for their construction in subsequent budget years.
3. Defer any action on road shoulder stabilization, improvement of parking facilities or construction of N-S

roads until dune cross-overs are operative. Nothing should be done to encourage an increase in pedestrian traffic across the unstabilized dunes.

4. Adopt a policy of encouraging public use of public beaches at either end of the developed area. Although excess pedestrian traffic across the dunes will be equally damaging in these areas there is considerably more flexibility than in the developed central part of Pensacola Beach. Furthermore, planning is well advanced regarding the construction of parking nodes and dune cross-overs in the public beach areas.
5. Continue a program of public education concerning the importance of dune preservation by the use of appropriate signs, etc.

COMING UP

- SATURDAY—SUNDAY, June 28-29, 1 pm: Panhandle Bikini Girl Contest, Holiday Inn.
- FRIDAY, July 4: Independence Day
- TUESDAY, July 8: Leaseholders and Residents Association Meeting—7:30 pm, Holiday Inn. Special Program—Life Flight.

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