



PRESS RELEASE: April 4, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAMERON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION WILL IMPLEMENT A CASH FOR TRASH PROGRAM FOR CAMERON COUNTY BEACH ACCESS 5 & 6 ON SOUTH PADRE ISLAND

On April 13, 2011, Cameron County Parks & Recreation will implement a **BAG OF TRASH RETURN REFUND PROGRAM** for County beaches north of Access number 5. It is scheduled to run through the end of summer of 2011. This program is intended to address the negative impacts of domestic trash left behind by visitors of County beaches. This program began last summer as a pilot project and showed great success in helping keep the beaches clean and educate the public about the unsanitary environment created by leaving trash behind.

As a result of implementing the bag of trash return refund program last summer, 54.25 tons of trash was removed from County beaches. Cameron County Commissioner Sofia Benavides supported the program from the beginning. Commissioner Benavides states, "With the great success we had last year, we believe the public understands the important role they play in preserving our public beaches by participating in and supporting the Bag of Trash Return Program." She also states, "We would like for this project to become routine and a positive reinforcement for those visiting our beautiful beaches." Cameron County Parks & Recreation have supported other successful methods to combat the litter problem, such as the Texas Adopt A Beach Guardian Program, Captain Crab Clean Beach Program and a County Park's Code Enforcement program.

The Bag of Trash Return Refund Program is expected to be implemented by April 13, 2011 and will run thru September 18, 2011. Cameron County park staff will collect an additional \$4.00, which will be a trash bag deposit for every vehicle entering County Beach Access 5 & 6 only and an empty trash bag will be provided with a receipt. As the visitors exit the beach, county staff will refund \$4.00 in return for their receipt and county issued bag full of trash. The refund will only be issued for that same day, if the bag is full and if they return before 7:00 p.m.

Trash left behind is not only unsightly, but is harmful to our environment, marine and wildlife habitat and especially to humans. We ask the public, and the users to respect public lands and please observe all State and County Litter Laws. For any additional information regarding this program you may contact Javier Mendez with the Parks and Recreation Department, at (956) 761-3700 or by email at jmendez@co.cameron.tx.us.

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