



## OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION COMMISSION

### OCEANO DUNES STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING San Luis Obispo, CA

April 28, 2023

**STAFF REPORT:** Rice Straw and Mercury/Fungicides at Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (ODSVRA)

**STAFF:** Jon O'Brien, Environmental Program Manager, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division

**SUBJECT:** Follow-up report on the rice straw used for dust mitigation projects at ODSVRA, and mercury and fungicide levels

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#### Summary

On January 24, 2023, the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Commission, Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area Ad Hoc Committee meet in San Luis Obispo, CA. The focus of that meeting was the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (ODSVRA). At that meeting, concerns were raised about elevated levels of mercury and fungicides in rice straw being used as part of the dust mitigation/dune restoration projects at the park (it was reported that samples had been collected from the dunes and analyzed at a lab, but no results or other documentation were provided). The rice straw used at ODSVRA is a by-product of food-grade rice grown in the Sacramento Valley of California.

To address the claims, the Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) hired a firm with expertise in soil and material testing to collect soil (sand) and rice straw samples from both new and old projects at ODSVRA. The samples were collected on February 24, 2023. The samples were tested by California-certified laboratories for mercury and multiple fungicides, in addition to organochlorine pesticides (OCPs) and other potential contaminants associated with agricultural settings.

All mercury and OCP samples in both the straw and the sand were below detection limits and at levels that are not harmful to people or the environment.

No fungicides were detected at harmful levels in the soil/sand samples. The fungicides Azoxystrobin and Propiconazole were detected at low levels in the straw samples, but

these levels are well below tolerance limits set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and are not at levels harmful to people or the environment.

Given these results, there are no safety concerns related to mercury or fungicides in the rice straw used at ODSVRA.

**Commission Action**

For information only.

**Attachments**

Rice Straw and Substrate Characterization Report, Ninyo and Moore, 3/29/2023