



COASTAL RESOURCES DIVISION
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WALTER RABON
COMMISSIONER

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March 20, 2026

Monica Cioppettini
mcioppet@scad.edu
Savannah College of Art & Design
312 East 37th Street
Savannah, GA 31404

Re: Letter of Permission (LOP), 2026 Sand Arts Festival, Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), Shore Protection Act (SPA) Jurisdiction, South Beach Area, City of Tybee Island, Atlantic Ocean, Chatham County, Georgia

Dear Ms. Cioppettini:

This LOP is in response to your request to host SCAD's annual Sand Arts Festival in SPA jurisdiction on the South Beach area of Tybee Island, Chatham County, Georgia. The one-day festival is scheduled 9am - 5pm Friday, May 1, 2026.

The Sand Arts Festival is a one-day event that includes SCAD students and faculty creating and sharing art with the general public on the beach at Tybee Island. The festival zone is located on the dry sand beach seaward of the 14th Street Dune Crosswalk and extends south towards the Chatham County Pier & Pavilion. All sand sculptures will be created on-site using only hand tools, beach sand, and water. Wind sculptures are also part of the festival and may include prefabricated features. Some wind sculptures may temporarily be installed on the beach or attached to the northern side of the Chatham County Pier & Pavilion. Event set-up will commence the day of the event at approximately 7am. Breakdown will be completed no later than 8pm the same day. All event amenities will be transported by hand to the beach the day of the event. There will be no more than ten (10), 10ft. x 10ft. tents set up by a contract vendor. When installed, the tents can be no closer than 20ft. seaward of the existing sand fence in the festival zone. The temporary tents will be used for supplies, participants, and first aid. Additionally, SCAD Radio will occupy a tent adjacent to the Pier. To minimize risks to public safety, an electrician will ensure that all electrical power lines associated with audio system are bundled, identified, and secured appropriately. Chatham County has agreed to supply power for the audio equipment. No gas or diesel generators are authorized for use or storage in SPA jurisdiction at any time. No vehicular equipment is authorized on the beach in connection with this event. All work must be accomplished using hand tools only.

All zip ties associated with the installation of the festival zone must be collected and placed in appropriate trash receptacles and removed from the public area during breakdown. Any incidental impacts associated with this project must be rectified by fully restoring areas to pre-event topographic and vegetative state.

No activities are authorized landward of the dry sand beach. To protect emergent dunes from unintended impacts, the event coordinator must clearly identify the landward limits of Sand Arts Festival area and prohibit foot traffic in the area landward of the existing sand fence in the festival zone. This can be accomplished by installing temporary ropes and signage that connect the seaward ends of the existing sand fence and limit ingress & egress to the dune field. During the event, faculty and students will patrol the beach to monitor activity and collect trash. After the festival is over, faculty and volunteers will canvas the beach, filling depressions by hand, collecting trash and restoring the area to its pre-event topographic condition.

Because the project will occur between May 1st and October 31st, sea turtle nesting season, an individual with a DNR Sea Turtle Cooperators Permit is required to survey the area prior to the work beginning. All turtle nests must be avoided and no activity may occur within 20ft. of a nest area.

The Department authorizes the temporary activities associated with the activities as depicted in the attached project request. This LOP is not meant to exempt the above referenced activities from future environmental laws. **No unauthorized equipment, materials or debris may be placed, disposed of, or stored in jurisdictional areas.** Any incidental impacts associated with this project must be rectified by fully restoring areas to their pre-construction topographic and vegetative states. Any change in the use, location, dimensions, or configuration of the approved project, without prior notification and approval from this office could result in the revocation of this LOP and in the required removal of the materials and related structures. This project must comply with all other Federal, State, and local statutes, ordinances, and regulations.

If you have any further questions or concerns regarding this or any other project, please feel free to contact Deb Barreiro at (912) 266.3695.

Sincerely,



Jill Andrews
Chief, Coastal Management Section

Enclosures: Event Description & Site Plan

cc: Robyn Rosner
City of Tybee Island
P.O. Box 2749
Tybee Island, Georgia 31328

LOP20260024

March 18, 2026

Dear Ms. Barreiro:

I am writing on behalf of Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) in application of a letter of permission to host this year's **2026 Sand Arts Festival** on the **South Beach area of Tybee Island**. The festival is scheduled to take place **Friday May 1, 2026, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm** on the **North side of the pier**. (see event maps of Tybee Beach - Figure 1 and Figure 2)

The event involves approximately 700 SCAD students creating sand sculptures throughout the day, with category prizes awarded in the afternoon. While constructing the sandcastles and sculptures students are instructed to use only sand from the beach and water from the surf. They are not allowed in the dunes or to swim during the event. Only shovels and buckets are allowed on the beach, no vehicles or mechanized digging is allowed. Faculty and student volunteers regularly patrol the beach and collect trash throughout the day to monitor activity and assist with trash collection. Lifeguards and SCAD security officers will also patrol the beach.

After the festival is over, faculty and volunteers will canvas the beach, filling depressions by hand, collecting trash and restoring the area to its pre-event topographic condition. The use of vehicles on the beach is prohibited in association with the event. No obstruction of public access is authorized through the existing crosswalks or along the high-water mark. Public viewing will be from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm. To reiterate our commitment to preserving the beach and its habitat, there are no events planned in or near the dunes. In addition to the sand sculpting, students will also participate in a wind sculpture category. These sculptures will be prefabricated and transported to the beach. Materials used will be appropriate for the beach and include objects such as kites and whirligigs. Before transport to the beach, all entries in this category will pass a rigorous inspection by qualified faculty at SCAD's Savannah location to ensure that they are suitable for display on the beach. All wind sculptures will be removed at the end of the day. We commit to this in effort to follow state regulations in favor of supporting the Best Management Practices (BMP's) prescribed to protect jurisdictional shore areas. We are coordinating all efforts with the City of Tybee Beach clean-up and providing additional help through SCAD Serve.

For media, check-in, information, first aid, drawing, tools, and music, we will have ten (10) tents measuring 10' x 10'. All tents and materials will be hand delivered from the parking lot to the beach, no motorized vehicles will be necessary. The ten tents of the same size will be placed parallel to the parking lot beginning at the pavilion and moving north housing our SCAD Radio sound, Check in and Media, the Drawing Center, and tools for sand building. In the middle of the sand building area, we will place two more tents for First Aid and Information. SCAD Radio will provide music for the event. Extension cords extended from the pavilion area of the pier will provide power for the sound equipment. The Chatham County Parks department has approved the use of power from the pier.

SCAD media services will be documenting the work the day of the event with approved video and drone use for noncommercial use outside of SCAD and the City of Tybee promotional use.

During the Sand Arts Festival, SCAD invites a resident artist to build a temporary, one day, sculpture on the beach. Please see the attached map which indicates where the sculpture will rest. There will be no interference to the public's ability to walk around or by this sculpture during the installment or display. The sculpture will be built early in the morning and finished by early afternoon.

As you know, the City of Tybee requests a copy of the letter of permission from the Department of Natural Resources for the festival. An email from your office expressing permission will satisfy their request. If you could also provide a copy for our records, it would be greatly appreciated. Please let me know if you have any questions that I can assist with.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray Yeager', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ray Yeager
Sand Arts Committee Member/Faculty
Professor of Foundation Studies SCAD
Wallin Hall 312 E. 37th Street
Savannah, GA 31404
Cell: (217) 371-8233
ryeager@scad.edu

Event Map



Figure 1



Figure 2