



Laboratory for Coastal Research & National Healthy Beaches Campaign

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“Dr. Beach” Names Fleming Beach Park America’s Best

MIAMI, FL --Embargoed to May 24, 2006. D. T. Fleming Beach Park takes the number one spot in the 16th annual Top 10 Beaches rankings produced by Dr. Stephen P. Leatherman, Director of Florida International University’s Laboratory for Coastal Research.

The western shore of Maui is known for its idyllic, year-round beach weather, and Fleming’s mile-long crescent, white sand beach offers a range of activities and stunning views of nearby Molokai Island. A favorite area for sunbathers, swimmers, and surfers alike, the beach is backed by a virtual forest of trees on the low sea cliff, providing welcome shade. Amenities include showers, restrooms, grills, bar/snackbar and picnic facilities overlooking the beach plus tablecloth dining on the south end of the park, which is the unofficial beach of the nearby Ritz Carlton.

“Fleming Beach is a wonderful beach, but when the surf is up during the winter months, it is best to stay close to shore unless you are a very strong and experienced swimmer,” noted Leatherman, an international expert on beaches and coastal processes. “Only swim when the lifeguards are on duty, which is true for any oceanic beach.”

As “Dr. Beach” (www.DrBeach.org), Leatherman has selected an annual Top 10 Beaches since 1991. Fifty criteria are used to evaluate beaches, which include water and sand quality as well as facilities and management.

What makes Leatherman's selections unique is his knowledge as a Ph.D. coastal scientist with 30 years of scientific experience studying storm impacts, erosion and ways to improve beach health.

The **National Healthy Beaches Campaign** (www.NHBC.fiu.edu) was founded by Leatherman to acknowledge the many beautiful and “healthy” beaches around the country from seaside and lakeshore destinations for any taste. Nominations are accepted by mail for this program for which there is no fee.

TOP 10 BEACHES 2006

- 1. Fleming Beach Park**
Maui, Hawaii
- 2. Caladesi Island State Park**
Dunedin, Florida
- 3. Ocracoke Island**
Outer Banks, North Carolina
- 4. Coopers Beach**
Southampton, New York
- 5. Hanalei Beach, Kauai, Hawaii**
- 6. Main Beach**
East Hampton, New York
- 7. Coast Guard Beach**
Cape Cod, Massachusetts
- 8. Coronado Beach**
San Diego, California
- 9. Hamoa Beach, Maui, Hawaii**
- 10. Barefoot Beach Park**
Bonita Springs, Florida

PRESS NOTES: Photos of 2006’s Top 10 and past #1 beaches are at <http://www.DrBeach.org/drbeach/>.