

St. Pete at Risk of Losing Oldest Nude Beach

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St. Petersburg's oldest nude beach is under threat of closure as local authorities aim to turn the area into a "family-friendly" resort.

The Dunes, located in Sestroretsk, 30 kilometers northwest of St. Petersburg on the Gulf of Finland, has long been a favorite haunt for nudists, but plans are under way to rebrand the beach for regular usage, a spokesman for the local district authorities said Tuesday.

"We are doing everything possible to survey the area and register it as one of the city's official city beaches," the spokesman told the Interfax news agency. "It will become a well-equipped, secure spot. There will be no nudists. There are certain rules that have to be followed in popular public places."

The spokesman said local authorities would offer disheartened nudist beachgoers an alternative spot.

"Of course, they'll be offered some other place, such as by the lakes on the district's border,

where families with children don't go."

The Dunes, which in 2008 was recognized by a U.S.-based publication as one of the best 1,000 naked beaches in the world, has been used by free-spirited sunbathers since the 1960s and, in 1992, was granted official nude-beach status.

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