RESOLUTION NO. 2008-035

A RESOLUTION OF THE DEL NORTE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DECLARING THE AREA OF STATE WATERS FROM THE MOUTH OF THE KLAMATH
RIVER TO THE MOUTH OF SMITH RIVER AN OCEANOGRAPHIC AREA OF
UNIQUE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE TO DEL NORTE COUNTY

WHEREAS, The fishing community of Del Norte County is a historic and important present day
contributor to our economic base. Along with dollars generated directly from fishing, our harbor
and its fishermen create a destination for sport fishermen and seafood lovers, increasing our
counties revenue; and

WHEREAS, Since the reduction in our off shore fleet through federal actions, most of our
fishery dollars are now generated from our near shore state waters. Because of our local weather
patterns, ocean fishermen who work and play in our county must fish close to our port or risk
injury; and

WHEREAS, This makes the state waters from the mouth of the Klamath River to the mouth of
Smith River of the highest economic importance to our county’s fishing community. At this time
there are no species of near shore finfish listed as over-fished by the federal or state government.
In 1998, the federal government decreased the overall fishing effort, creating conditions that
have the area currently rebuilding all near shore species through historically high protection
levels; and

WHEREAS, This high level of protection has already cost our county through fishery reductions,
and has brought our fishing infrastructure close to the point of collapse. Thus, any farther
reductions may collapse our fishing community; and

WHEREAS, Any closures of this area will be fought with the highest degree of effort available
to our county. We also ask that any regulatory managers of these waters take our counties
reliance of above-mentioned area and maintain our fishermen’s access to it. We do this because
we understand the importance of our fisheries to our county’s economic base; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors,
hereby declares the area of state waters from the mouth of the Klamath River to the mouth of
Smith River an oceanographic area of unique economic importance to Del Norte County.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 27th day of May, 2008.

Ayes: Supervisors Hemmingsen, Sullivan, McClure, McNamer, Finigan
Noes: None

David Finigan, Chair
Del Norte County Board of Supervisors
IN FOCUS: OVERDUE DREDGING

The Shallow End

Photo by Crescent City Harbor District

Crescent City Harbor Facilities Manager Paul McAndrews stands knee-deep in the federal channel that leads to the inner harbor last month. The channel is supposed to be 15 feet deep, but sediment and materials from the ocean have washed into it, leaving an ever-growing need for dredging.
As channel fills with sediment,
Harbor raises mooring rates after passing lean budget

LOCAL

Dredging

Continued from A1
federal government, said Harbormaster Richard Young.

Fishermen, harbor officials and government representatives recognize that a shallow-access channel could affectively stop boats from entering or exiting the harbor and hurt the local economy.

"We're trying to do everything we can to help acquire funding for that project," said Del Norte County Supervisor Gerry Hemmingsen, who also fishes out of the harbor. "It's pretty inconvenient and dangerous. I think we need to make the case that this is an emergency."

**Economic Implications.**

If no action is taken to remove the sediment that continues to fill the harbor's access channel, the local fleet of fishing boats could be forced to dock elsewhere. Already, many local fishermen must watch the low tides to plan when it's safe—and possible—to enter or exit the boat basin. For some boats, low or minus tides almost always guarantee hitting bottom in the access channel, forcing fishermen to wait until it's safe to move.

"We have to operate everything around the tide," said David Evanow, a local fisherman.

Evanow said his large boat, the Darin Alan, and his smaller one that draws down about 4 feet, have both run aground in the harbor's access channel. It used to be just the larger, deeper-drawing vessels that would hit bottom, Evanow said, but now smaller boats also have problems.

"At a low tide, it's frightening how bad it is," Evanow said. "If this harbor keeps going as it said, "There really will be a disaster if this harbor doesn't function anymore."

**Waiting on Congress.**

Funding to dredge the harbor's federal channel must now come from Congress through an appropriations process. Two years ago, dredging for shallow coastal ports such as Crescent City used to be included in the president's budget, but the project now requires Congress to request specific funding.

The Army Corps estimates it will probably cost $2 million to $3 million to dredge Crescent City's federal channel, depending on where the material is disposed. Once that money is available, the Army Corps can then contract out to complete the dredging project.

Even though dredging the federal channel is at least three years overdue, only about $5.5 million is currently available for Crescent City dredging, said Liz Murguia, district representative for U.S. Rep. Mike Thompson, who is trying to secure additional money for the work. The Democratic congressman has requested $2.3 million in the 2009 fiscal year appropriations process, but it remains to be seen if the funds will be secured, Murguia said.

"It is a top priority for the congressmen, but there are numerous hurdles to securing the funds—not the least of which is whether or not there will be any congressional earmarks in this year's budget," Murguia said in an e-mail.

**Southwest Bank.**

Port Bragg's harbor is another shallow-water port within Thompson's district that needs congressional funding to be dredged, Murguia said. Funds to dredge deep-water commercial

**The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Dorado docks out by Whaler Island, but must enter the federal channel's shallower section to fill up at the fuel dock along Citizen's Dock. The boat hasn't come close to running aground, but the Dorado's captain, Lt. Chris Weber, said he must watch the tides to know when the channel is deep enough for the cutter to tie up by the fuel dock. Weber said he plans to send a "high priority" internal memo to recommend that the harbor's federal channel be dredged for the safety of the Coast Guard's rescue missions, enforcement and patrol.**

"My concerns are ensuring we can respond at any time," Weber said. "With that in mind, that's where my concerns arise."

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