



Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers Inc.

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FEIN #61-1575751

4/10/2016

Peter Mull
US Army Corp of Engineers
601 Startare Dr #100
Eureka, Ca. 95501

RE: Emergency dredging of Humboldt Bay

Dear Mr. Mull:

As an organization representing saltwater anglers, HASA is deeply concerned about boating safety. El Niño driven winter storms caused the recent shoaling at the entrance to Humboldt Bay and has created an unsafe condition not seen in many years. The shallow bar conditions have made crossing the harbor entrance much less predictable, with short steep waves and breaking waves occurring at almost any tide. Recreational boaters have benefited greatly from the regular dredging of the Humboldt Bay channel and entrance. At proper depth, the harbor entrance is much safer for small boats, and wave-related incidents are substantially reduced since regular dredging began.

Not only are we suffering an economic loss without large ship traffic, but recreational boaters and commercial fishermen are now forced to decide whether it is safe to cross the bar or not, even during reasonably calm ocean conditions. We believe risk of boats crossing the harbor entrance encountering unsafe wave conditions would have been severe if the crab season opened as normal, and we fear that boaters may be at much greater risk when crab season does open and during the upcoming salmon, halibut, and rockfish seasons (beginning by May 1).

HASA will do all we can to inform and educate recreational boaters of the danger and how to reduce risk during the time until dredging resumes; however, due to the delay in arrival of the dredge and a May 1 (or earlier) start date for crab season and halibut season, we request that emergency dredging be conducted at the entrance of Humboldt Bay to reduce the risk of recreational boats being capsized and associated injury or loss of life. HASA wholly supports all efforts to obtain emergency dredging because we believe dredging is the only way to best protect the recreational and commercial fleet from the dangers of a rough bar caused by unusually shallow water depths. Please let us know if there is any additional assistance we can provide to facilitate this emergency dredging.

Sincerely,

Casey Allen, Public Information Officer
Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers, Inc.
Member – Humboldt Harbor Safety Committee