



To enrich lives through effective and caring service



February 2, 2006

Stan Wisniewski
Director

Kerry Gottlieb
Chief Deputy

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Stan Wisniewski, Director *Stan Wisniewski*

SUBJECT: **URGENT NEED FOR DREDGING OF MARINA DEL REY ENTRANCES AND CHANNEL**

As part of a periodic effort to keep your Board informed about navigation conditions in Marina del Rey's entrances and channel, as well as efforts to obtain federal funding to dredge these areas, this memo will serve to update your Board about current conditions and the pressing need to obtain federal funding to remedy them.

The Marina's Harbor Master recently informed our Department that the build-up of sand in the north entrance has advanced to a dangerous level. At a zero low tide, about 50% of that entrance at its narrowest point has a depth less than 10 feet and buoys have been placed to keep away boaters from these shallow areas. Once shoaling advances to where 65 to 70% of that entrance is blocked in this manner, the Harbor Master will be compelled to close that entrance as vessels will otherwise be forced to travel too close to the adjacent rocky breakwater. Likewise, the southern entrance is about 42% congested in a similar manner with both sand and sediment from Ballona Creek. A leeway of only 15% at the north entrance and 23% at the south entrance, therefore, exists before navigation into the Marina is thrust into an emergency situation. Larger vessels are already being advised by the Harbor Master to only enter the Marina at high tide.

To illuminate the current condition of both entrances, the Harbor Master's recent depth charts are attached for your review. The north entrance particularly suffered due to recent storm and wave action at the beginning of the year, which thrust additional sand into that entrance; we fear that any additional action during the remainder of this storm season could rapidly fill it up. In addition, the spring and summer months could see strong wind/waves that further exacerbate the situation. With respect to the south entrance, there is a large amount of sediment sitting in Ballona Creek waiting to be pushed into it by a large storm.

Accordingly, I recently sent the attached letter to Colonel Dornstauder of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) sharing these concerns and asking that immediate attention and funding be allocated to dredge particularly the Marina's north entrance area, which is a federal responsibility. I reminded the Colonel that the Marina should be dredged about every five years and almost six years have elapsed since the last dredging was completed (in March 2000). In the last two years, the Congress has allocated \$1,000,000 to the Corps for dredging of the Marina's entrances and channel (\$100,000 for FY 2004 and \$900,000 for FY 2006). Unfortunately, this amount is expected to fall short of the total funds needed for completion of a dredging operation,

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particularly as testing has already evidenced the presence in certain areas of contaminated sediments, disposal of which costs substantially more than placement on the beach via a renourishment project. The money has, however, allowed for commencement of the planning, design and environmental assessment of a comprehensive dredging project of not only the north entrance, but also the south entrance and the main channel, these, too, being the responsibility of the federal government.

Our Department will continue to work closely with Supervisor Knabe's Office, our federal representatives, the Corps and the Chief Administrative Office to obtain sufficient federal funding to dredge Marina del Rey's entrances and channel now and in the future. As mentioned in my letter to Colonel Dornstauder, it is our hope to achieve an annual line item in the federal budget for Marina dredging.

We will continue to provide your Board with periodic updates. If you need any further information at this time, please let me know.

SW:ks

Attachments

c: Chief Administrative Office
Each Board Deputy
Harbor Master