

Redondo Beach Harbor Commission request support regarding King Harbor Dredging Project

XX February 2021

The Honorable Mayor Brand and City Council Members
City of Redondo Beach
415 Diamond Street
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

SUBJECT: Harbor Commission Request for support regarding King Harbor Dredging Project

Mayor Brand and City Council Members,

With regard to the upcoming King Harbor Dredging Project, the Harbor Commission respectfully requests the following support from the City Council. The following sentences summarize our request. Additional background detail follows.

Request:

The Harbor Commission respectfully requests that City Council direct staff to amend the dredging permit to request that all of the dredged material be placed at the Army Corps of Engineers storage site outside the harbor, rather than placing 29,000 cubic yards inside the harbor, and 33,000 cubic yards outside the harbor.

The Harbor Commission respectfully requests that City Council direct staff to apply for the secondary maintenance dredging permit as soon as practical, in hopes of receiving approval in time to perform any needed maintenance dredging during mobilization of equipment for the main harbor dredging project.

The Harbor Commission respectfully requests that City Council direct staff to request that the Request for Proposals for the dredging contract specify that best practices to eliminate debris will be used; that bidding responses specify practices to be used and provide results from previous operations; that the harbor commission be allowed to review the RFP and responses from bidding contractors; and that the Harbor Commission or its representative be allowed to monitor the dredging project.

The Harbor Commission respectfully requests that City Council direct staff to schedule the dredging operation to use the Nearshore Placement Site between January 1 and July 15 when juvenile Giant Sea Bass are not present.

Background:

City staff have begun the permitting process for much needed dredging of King Harbor. Sand has built up in the narrow channel to Basin 3, used by large commercial boats. This shoal is

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approximately 0.35 acres in size. A second shoal of approximately 4.1 acres in size is above water at low tide, along most of the northern section of the outer breakwall.

Dredged material placement location:

The submitted permit has requested that approximately half the dredged material (29,000 cubic yards) be placed inside the harbor, in a depression in the harbor turning basin, and the remainder (33,000 cubic yards) placed at a site used previously by the Army Corps of Engineers for sand storage, the “Nearshore Placement Site”, in the open ocean off Sapphire street and Topaz jetty. Consultants proposed filling this in-harbor depression to increase water circulation within the harbor. The Harbor Commission feels that the dredged material placed in the harbor will become a future nuisance, and migrate back to again block the channel to basin 3 and other nearby areas including the hand launch. Currently, sand has built up at the hand launch, the hand launch dock no longer floats at low tide. Finally, the material to be dredged has been tested and has been found to contain levels of DDT and PCBs, and the Commission prefers this material to be placed in open ocean at the Nearshore Placement Site where it will be exposed to open tidal flow and more rapid dilution, rather than in the harbor where boaters and paddle boarders will come in contact with it.

The Harbor Commission has shared these concerns with the US Army Corps of Engineers, during their comment period on the project. No response has been received.

The Harbor Commission respectfully requests that City Council direct staff to amend the dredging permit to specify that all of the dredged material be placed at the Army Corp storage site outside the harbor, rather than placing 29,000 cubic yards inside the harbor, and 33,000 cubic yards outside the harbor at the US Army Corps of Engineers Nearshore Placement Site.

Acceleration of permitting for minor maintenance dredging:

Staff plans to apply for a permit for minor maintenance dredging to allow dredging as needed in small volumes on an ongoing basis. The southwest corner of the central basin, and the hand launch, needed dredging in 2005, and the hand launch needs dredging again now. If the maintenance dredging permit is approved before the major dredging project begins, additional maintenance dredging may be able to performed cost effectively during the larger project.

The Harbor Commission respectfully requests that City Council direct staff to apply for the secondary maintenance dredging permit as soon as practical, in hopes of receiving approval in time to perform any needed maintenance dredging during mobilization of equipment for the main harbor dredging project.

Assurance that dredged material will be clean:

In 2012, the Marina Del Rey harbor channel was dredged, and dredged material was barged to the US Army Corp Nearshore Placement Site, off Topaz Jetty and Sapphire Street, for storage.

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Poor practices were used, the material was contaminated with trash, particularly plastic debris, which fouled our beach and the popular scuba dive site at Veterans Park. The Harbor Commission wishes to ensure that best practices are used and that debris is removed from the dredged material before being returned.

The Harbor Commission has shared these concerns with the US Army Corps of Engineers, during their comment period on the project. No response has been received.

Reference to video of divers removing debris in 2012: <https://youtu.be/rPUctdS-cCE>

The Harbor Commission respectfully requests that City Council direct staff to request that the Request for Proposals for the dredging contract specify that best practices to eliminate debris will be used; that bidding responses specify practices to be used and provide results from previous operations; that the harbor commission be allowed to review the RFP and responses from bidding contractors; and that the Harbor Commission or its representative be allowed to monitor the dredging project. bidding contractors; and that the Harbor Commission or its representative be allowed to monitor the dredging project.

Dates of dredging project to accommodate presence of juvenile endangered Giant Sea Bass:

Giant Sea Bass, *Stereolepis gigas*, are endangered and protected. They are a highly charismatic species of megafauna, growing to over 500 pounds and 7 feet long. They are unrelated to white sea bass, *Atractoscion nobilis*, a gamefish supported by regional volunteer hatcheries. Research has found increased numbers of juvenile giant sea bass within hundreds of yards of the heads of submarine canyons, in particular, the Redondo Submarine Canyon which terminates off Veteran's Park, near the US Army Corp placement site. In 2019, for the first time, the Cabrillo Aquarium and the Long Beach Aquarium were able to rear hundreds of them from eggs, and in 2020 released these fish at the site best known for their survival, in front of Ruby and Sapphire Streets near the head of the Redondo Canyon, near the location of the US Army Corp of Engineers Nearshore Placement Site, which will be used for the King Harbor Dredging project.

Studies have shown that juveniles are present only in the late summer and fall. Scheduling future Redondo Beach sand replenishment and major shoreline infrastructure projects to be implemented between January 1 and July 15 would be expected to avoid or greatly minimize impacts to the YOY of GSB at this nursery site

Reference to LA Times article: <https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2020-03-04/scientists-seed-local-seas-with-imperiled-fish-can-giant-sea-bass-make-a-comeback>

Reference to scientific paper:

<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=175914&inline>

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The Harbor Commission respectfully requests that City Council direct staff to schedule the dredging operation to use the Nearshore Placement Site between January 1 and July 15 when juvenile Giant Sea Bass are not present.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Jim Light
Chair
Redondo Beach Harbor Commission

Rqger Carlson
Chair
Redondo Beach Harbor Commission Dredging Subcommittee

Mat Kilroy
Commissioner
Redondo Beach Harbor Commission

CC: S. Proud, J. Hoefgen, E. Manzano