



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 6/12/2023

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Regional Parks

Staff Name and Phone Number: Bert Whitaker, 707-565-2041

Vote Requirement: 4/5th

Supervisorial District(s): Fifth District

Title:

Abandoned Vessel Abatement Fund and Commercial Berthing Credit at County of Sonoma Marinas

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Budget Resolution transferring \$150,000 of FY 2022-23 General Fund Contingencies to Regional Parks to create the Abandoned Vessel Abatement Fund to remove abandoned fishing vessels from Bodega Bay Marinas operated by the County of Sonoma and authorize a temporary waiver of dock fees at County of Sonoma Marinas for commercial fishing vessels experiencing financial hardship. (4/5th Vote)

Executive Summary:

The commercial fishing fleet has been dealt a significant economic blow due to cancellation of the salmon season and shortened crab seasons this year. Additionally, because of the economic challenges, vessels have been abandoned in the marinas due to the financial hardship and need to be removed for disposal.

Discussion:

The County operates three marinas in Bodega Bay that provide berthing and other services that support the commercial fishing fleet. Currently, there are 95 commercial fishing vessels berthing at County owned marinas in Bodega Bay. This past winter's crab season was shorter than usual with a delayed start and early closure significantly impacting the ability for fishing vessels to offload crab. Additionally, the commercial salmon season that historically begins in April was cancelled for all of 2023.

This year's fishing season, and multiple years of late starts with early closures of the crab and salmon fisheries, has resulted in significant financial hardship. This has caused some boat owners, who have been unable to pay the monthly dock fees, to receive lien notices. In these instances, the boat owner usually attempts to sell their vessel, however, with the serious impacts to the salmon and crab seasons boats are not selling and ultimately being abandoned. Presently there are three vessels that require removal and Spud Point Marina is anticipating additional vessels will be abandoned and likely require removal and disposal. The approximate cost to remove and dispose of one vessel ranges from \$5,000 to \$20,000 and the department is requesting \$100,000 for an Abandoned Vessel Abatement Fund to be included in the Spud Point Marina Special Revenue Fund.

Additionally, because of this year's cancelled salmon season and shortened crab season, many fishermen who

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have now experienced multiple years of financial hardship have no revenue to cover dock fees. Regional Parks staff is requesting the County provide up to \$50,000 in temporary relief to support this important industry. If approved, Regional Parks staff will work with the Spud Point Advisory Committee to expeditiously develop a streamlined application process where individual commercial crab and salmon vessels may apply for temporary relief of dock fees. Dock fee waivers can be applied for monthly and will be prioritized to individuals who can demonstrate significant financial hardships, meaningful contributions to economic vitality of the local fishing economy, and circumstances where this fee waiver will decrease the likelihood of the boat being abandoned and likely requiring removal and disposal. For example, a fisherman who employs multiple deck hands and primarily relies on income from crab or salmon fishing to live would be prioritized for this assistance. Also, fisherman who apply will need to have active salmon or crab permits issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and have caught and offloaded commercial volumes of crab or salmon in the past year in order to be eligible for the fee reduction. Regional Parks staff, in consultation with County Counsel, will develop and implement this program.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

Prior Board Actions:

January 12, 2016: Approved a temporary waiver of dock fees at County of Sonoma Marinas for fishermen impacted by the postponement of crab season.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 22-23 Adopted	FY23-24 Projected	FY 24-25 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested	\$150,000		
Total Expenditures	\$150,000		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies	\$150,000		
Total Sources	\$150,000		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The \$150,000 of General Fund Contingencies will be transferred into the Spud Point Marina Special Revenue

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Fund. Revenues will be carried forward into FY 2023-24, which is when expenditures are expected to begin for this program. An adjustment will be included in FY2023-24 Q1 Consolidated Budget Adjustments to increase expenditure appropriations in the Spud Point Marina section.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

Budget Resolution

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None