

SOUTH COAST SAILING TEAM
32862 Staysail Drive
Dana Point, CA 92629
949-493-3952 <tel:949-493-3952>

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Brad Gross, Director
OC Dana Point Harbor
24650 Dana Point Harbor Drive
Dana Point, CA 92629

Dear Mr. Gross,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for The Dana Point Harbor Marina Improvement Project dated September 20th. I am writing to express my concerns over the modification planned for the OC Sailing and Event Center. My remarks are directly pointed to the facility. I realize that the total harbor plan is very comprehensive. I wish only to express my dismay at the suggested changes for the facility previously known as the youth and group facility.

Question 1 Has anyone utilizing the present center requested a change in the facility?

I was a member of the county planning committee that worked with the naval architect in designing the present structure. I formally represented the Sea Scouts on that committee. We were very proud of our work at the time. The facility after opening received a number of prestigious design awards. Since that time for over twenty-five years I have been the Director for the sea scouts in Dana Harbor. The facility has always totally served our needs. The county employees and management have always been totally cooperative and responsive in helping us serve thousands of youth and adults of the community. As the Sea Scout representative, I have worked closely with all of the other organizations utilizing the facility. I am completely unaware of anyone that desires a revamping of the facility. All of us are aware of the need for renewing the aged docks and buildings. We support totally the effort by the county to upgrade existing docks and buildings. We do not support the proposed design changes in the facility.

Question 2 Despite the claim that the linear dock footage for the facility would be increased, is it not true that the length and size of vessels that the facility could accommodate would be greatly curtailed due to the decreased size of the individual docks, the movement of the docks to the outer harbor from the inner harbor and the shoaling of the water in the area proposed for the new docks? In the existing facility there are two docks that could accommodate 40 foot vessels, five docks that could accommodate 48 foot vessels and one that could

accommodate a 55 foot vessel.

Question 3 Is it not true that four of the vessels currently utilized by the Sea Scouts, Saddleback College and Westwind Sailing for their programs would no longer be accommodated by the new facility?

These vessels are 35, 36, 37 and 38 feet in length. The largest vessel shown to be accommodated on the new plan is 32 feet in length'

Question 4 Have studies been done to evaluate the effect of surge currents in the area of the proposed new docks?

At the present time, there are only three vessels kept in the outer harbor at this end of the harbor. These vessels are owned by the Ocean Institute. For the last nine years I have been charged with the safe dockage of two of these vessels. Due to the extreme surges that can occur, I have utilized chain dock lines and windlasses to safely lash these vessels to the docks.

Question 5 Have studies been done to evaluate the rate of shoaling in the proposed area for the new docks?

Recently the schooner, *Spirit of Dana Point* went aground in the anchorage area south of the proposed area for the new docks. A diver for the Orange County Harbor Department Maintenance Staff determined that the shoal area outlined by buoys maintained by the county had grown out into the harbor beyond the buoys. The buoys were subsequently moved an additional fifteen to twenty feet away from the swim beach.

Question 6 Has the topography of the bottom in the area proposed for the new docks been charted to establish minimum depths?

Vessels are shown on the plan to be docked between the proposed docks and the existing pier. A docking approach to the outside dock would require maneuvering in the water between the dock and the pier. It is known that fourteen foot sailboats occasionally touch bottom in this area. Thirty-two foot vessels as shown on the plan would definitely draw more water than a fourteen foot sailboat.

Question 7 Has the relative effect of the wind in the area proposed for the new docks compared to the existing docks been studied?

All of the vessels docked at the facility have been utilized in the past for teaching docking. The larger sailing vessels at the facility are normally docked with the use of inboard engines. The vessels as they turn into the present docks under prevailing winds encounter steady head winds partially blocked by the buildings at the facility. In the proposed docks, depending on the direction of the dock, students will encounter swirling winds, beam winds, head winds and tail winds.

Question 8 Has the increased danger to swimmers imposed by vessels with propellers and manned by students been studied?

Although it is true that many of the docks will be contained, it is also true that the proposed dock configuration forces some vessels to be operated in very close

proximately to the swim beach.

Question 9 Since the area in front of Baby Beach defined by the shoal buoys and the beach swimming buoys is presently devoted to small sail boat sailing, stand up paddling, wind surfing and kayaking, what is the estimated percentage loss to this usage?

Presently larger vessels do not enter the area outlined by the shoal buoys. This area is devoted primarily to use by small human powered or wind powered vessels. Under the proposed dock plan, space would be taken for the docks, the vessels docked there and maneuvering inside and outside the dock area by engine powered vessels.

Question 10 Has the impact of the proposed docks on the vessel traffic in the channel directly between the Event Center Mole and the Dana Point Yacht Club Mole been studied?

Presently the channel is heavily used by docked vessels entering and departing the West Basin as well as human powered vessels. The proposed plan would narrow the channel by a considerable degree both with the addition of a dock and the continuing maneuvering of vessels to momentarily dock at the pump out station. In addition all small vessels stored on the dock next to the facility sidewalk would be forced to enter this channel before being brought to a teaching space within the proposed dock space.

Question 11 Has a study been done to determine the effect on teaching caused by the concentration of all activities on one side of the facility with a focus on the increased distances between classrooms, lockers, storage and maintenance areas? It is not uncommon on a Saturday morning for students to be testing on swimming ability in the area near the crane, practicing rigging on the northeast docks, performing maintenance on the larger vessels on the southeast docks and practicing basic sailing and launching paddle boards off the west docks. As proposed by the new dock plan, all of these activities would require movement of material and personnel down the same ramp and onto narrow congested dock spaces.

Question 12 Has a study been done to determine how to provide for the present uses of the parking area north of the docks, between the event center and the present guest docks?

If as proposed, the docks to the east of the facility and the present guest docks are to be dedicated to the docking of private vessels, than one would assume that parking spaces would need to be dedicated for these private renters. At the present time this parking lot is used for public parking, storage of Sea Scout equipment, storage of Outriggers and related equipment, storage of equipment for a number of organizations and dry storage of a variety of small vessels. The loss of this space to the activities of the center would greatly impact the present usage of the facility. Removal of this storage space to the lot directly north of the center would greatly impact the public parking of the users of the beach and the center multipurpose building.

Question 13 Has a study been done to determine the negative effect on the use of the crane created by the elimination of a part of the dock underneath the crane?

Presently vessels being lifted out of the water or into the water are swung over the south side of the crane pier. The crane design allows no other usage. Vessel tag lines can be utilized by persons on the to-be-removed ramp. Vessels can be moved from the dry storage area utilizing the to-be-removed ramp. Vessels waiting for crane usage can be stored on the to-be-removed dock under the crane and the to-be-inaccessible dock on the southeast side of the crane.

Question 14 Has a study been done to determine the impact of increased foot traffic occasioned by the additional movement of private boat owners with their guests and equipment being added to the present users of the facility and the walking public?

All private slip renters for the proposed southeast docks would be forced to walk the entire length of the facility sidewalk to reach the ramp and share the pump out dock with the transient vessel operators.

Question 15 What if any are the expected advantages envisioned to be created by the proposed dock plan for the public use of the OC Sailing and Event Center?

Question 16 What if any are the instructional advantages envisioned to be created by the proposed dock plan?

The Sea Scouts of Dana Point are high school age members of the Boy Scouts of America. The local unit to which all belong is designated as Mariners, Ship 5936. A separate unit for 12 and 13 year old youth, not affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America is designated as Mariner Juniors. The sponsoring organization for both groups of boys and girls is the South Coast Sailing Team, a 501c3 non-profit corporation.

I personally have been honored to serve as President of the Corporation and Skipper of the units since their founding. I have also served as Captain of the PILGRIM for the last twenty-five years and the Captain of the SPIRIT OF DANA POINT for the last six years. My wife and I moved our family to the City of Dana Point before the harbor coffer dam was removed in 1969. Over the years, our six children and fourteen grandchildren have played on Baby Beach and benefitted from the activities at the Sailing and Event Center.

It is extremely important to me as a citizen of Dana Point and Orange County for over forty-one years, that the public at large have an opportunity to enjoy the park land and water access provided by the Harbor. I feel very strongly that removing the public docks from the east side of the facility to the west side would seriously denigrate the mission of the Center and negatively impact the thousands of youth and adults that utilize Baby Beach.

Your kind consideration of my questions is very much appreciated.

Fair winds and following seas,

Captain Jim Wehan
President
skipwehan@fea.net