

## COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation  
September 22, 2011

### **SAN DIEGO COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REVITALIZATION AND COASTAL ACCESS PLAN: PHASE I IMPLEMENTATION**

Project No. 11-045-01  
Project Manager: Deborah Ruddock

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to disburse up to \$285,500 to the San Diego Unified Port District for initial projects at Driscoll's Wharf to implement the San Diego Commercial Fisheries Revitalization and Coastal Access Plan, including renovation of an unloading facility, purchase of an ice machine and live seafood holding tank, installation of interpretive signage, and planning for an on-site fisherman's market.

**LOCATION:** San Diego

**PROGRAM CATEGORY:** Urban Waterfront

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#### **EXHIBITS**

Exhibit 1: [Project Location and Site Map](#)

Exhibit 2: [Photos](#)

Exhibit 3: [Project Letters](#)

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#### **RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:**

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31300-31316 of the Public Resources Code:

"The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes disbursement of an amount not to exceed two hundred eighty-five thousand five hundred dollars (\$285,500) to the San Diego Unified Port District (Port) for initial projects at Driscoll's Wharf to implement the San Diego Commercial Fisheries Revitalization and Coastal Access Plan, including renovation of an unloading facility renovation, purchase of an ice machine and live seafood holding tank, installation of interpretive signage, and planning for a fisherman's market, subject to the following conditions:

1. The work shall not commence and no funds shall be disbursed until the Executive Officer of the Conservancy has approved in writing:
  - a. A work program, including budget and schedule.
  - b. Any contractor that the Port intends to retain to undertake project work."

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

“Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with the current Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
2. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of Chapter 7 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding urban waterfront restoration.”

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**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

In May of 2007, the Coastal Conservancy (Conservancy) authorized a grant of \$450,000 to the San Diego Unified Port District (Port) for the preparation of a Commercial Fisheries Revitalization and Coastal Public Access Plan aimed at increasing the value and stability of the local commercial fishing industry. The project culminated in a Preferred Alternative Implementation Plan (Plan) for Tuna Harbor and Driscoll’s Wharf (Exhibit 1). The Plan, which was unanimously approved by the Board of Port Commissioners in January 2011, identified projects at Driscoll’s Wharf as first phase implementation priorities. Recommended projects include renovation of the dilapidated offloading facility, purchase and installation of an ice machine and a fish holding tank and development and placement of interpretive signage. In addition to these infrastructure improvements, the Plan recommended development of a fisherman’s market.

The proposed authorization will provide funding for: (1) the structural upgrading of the existing offloading pier; (2) purchase and installation of a small scale ice machine and fish holding tank; (3) design, fabrication and placement of interpretive signage; and (4) planning for an on-site fisherman’s market.

The current condition, size, and capacity of the pier are inadequate for current and projected needs (Exhibit 2). Originally constructed in the early 1950s, the pier is too narrow and structurally limited to support increased levels of commercial fish and gear offloading operations. Furthermore, offloading is tide dependent due to the shallow depth of the basin, making operations inefficient. Additionally, the pier cannot support a refrigerated truck, which means catch must be loaded onto a forklift and then on to a waiting truck, creating more inefficiencies. Restoration as proposed would allow the offloading pier to remain serviceable for approximately 10 more years. Ultimately a new facility is envisioned as a future, longer term solution at a cost of well over \$1 million.

To complement the dockside infrastructure improvements and to assure a fresh quality product, the Port proposes to increase service to fishermen with on-site installation of a small scale ice machine and a fish holding tank. One of the two available local ice sources produces insufficient quantities and the other requires a 40-minute run each way, making these options inconvenient and expensive. Consistent access to affordable ice near the landing facility is a critical need and will boost the efficiency of the small, family run fishing businesses. Storage for live catch will also benefit the fishermen. Local fishermen have identified the need for a chilled, filtered, and recycled water fish holding tank since the water temperatures in the shallow harbor are much warmer than the depth at which most species are caught. A chilled filtered system will allow

catch to survive longer at the dock, in the possession of the buyer, and throughout the distribution chain. A holding tank will also allow the fishermen to better adjust to fluctuations in market demand, as well as periodic drops in landings due to bad weather or vessel repair.

The project also includes planning for a fisherman’s market at the wharf, one of a suite of recommendations identified in the Plan to expand and strengthen the connection between San Diego fishermen and the local community, differentiate San Diego seafood in the marketplace and increase awareness of, and demand for, San Diego seafood products. The planning process will include consideration of the environmental factors related to the proposed fisherman’s market.

Finally, the project includes creation of a series of interpretive signs focused on historic San Diego fisheries and sustainable ways to manage and operate these fisheries into the future.

The Port will collaborate on this project with the numerous stakeholders who participated in development of the fisheries revitalization plan, including Driscoll’s Wharf fishermen recently organized as the non-profit San Diego Fishermen’s Working Group for the purpose of developing a local seafood marketing association.

Letters of support for the project have been received from Congresswoman Susan Davis, State Senator Christine Kehoe, Assemblymember Toni Atkins, California Coastal Commission, County Supervisor Greg Cox, Sportfishing Association of California, Ecotrust, the San Diego Fishermen’s Working Group, San Diego Port Tenant’s Association, Chesapeake Fish Co., Attorney August Felando, The Working Waterfront on San Diego Bay, Catalina Offshore Projects, Semantic Research, Interpac Yachts, Inc., Douglas K. Smith Marine Insurance Services, F. Leland Hope Architect, and Lisa Wise Consulting (Exhibit 3).

**Site Description:** The Driscoll’s Wharf commercial fishing facility is located along Torpedo Point off North Harbor Drive within the America’s Cup Harbor and is part of the Shelter Island area. The Driscoll’s Wharf facility currently consists of four two-story buildings, totaling approximately 35,000 square feet. The waterside facilities include four mooring piers with capacity for approximately 123 boats and an off-loading facility (Pier 4).

The offloading facility is an approximately 135-foot offloading dock with a hoist with maximum capacity of 1,500 pounds, depending on the size of the boat.

**Project History:** The renovation of the commercial fishing offloading facility at Driscoll’s Wharf is an implementation recommendation of the Commercial Fisheries Revitalization and Coastal Public Access Plan that was completed in 2010 with a \$450,000 grant from the Conservancy. The project addressed the economic, regulatory, market, environmental, and infrastructure opportunities and constraints facing the commercial fishing industry, as well as public access and public awareness of opportunities for the sites as part of a vibrant working waterfront. A core committee of commercial fishing industry stakeholders, representatives from the Port, a local Senator’s office, and Conservancy staff supervised the work.

## **PROJECT FINANCING**

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| <b>Coastal Conservancy</b>             | \$285,500 |
| <b>San Diego Unified Port District</b> | 190,500   |

|                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Driscoll’s Wharf Leaseholder</b> | <u>10,000</u>    |
| <b>Total Project Costs</b>          | <b>\$486,000</b> |

The anticipated funding source is the fiscal year 2009-2010 appropriation to the Conservancy from the “The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006” (Proposition 84) for projects to protect and restore the resources of San Diego Bay and its associated watersheds and facilities (Public Resources Code Section 75060(f)). As defined by Proposition 84 “protection” extends to actions necessary to allow the continued use and enjoyment of coastal property, including “restoration”, which includes the improvement of physical structures or facilities. The proposed project will enhance the viability and sustainability of San Diego’s commercial fisheries and will serve to restore and improve coastal structures and facilities and is thus consistent with the intended purposes of the funding source.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:**

The proposed authorization is undertaken pursuant to and is consistent with the Conservancy’s enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, specifically Chapter 7 (Sections 31300 et seq.) pertaining to urban waterfront restoration.

Section 31307 of Chapter 7 authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to public agencies and non-profit organizations for the restoration of urban coastal waterfront areas. Consistent with this section, the Conservancy under the proposed authorization will grant funds to the Port, a public entity, for renovation of aging fisheries support infrastructure and the addition of new infrastructure necessary to sustain commercial fishing at Driscoll’s Wharf on San Diego Bay.

Section 31305 requires the Conservancy, in reviewing grant applications and urban waterfront restoration plans, to “seek to promote excellence of design” and to “stimulate projects which exhibit innovation in sensitively integrating man-made features into the natural coastal environment”. Consistent with this requirement, the proposed project at Driscoll’s Wharf will incorporate sustainability principles and strategies in design, construction and operation of the facilities, including best management practices to reduce or minimize greenhouse gas emissions and use of recyclable materials and renewable energy where appropriate and feasible.

Additionally the project will integrate interpretive signage into the project to enhance the public’s experience and understanding of San Diego’s fisheries and working waterfronts and create awareness of climate change and sustainable natural resources management.

The proposed project also meets the requirements of Section 31308 regarding local participation in urban waterfronts projects. The Conservancy’s funding is leveraged through the Port’s commitment to provide approximately 40% of the total project cost.

Finally, as required by Section 31308, in determining the amount of Conservancy funding, staff has considered a variety of factors, including those detailed in the “CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES” section, below.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S 2007  
STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):**

Consistent with **Goal 3, Objective B**, the proposed authorization will implement the Port of San Diego Commercial Fisheries Revitalization and Coastal Access Plan, enabling the Port to support local commercial fisheries by updating deteriorating infrastructure at Driscoll's Wharf.

Consistent with **Goal 3, Objective C**, the proposed authorization will provide funding for the creation and installation of interpretive signage for educating the public about local commercial fishing activities, history and sustainable fishing practices.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S  
PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:**

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on June 4, 2009, in the following respects:

**Required Criteria**

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes:** See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Enabling Legislation" section above.
2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See "Project Financing" section above.
3. **Support of the public:** This project is supported by Congresswoman Susan Davis, State Senator Christine Kehoe, Assemblymember Toni Atkins, California Coastal Commission, County Supervisor Greg Cox, Ecotrust, Sportfishing Association of California, the San Diego Fishermen's Working Group, San Diego Port Tenant's Association, Attorney August Felando, Chesapeake Fish Co., The Working Waterfront on San Diego Bay, Catalina Offshore Projects, Interpac Yachts, Inc., Semantic Research, Douglas K. Smith Marine Insurance Services, F. Leland Hope Architect, and Lisa Wise Consulting, (Exhibit 3).
4. **Location:** The proposed project is located within the coastal zone of San Diego.
5. **Need:** Without Conservancy assistance, Driscoll's Wharf will continue to deteriorate and San Diego Bay will continue to lose fishermen. The Port does not have sufficient appropriate funding available to cover the entire cost of the project, and wharf tenant leasehold revenue can only support a small portion of the project cost.
6. **Greater-than-local interest:** Driscoll's Wharf serves commercial fishermen from up and down the California coast, all of whom will benefit from planned infrastructure improvements.
7. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** The upgraded offloading pier elevation will not change and improvements are scheduled as a 10 year upgrade to an existing facility. The pier meets grade level of the promenade that is approximately 12 feet above Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW) (0.00'). The area is subject to tidal fluctuation. It is feasible that under the scenario of 16 inches of sea level rise (SLR) by 2050, SLR could potentially start to impact

the function of the facility before that time. Ultimately a new facility is envisioned as a future, longer term solution at a cost well over \$1 million.

**Additional Criteria**

10. **Leverage:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
13. **Readiness:** The Port is prepared to commence the project in January, 2012.
14. **Realization of prior Conservancy goals:** The renovation of the commercial fishing offloading facility at Driscoll’s Wharf is an implementation recommendation of the Commercial Fisheries Revitalization and Coastal Public Access Plan that was completed in 2010 with a \$450,000 grant from the Conservancy (See “Project History” section). In 2004, the Conservancy assisted the City of Morro Bay Harbor Department to purchase and install an ice machine to support direct-to-consumer sales of locally caught fish.
15. **Return to Conservancy:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
16. **Cooperation:** The proposed project will involve the cooperation of Port representatives, the Driscoll’s Wharf leaseholder, and the San Diego Fishermen’s Working Group, a nonprofit organization of fishermen recently established to promote San Diego’s fisheries.
17. **Vulnerability from climate change impacts other than sea level rise:** As mentioned in number 7 above, the project is unlikely to be vulnerable to other climate change impacts because of the short estimated project life.
18. **Minimization of greenhouse gas emissions:**

*Construction Activities:*

The offloading pier upgrade construction is anticipated to include a local design build contractor experienced in marine and sustainable construction and sustainable construction strategies. Construction contract will encourage car pooling, and TVM reduction. Use of generators and GHG emitting equipment is not anticipated and equipment should be less than 10 energized tools and will include hand tools. Off-site, shop construction that provides interior controlled environment BMP’s will be utilized. The Contractor will utilize LEED strategies regarding waste management, recycling and energy use to the maximum extent possible.

*Operational Activities:*

Offloading Pier - Upgrading the offloading pier will be the focus of the commercial fishing facility. Boats unloading will be required to shut down engines and generators and “No Idling” signage will be included on the pier. This operational policy will reduce GHG emissions. Energy saving LED lighting will be part of the upgrade to reduce energy use.

Ice Machine / Fish Holding Tanks - Energy Star and low energy consumption will be key to the selection and design of this equipment and operation. A pre-selection planning component is critical to the success of these facilities. Analysis includes looking at expanding existing facilities, dual use, recycled content and production as well as possible solar and wind power.

Signage – Recycled content and sustainable materials will be pursued for the creation of the

educational interactive signage. Solar power may be appropriate. Signage will not only educate the public about the local commercial fishing industry, but also of the energy saving aspects of the project as constructed and of operational activities.

*Lifecycle Emissions:*

Offloading Pier - Upgrading the offloading pier should provide a 10 year improvement life. By upgrading an existing facility using sustainable strategies, the GHG and carbon footprint will be reduced. Establishing Operational Policies such as “No Idling” will also reduce emissions. LED Lighting and possible future alternative energy resources such as wind and solar will also provide reductions. No measurable emissions above the current baseline should occur.

Ice Machine / Fish Holding Tanks - Energy Star and low energy consumption will reduce life cycle costs and impact. The cumulative impact of providing ice will significantly reduce TVM of trucks deliveries and extended boat travel and thereby reduce GHG. The fish holding tanks utilize filtered bay water that does not impact water demand. Having holding tanks reduces the need for cold storage and provides living fresh seafood.

Signage – Recycled content and sustainable materials will be pursued for the creation of the educational interactive signage with consideration of emitting gases. Solar power may be appropriate. Signage will not only educate public about the local Commercial Fishing Industry, but also of the energy saving aspects of the project as constructed and of operational activities that encourage GHG reduction.

**CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:**

The California Coastal Act regulates any changes to Coastal infrastructure in this project. In regard to commercial fishing the Section 30234 of the Act states: “The economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing activities shall be recognized and protected ... therefore, ports shall not eliminate or reduce existing commercial fishing harbor space, unless the demand for commercial fishing facilities no longer exists or adequate alternative space has been provided. The Port Master Plan functions as the Local Coastal Program for this area. The Precise Plan included in the Master Plan for Shelter Island (the location of Driscoll’s Wharf and the commercial fishing offloading facility) states that the planned land and water uses in this area are to remain essentially unchanged from existing uses. The major emphasis is directed toward renovation of obsolete structure(s) and improvement of the quality of the landscape. Driscoll’s Wharf is designated entirely Commercial Fishing.

**COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:**

The proposed project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the following sections of 14 Cal. Code of Regulations: (1) Section 15301 in that the project includes the repair, restoration and rehabilitation of a deteriorated, existing public facility – the unloading facility; (2) Section 15311 in that the project includes the installation of an ice machine, live seafood holding tanks, and interpretive signage, minor structures which will be appurtenant to existing uses; and (3) Section 15262 in that the project involves preparation of a local fisheries education and marketing plan, a planning study which will include consideration

*SAN DIEGO COMMERCIAL FISHERIES REVITALIZATION AND COASTAL ACCESS PLAN:  
PHASE 1 IMPLEMENTATION*

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of environmental factors, for possible future actions, which the Conservancy has not approved, adopted or funded. Staff will file a Notice of Exemption upon Conservancy approval of the project.