

Summary of Small Boat Committee Recommendations for HMSC

October 15, 2004

Attendees:

Tony D'Andrea, COAS, Chair
George Boehlert, HMSC Director
Brian Parker, NWFSC-FRAM
Cliff Ryer, AFSC
Troy Buell, ODFW
Chris Holmes, Zoology/PISCO
Bruce Mate, MMP
David Specht, EPA
Fred Jones, Ship Ops
Tad Schwager, HMSC Grad Students/Heppell lab

Main Topics for Discussion:

- Review of potential options for small boat operations at HMSC
- Revisit needs of various user groups
- Summarize potential needs to approach South Beach Marina as a group

Current Status of Small Boat Dock and Launching at HMSC

Options

- *OSU Capital Facilities*: request has been submitted but this is unlikely to be approved, particularly in the short term.
- *Federal money from Agencies and/or NSF Marine Lab funding*: There are definite issues with this route particularly with the need for better estimates of costs and design of small boat dock. Still somewhat unrealistic at this point.
- *West Side of Ship Ops*: One of the suggestions from the last meeting was to have a floating small boat dock off of the west side of the Ship Ops dock (therefore away from both the *Wecoma* and *Elakha*). There has been little movement on this option but Fred seemed to indicate that even that location is likely to interfere with Ship Ops and, with additional Homeland Security changes coming soon, less likely. This option was pursued previously because of the opportunity to have the ability to drive equipment to the boats and the potential to load equipment using a crane. We did discuss the potential for perhaps a ramp or sling launch in this location but both would also likely be viewed as interfering with Ship Operations. It was proposed that we look into widening the causeway to account for this interference, but there was not a consensus on how likely this option may be (At the previous meeting, Fred highlighted the barriers permit-wise now in place for construction of drive-able causeways such as that at Ship Ops and this may be as true for expansion projects) In addition, if the Ship Ops dock is lengthened as a component of the future NOAA NWFSC vessel and facilities expansion, Fred sees little opportunity at Ship Ops for small boat operations.
- *Future NOAA Shore Site Facility*: There is the potential for the NWFSC to be in line for a NOAA research vessel in ~6+ years so planning should begin on facilities for this

expansion so that they are in place when the vessel arrives. The goal is for a 10,000 square foot or so facility as part of the shore site facility. If this facility is built in Newport, it may provide opportunities for groups at HMSC to be involved with this planning and perhaps collaborate on a combined larger facility that may serve some of the storage needs of the future small boat needs at HMSC. It is still unclear what the timetable for this planning would be but it is definitely an opportunity that should not be overlooked. The old plan for berthing the new NOAA vessel involved extension of the Ship Ops pier as opposed to building a new dock. This would effectively eliminate small boat options at Ship Ops.

- *South Beach Marina*: Most of the small boat users currently use the South Beach Marina for their launching/mooring activities at present. Of the groups present, four of them (OSU-COAS, OSU-F&W, EPA, AFSC) actively moor boats at least seasonally and all groups launch boats at the marina. There was some comment on the issues associated with getting an annual launch pass for the marina if the group does not get the pass early due to the limited number of passes the marina issues per year. The committee sees a potential partnership with the marina as the most viable short-term option for small boat operations at HMSC. (more details below)

Potential Partnership with South Beach Marina and HMSC Small Boat Needs

If we were to pursue this partnership, we should do this soon as the plans for the Rogue Brewery expansion, South Beach Convention Center, and the proposed movement of the launch ramp proceed.

It may be useful to have copies of the US Army Corps Public Notice for Permit Application from this past summer available to committee members.

Short Term Strategies and Needs:

Launch Passes

HMSC purchases a number of annual passes every year and agencies/research groups then buy an HMSC pass. This would assure that all groups that request them, can get annual passes for launching boats

Current needs: AFSC-1; OSU-2; EPA-5; ODFW-3 (11 total)

Mooring

Perhaps approach the marina about an HMSC-dedicated pier for HMSC boats.

Current needs: 6 boats (2-24', 1-29', 3-21' or less) with mooring needs. The primary need is seasonal mooring (~4 months/year in summer) with the two largest boats requiring year-round mooring. We do need to come up with a stronger argument for an HMSC-dedicated pier. The timing of most of the mooring needs coincide with the busiest time of year for the port, as opposed to times of year when the port is more pressed for business (e.g. winter).

There was also some discussion about the need for a dock that you can drive on to load/unload equipment and/or a crane. Both of these options require a significant investment for the port and seem unlikely. A 3 ton crane with a 30' reach is ~30K used and ~72K new. An additional question was who would be responsible for maintenance if we do have a crane at the marina (or even a sling launch at Ship Ops)...the port or OSU?

Storage Building at Marina

Even with the planned changes to the Port, there is an ~6.6 acre area of dredge spoil land. If we were to actively pursue a partnership with the port, then we should also think about an HMSC Boat Storage building at the marina. This would involve getting a long-term lease with the port for a storage building designed for our needs (detailed below). If HMSC was also able to get some federal or state agencies to sign on, then the process would be easier both from an overall cost perspective as well as being able to effectively sell this plan to OSU.

The primary arguments to pursue a storage building at the marina:

- OSU and agencies have invested money in major equipment (boats) that are currently fully exposed to weather conditions and have little to no security
- This would be a more attractive (stable) source of income to the port relative to the low return from the passes and mooring described above.
- From an OSU perspective, this is more cost effective in the short-term and is probably the only viable approach at present to serve storage needs.
- Storage for boats and field equipment is limited or lacking for several groups at HMSC and any long-term plan needs to take this into account
- The port provides 24-hour security

Current storage Needs

Boats:

OSU	COAS has 1 boat <21' that currently requires storage F&W also has a boat <21' – unclear needs (Scott Heppell not present)
ODFW	Primarily storage for the Shearwater (24'); also beginning an estuary program but it is unclear whether this will involve additional boat storage needs.
EPA	May utilize space to store two hovercrafts
USDA	Brett Dumbauld currently purchasing at least one boat; it is unclear what his potential storage needs may be for the boat

Gear Storage:

OSU	COAS and F&W both require gear and boat equipment storage
ODFW	Current gear storage is off-site and paid for off-site; If costs are reasonable, it would be easier to use on-site storage at the marina
EPA	Has own storage; no real needs.
NWFSC	Until future NOAA Shore Site facility built, there is a need for net storage since currently nets are shipped to Seattle.

Summary: Building with some boat storage but capability for gear storage needs of several research groups at HMSC. We should definitely pursue this possibility.