

Harbor Updates Options Providing Ice to Fishermen

November 11, 2024



Crescent City Harbormaster (interim) Mike Rademaker acted expediently and boldly in addressing the absence of local ice production via the exit of Pacific Seafoods.

The intrepid harbormaster wasted no time in addressing short-term needs in preparation for the January 2025, crab and shrimp season.

Pacific Seafoods (PS) was operating an ice production plant on Citizen Dock when PS gave 30 day notice to the Harbor to terminate its lease due to the “prolonged lack of ice sales and the continuing increase in the cost of repairs and operational expenses.” One significant cost factor for PS has been the stringent regularity requirements in California compared to its operations in other states. Pacific Seafoods will continue to operate in Brookings Harbor. The regulatory bone of contention revolves around the process of utilizing the anhydrous ammonia refrigerant process, banned in the Golden State but legal in Oregon. California Environmental Health requires the modern (and costly) carbon / oxygen protocol. The estimated cost for a containerized ice plant is about \$1 million. The Harbor is also exploring options with the California State Coastal Conservancy, the City of Crescent City and the Yurok Tribe.

Rademaker said, “The Harbor has been in active negotiations to establish a bulk ice purchase agreement with the PS Brookings plant. The agreement is mutually beneficial by increasing both local economies and

reducing per-unit costs. The CCHD may also take responsibility for transporting the ice from Oregon and storing it in Del Norte county.”

Regarding long-term solutions, the Harbor is exploring multiple options. A “mobile container iced ice plant,” a system built into a standard 20 or 40 foot shipping container, will be the most cost-effective choice. A key issue with the former Citizens Dock ice plant was that it was designed for a much larger fishing fleet with greater ice demand.

Post Election, State Senate Pro Tempore Mike McGuire has pledged to meet with the Harbor, City, County and Tribal interests in finding a new ice source to serve the needs of Del Norte commercial fishermen.