

Eye on Del Norte: The Crescent City Jetty Jitters: Perilous and Beneficial

December 26, 2022



Should the Jetty be secured from the public? With yet another near-tragedy incident two weeks past, this latest close call occurred when a brazen couple ignored signage and avoid walking atop the Jetty. The unidentified man and woman slithered through the flimsy gate and began to casually walk the 3400 foot dog-legged peninsula, toward the dolosse which are equipped with sensitive electrical data to monitor pier movement and precariously balancing the Jetty and protecting ingress and egress to the Harbor. On the way back, this irresponsible couple encountered the fury of the Pacific and were hit broadside by huge waves, knocking them to the ground three times and nearly sweeping both off the deck and on to probable severe blunt force trauma and possible death. The episode was videoed by a Crescent City couple, Jeremy and Felicia Murphy. It was dramatic and harrowing to watch.

This December 11, 2022 event was not stand-alone. Since 2001, Del Norte Search and Rescue has conducted scores of rescues. 15 individuals have suffered serious injuries. During this two decade plus

record, three people have lost their lives after being swept off the Jetty and on to the jagged rocks propping up the Jetty on the Harbor side.

Warning signage of this peril discouraging accessing the Jetty is not effective. In fact,, signage allows entry"... at your own risk.,” Local law enforcement has no purview or oversight to cite those who defy the signage. The property is owned and operated by the Federal Agency, the Army Corps of Engineers

What can the public do to protect these apparently illiterate and obviously irresponsible folks who risk their lives and those who attempt to rescue them?

The City is taking the lead and will contact the USACE, in San Francisco for a serious conversation about this ignominious record of human tragedy atop the Jetty. Arguments for solutions include more signage, more education, stronger, secure gating and appropriate thimble fencing enveloping ingress. I support the thimble fencing preventing all but the authorized to access the jetty.

There are those who subscribe to Charles Darwin’s theory on survival of the fittest, implying those who wantonly defy dangerous warning signage will eventually succumb to their own self-inflicted irresponsibility; I don’t subscribe to that mindset. Those in authority should do everything in their power to prevent people from injuring or killing themselves. A good intervention example is the State of California creating a motorcycle / bicycle helmetJetty.

The argument against this intervention is also reasonable.

What’s to prevent an individual from climbing atop a rock or cliff, slipping and falling to injury or worse? What’s to prevent now-legal J walking which will no doubt increase pedestrian/ vehicle contact: another imprudent law passed by a misguided State of California? This déjà vu attitude of standing by doing zero to those who irresponsibly risk their lives and those sworn to protect them must stop now. To be sure, standing by and doing nothing ensures more irresponsible behavior will continue and more tragic events will occur.

EYE ON DEL NORTE

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