



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

AGENDA ITEM NO.
C-2

For the meeting of: May 12, 2015

Date: April 30, 2015
To: Board of Supervisors
From: Supervisor Virginia Bass
Subject: Letter to Senator Feinstein, Senator Boxer and Congressman Huffman Requesting Additional Funding for Maintenance Dredging in Humboldt Bay.

RECOMMENDATION(S): That the Board of Supervisors authorize the Chair to sign the letter.

SOURCE OF FUNDING: N/A

DISCUSSION: Shoaling in Humboldt Bay has been significant since the severe storms in December, 2014, and has resulted in abnormal amounts of sediment being deposited into the entrance channel of Humboldt Bay. While the Army Corps of Engineers is scheduled to arrive in June to deepen the channel to a depth of 44 feet, local experts have stated that maintenance depth should be at least 48 feet, in order to support a 12-month port. As such, the Board of Supervisors is sending a letter to its legislators requesting increased appropriations for FY 2016 in the Army Corps of Engineers Budget to provide sufficient funding to dredge to the maintenance depth required.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS: Letter requesting further funding for maintenance dredging on Humboldt Bay.

Prepared by Kathy Hayes

Signature Virginia Bass

REVIEW:

Auditor _____ County Counsel _____ Personnel _____ Risk Manager _____ Other _____

TYPE OF ITEM:

Consent
 Departmental
 Public Hearing
 Other _____

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Upon motion of Supervisor Sundberg Seconded by Supervisor Bass

Ayes Sundberg, Lovelace, Fennell, Bohn, Bass

Nays
Abstain
Absent

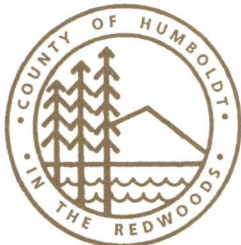
PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No. _____

Meeting of: _____

and carried by those members present, the Board hereby approves the recommended action contained in this Board report.

Dated: May 12, 2015
By: [Signature]
Kathy Hayes, Clerk of the Board



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

825 5TH STREET

EUREKA, CALIFORNIA 95501-1153 PHONE (707) 476-2390 FAX (707) 445-7299

May 12, 2015

Senator Diane Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Congressman Jared Huffman
1630 Longworth House
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear: Senator Feinstein, Senator Boxer, Congressman Huffman:

The Port of Humboldt Bay is vital to maintaining and promoting diverse industry in our region. It is the only deep-water port between San Francisco and Coos Bay, and provides transportation opportunities for Del Norte, Humboldt, Trinity and Mendocino Counties. The port is the primary mode of transportation for gasoline and diesel into the area, and has historically been an important transportation route for forest products. Humboldt Bay also serves as a "harbor of refuge" for disabled ships transiting the coast or vessels seeking shelter from storms.

The port has been very active with log ships bound for Asia. With the closure of the pulp mills our region has struggled to find reasonable alternatives for the use of wood chips that are a byproduct of the milling process. Green Diamond recently invested over \$7 million to upgrade its chip facility on Humboldt Bay, and last year shipped two cargos of wood chips to China. Green Diamond has six more cargos that are scheduled for 2015, but had to cancel one shipment and delay another due to shoaling of the entrance channel.

This shoaling is due to a significant storm in December of 2014 that resulted in an abnormal amount of sediment being deposited into the entrance channel. The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) dredge is scheduled to arrive in late June to deepen the channel to a depth of 44 feet. While we applaud this effort, authorized depth is 48 feet, established through a cooperative agreement between the ACOE and the Port. At the deeper depth, the channel is much more likely to remain open for all vessels on a 12 month basis.

We also understand that the proposed ACOE budget for FY 2016 does not provide sufficient funding to dredge to the maintenance depth of 48 feet. To support a 12 month port, we would respectfully request additional funding for this year to complete the dredging to 48 feet and to increase the appropriations for FY 2016 to provide sufficient funding to dredge to the maintenance depth.

Looking forward, we see a bright future for the Port of Humboldt Bay. Our region is surrounded by a vast potential of renewable biofuels that can be produced from sawmill byproducts (hog fuel from bark, shavings and sawdust) as well as material from the forest (slash from logging residues and small trees from forest thinning projects) that could be generated from both public and private lands. A reliable, year-around port is vital to support these opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Estelle Fennel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E".

Estelle Fennel, Chair
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

EF:kh

cc: LTC John Morrow, District Commander
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco District
1455 Market Street, Rm. 1668
San Francisco, CA 94103-1398