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Public invited to talk about fishing pier replacement

(Newport, Ore) A popular fishing spot is headed for a complete overhaul when the Port of Newport rebuilds the public fishing pier in South Beach. The project is in the early stages of what will be a measured, multi-step process and begins with Port officials seeking public input at a meeting on April 11, 2023.

“We want to learn more about how people use the pier and how they think their crabbing or fishing experiences from the pier could be improved,” said Port Director of Operations Aaron Bretz. “Unlike the existing pier, this replacement would be built for the exact purpose of public fishing and crabbing. Gaining public input will help us as we explore all of options.”

The pier rebuild is intertwined with a project on the other side of Yaquina Bay. Reconstruction of Port Dock 7 is currently in the early design stages, as engineers lay the groundwork for new docks and finger piers to accommodate a growing commercial fishing fleet. Port officials expect permitting agencies will also attach mitigation requirements to the project. On a project like this, mitigation means the Port must find a way to compensate for any impacts to aquatic resources.

For Bretz, that means looking for other needs that can be addressed while offsetting the unavoidable disruption that will take place when the new dock is built.

“If we were going to take out the pilings at the fishing pier and create a new pier with fewer pilings made of more environmentally-friendly material, we would reduce the fishing pier’s impact on the environment,” he explained. “If we do that as part of the Port Dock 7 project, we build a new dock and a new public fishing pier, and the net result will be less impact on the environment. It can also mean a net gain for the community and the users of those facilities.”

The South Beach pier was originally built to allow ships to load logs from the water before it was later repurposed for public fishing. For decades, the pier has been subject to the abuses of this coastal climate and is showing serious wear. Pairing its replacement with the Port Dock 7 project means both mitigation and maintenance are addressed.

Bretz explained the mutually-beneficial relationship between the two projects. “Without the fishing pier replacement, Port Dock 7 expansion isn’t possible, and without the Port Dock 7 rebuild, the fishing pier wouldn’t be happening.”



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Port officials will share some conceptual designs for pier replacement at the community meeting on April 11. Interested parties are invited to gather at 6pm in the activities room at the Port's RV Park office.

For those who cannot attend the meeting but wish to provide feedback or ideas, comments can be submitted on the Port's website at <https://www.portofnewport.com/public-fishing-pier-south-beach>.

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