

9.6.06 p. A4

OPINION

Headlight-Herald

Memaloose dredging badly timed

The county commissioners either don't know, don't understand, or just flat don't care about the salmon fishing that happens in early September at Memaloose Point Boat Launch.

To close this facility takes a real bite out of salmon fishing for 10 days. Typically from Sept. 1 to 15, many salmon are caught.

This begs the question, why wasn't this dredging scheduled off season when there is little or no use of the ramp. Also, why do it in a month that produces parking revenues?

I hope the guides and other fisherman show their displeasure and vote someone out of office next election day.

I'm Utah Bob; been fishing here every September for 20 years. I spent the money for a season parking permit only to find I am denied 10 days' use.

This facility has needed dredging for several years. To do it now is a slap in the face to fishermen. And a financial disaster to Tillamook.

Robert Prestwich
Provo, Utah

(Editor's note: *The following response was received from County Commissioner Tim Josi.*)

Early last year, the county applied for and was awarded grant dollars needed to conduct the Memaloose Point Boat launch dredging project. The county also started the permitting process with the Division of State Lands and the Army Corps of Engineers. Just before the Corps of Engineers was ready to issue its permit, NOAA Fisheries, another federal agency, required sediment testing of dredge material, which prevented the dredging from being done last year because the time had run out to spend the grant money.

In January of this year, the grant and permit application process had to be repeated. The grant money was finally in place by

July, when we quickly prepared bid documents; requested bids and ultimately awarded the dredging project. The contractor will start right after Labor Day. I believe we did everything we could to expedite the project. However, we have found that, when dealing with the federal government, procedures continue to get more complicated and time-consuming. We have dredged the Memaloose Point Boat Launch many times in the past and the permitting process was fairly simple. That is no longer the case.

Tim Josi
County Commissioner