

Chebeague Stone Wharf: Meeting #3/Fishing Operations
Responses from Meeting

The Present Situation

1. Briefly, how are the following Stone Wharf locations used to support fishing operations - and how do tidal and seasonal conditions affect each?
 - Northeast Pier Face
 - 6-10 fishermen use this site on a regular basis
 - Used widely by most fishermen for loading and unloading of traps, bait, other gear. Only location where trucks are adjacent to docked boats on similar level (at the high). While space is limited, fishermen successfully manage sharing the facility. No product/catch is brought into any of these locations, nor can fishermen envision that this would be desirable.
 - Primary site on Stone Wharf for fishing operations.
 - Northwest of Boat Ramp
 - 2-3 fishermen uses this site daily during the summer season.
 - Alternate spot used by some smaller boats for loading and unloading of gear / traps. The pier elevation is lower at this location than the Northeast side.
 - Alternate site when Northeast Pier Face is exposed to weather.
 - Non-Fishermen are not allowed to park at this location between June and November to allow use by fishermen. Fishermen have access to this location all year round but cannot leave vehicles unattended / parked.
 - Boat Ramp
 - Used not just for barge deliveries, but also to launch skiffs, usually only on a seasonal basis.
 - The ramp cutout is too narrow to add floats.
 - Commercial Floats
 - Only location that is currently accessible at all tides.
 - Used mostly for boat repairs, marked as for commercial boats only, also signed for fishermen. Small grade change (and pedestrian access to transient floats) inhibits truck or trailer parking on the Stone Wharf for gear loading / unloading at this location.

- This location is often obstructed / congested by transient boats, inn customers, and the like, despite significant signage indicating it is for commercial boats only.
2. What existing conflicts or challenges with the Stone Wharf do you observe at each location?
 - Current events with pier overtopping appear to happen in the winter and do not occur often enough to disrupt fishermen use.
 - Conflicts with pier access for fishermen are mostly with tourists/transient boats/others who dock incorrectly, block access on the pier. Problems peak when the ferry comes in and are worse during the summer.
 3. What could you envision as solutions to these conflicts and challenges?
 - More space/floats would be helpful, especially any that could be available at low tide. Any proposal to add floats in an area that would be accessible at all tides would be welcome. Narrowing access to the pier “finger” to less than 20 feet (16 feet was discussed as minimal) would present a problem in terms of truck and (especially) trailer access.
 - Enforcement of commercial docking areas and parking management.
 - Widen pier where it narrows to facilitate room for vehicle circulation (and backing of trailers). Move ramp access to ferry back to wider section of the pier.
 4. What are the barriers to these solutions?
 - Cost, potential obstruction of turning basin, no one to do enforcement, unclear as to legality of enforcement.
 5. What is the biggest challenge to the seasonal loading and offloading of gear at the Stone Wharf? Is vehicle access critical *only* for *this* activity?
 - Vehicle access is critical year-round. However, fishermen do not advocate keeping all vehicles except theirs off the pier as people shouldn’t have to carry groceries (for example) a long way.

The Future

6. Recognizing that increasing the height of the Stone Wharf in locations used by the fishermen makes boat access more difficult, what would be a reasonable height increase to address each of the following conditions?
 - The existing height on northeast pier face, where most fishermen work, could be raised up to one foot. Any more than that would make it more difficult to transfer gear, especially for older fishermen.
 - In general, installing a hoist to manage shifting gear if the pier was raised did not seem to generate interest, although a hoist by the commercial float was

perceived as potentially useful. Most of the Chebeague fishing boats have a jib boom on their boats to facilitate loading and unloading.

- Bait does not come across the pier as it is purchased from a Smack near the boatyard. Likewise, no product comes across the pier as this is not sold on the island.
7. Based on your experience and observations, how will any future changes in fishing operations/conditions affect how the Stone Wharf is used in the future?
- There is a lot of interest in Aquaculture (oysters, kelp), but changes to the Stone Wharf infrastructure needed to support this are minimal because the product is harvested and sold without crossing the pier.
 - Biggest question in terms of potential changes in fishing off Chebeague is whether fishermen will continue to be able to afford to live on the island. Lobster population was noted to be healthy.