

# Pine Point Pier project pushes forward

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Scarborough commercial fishermen might soon find their jobs easier and safer.

On March 10, the town was awarded a \$320,000 grant to build a new pier, said Town Manager Tom Hall.

The money comes from Land for Maine's Future Working Waterfront Pilot Access Protection Program.

That money, combined with the Town Council-approved \$400,000 capital improvement from 2006 and a \$100,000 Small Harbor Improvement Program grant awarded in 2007, will pay for the \$820,000 project, Hall said.

"I think this is good news," said Scarborough commercial lobsterman Gary Violette, 44, who's been fishing off the old pier since he was 9. "Right now, I feel like we are fishing in the dark ages."

Some 30 commercial lobstermen and 35 commercial clam diggers use the pier, said Dave Corbeau, marine resource officer/harbormaster for Scarborough. Those workers can only unload

or load gear during low tide, when they can drive their trucks onto the beach to unload their gear.

If that opportunity is missed, fishermen can unload their gear into a dingy and row out to their boat. Depending on how much stuff they have to bring on their trip, this could be done more than once. Fishermen also can carry items down the dock ramp, climb down the ramp to the float, and then lift the items onto the boat.

"That makes it really difficult," Violette said. "You have about an hour-and-a-half window, and then you're fighting to get a spot among 20 other trucks that are parked down there to unload. It's not a very economical way to do business."

A new pier would allow 24-hour access to the floats, allowing the fisherman to work regardless of the tide. It also allows them to lug gear such as traps, bait and catch more easily because they won't need to travel as far to get the gear to their boats or to the floats.

"What needs to be done is we need to get the fishermen better access to the water," Corbeau said. "What they've been doing is

totally inadequate. There are a lot of bad backs because they're loading and unloading pretty heavy equipment. This new pier will allow them to do less lifting."

The current pier in Pine Point was built in 1971 to help about 20 commercial fishermen load and unload their gear, Corbeau said. The town added three 30-foot floats in 1999.

Access to the pier is from town-owned property located at the end of King Street. The 2.12-acre parcel has a 90-space parking lot, a public boat launch and a building that houses the marine resources officer.

The town is securing the property permits before the project can move forward, Hall said. The town already has a completed design for the project. It will be located next to the current pier.

"We hope to begin construction in the fall," Hall said.

The new pier is 4,200 square feet with an additional 3,300 square feet of floats. It is 14 feet wide. New pilings will also be built to support the weight of vehicles that will be able to travel on the new pier.



**Scarborough wants to replace the Pine Point Pier, making it more fishermen friendly, after it received a \$320,000 state grant to move forward with the project.**  
*Photo by Al Edwards*

The current pier is 840 square feet with an additional 2,100 square feet of floats, Corbeau said. It is 6 feet wide.

The Pine Point pier is the only piece of commercial waterfront in town and one of a handful in the area, Corbeau said.

"Right now it's back-breaking work," Violette said. "Fishing isn't easy any way, but a new pier would make it a little better."