



## City of Homer

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

Port and Harbor

4311 Freight Dock Road

Homer, AK 99603

[port@cityofhomer-ak.gov](mailto:port@cityofhomer-ak.gov)

(p) 907-235-3160

(f) 907-235-3152

August 20, 2015

Dear Concerned Load and Launch Ramp User:

I have been receiving communications about the issue of our planned closure of Homer's load and launch ramp and the inconvenience that it will cause the boaters who frequent that facility. I would like to address the most frequently asked questions in this letter.

**1. Couldn't you just do one side of the ramp at a time and leave the other side open for traffic?**

Early in the project planning stage, we really did spend a lot of time and effort trying to figure a way to keep part of the ramp open to use while we worked on the other side, but in the end safety and project completion/quality have to come first. That is what drove the decision to close the whole area off from the public.

**2. Couldn't you postpone the project for another month? Most of the sport fishermen will be done by then.**

On the subject of project timing, we had to give the contractor a time of year that allowed them to work the ground, pour, and cure concrete, meaning conditions that were not freezing. So we pushed it as late in the year as we felt we could, leaving a comfort margin for weather anomalies.

**3. Why can't I use the other single lane ramp down by the fuel float to launch my boat?**

The Barge Ramp was built for commercial industrial use (heavy equipment) and any other use has to be worked around the intended customers' schedule. The Barge Ramp is not as long as the load and launch ramp meaning you could back off the end of the ramp during a minus tide. There are no landing floats to moor your vessel to at the barge ramp. It takes two operators to launch and retrieve a vessel at the barge ramp, one to drive the truck and one to drive the boat. You have to be able to launch and go and just the opposite when pulling out, the trailer needs to be backed down into the water before the boat ever approaches the ramp so that it can pull right onto the trailer, get strapped down and then haul out. There is no boat trailer parking in the uplands above the barge ramp. All that area is designated and used for equipment staging (laydown) for the dock and barge ramp use.

Day use, small boat load-and-launching will not be allowed at the Barge Ramp.

There is no way that we can substitute a single lane ramp for a five lane boat ramp. The facility would quickly become plugged up with traffic. However, we do offer a compromise during this construction period.

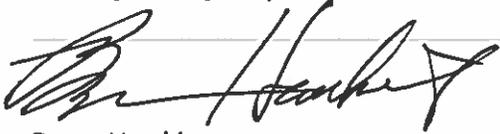
Vessel owners who have vessels in the harbor and want to haul out after the launch ramp closure can schedule to do so with the Port and Harbor Office.

Vessel owners who want to put their vessel into the harbor for at least a week during this construction period may do so by scheduling with the Port and Harbor Office. Normal mooring and launch fees will apply. Vessel owners wishing to use the Barge Ramp will have to confirm with harbor staff that they will be able to provide two operators and use the normal trailer parking area by the Load and Launch Ramp.

Barge loading/unloading has top priority! Vessel owners authorized to use the Barge Ramp will have to be flexible and willing to work around the commercial barge loading activities. If the ramp is not being used by our freight customers then we'll allow it to be used for boat launch/retrieval; if it is being used then the small boats will have to wait until it's clear.

ADF&G and the City of Homer have been working on this project for about six years; there has been a significant amount of money and time spent just in design, engineering and planning. Now is the last, most critical stage: construction. We have to give our contractors every advantage for successfully constructing this much needed improvement before we can all enjoy what will be a top-of-the-line Public Access Boat Ramp.

Thank you for your patience,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryan Hawkins", written over a horizontal line.

Bryan Hawkins

Port Director/Harbormaster