



PROJECT PROFILE

DEEP BAY HARBOUR EXPANSION



Keith Reid, Chair of the Deep Bay Harbour Authority and Owner of Stellar Bay Shellfish.



DEEP BAY HARBOUR EXPANSION: OPENING THE DOOR TO NEW MARKETS

BAYNES SOUND is a unique part of the Vancouver Island coast and host to an important and growing shellfish aquaculture industry. Its calm waters, beautiful ocean and mountain views, and proximity to major urban centres like Vancouver, Victoria, and Seattle, also make the area a major draw for marine visitors.

In response to the increased use of the harbour facilities at Deep Bay by the shellfish aquaculture and commercial fishing sectors as well as the ever-increasing demand for transient visitor berths, the Deep Bay Harbour Authority embarked on a much-needed harbour expansion project.

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“Harbours and marinas can be challenging infrastructure projects, because there are usually multiple agencies and stakeholders involved,” said Keith Reid, Chair of the Deep Bay Harbour Authority and owner of Stellar Bay Shellfish. “There was so much potential up-side for the region, that we simply couldn’t let the scope of the challenge stop us.”

In addition to funding and support from ICET, those ‘multiple agencies’ included both the provincial and federal governments, with the Harbour Authority leading the half-million dollar project.

The results have been impressive. In only two years, the number of commercial vessels tying up at the Harbour increased by 65% (from 32 in a typical month to 53) and estimated offloading of oysters, clams, geoducks and mussels reached an estimated \$10 million in 2015.

Reid noted that, in addition to improving productivity and safety for the shellfish aquaculture and commercial fishing users, increased marine tourism has provided an important economic boost to the region.

“Ultimately, we added 450 feet of new dock floats which added 1,800 feet of moorage space, and it’s full already,” Reid said. “Without these new berths, we were watching visitors sail past our community, or simply choosing other marine destinations.”

Reid notes that since the berths have been completed, a wide range of community and regional businesses have been reaping the benefits of the increased visitor day excursions and provisioning.

ICET has invested in upgrades to marinas, wharves, and harbours across the region, including Port McNeill, Powell River, Comox, Ladysmith, and more. With revitalized infrastructure, coastal communities can capitalize on marketing efforts by AHOYbc.com – another ICET-funded project.

Building on the strength of the region’s natural assets and the province’s international brand and reputation, the AHOYbc.com website markets BC’s marine tourism opportunities as world-class destinations.

“Boaters – especially those who take multi-day trips along our coast - are one of the biggest spending groups among tourists,” said Michael McLaughlin, Manager with Ahoy BC. “Average spending on a trip with a stop in a harbour like Deep Bay is \$218 for every day spent on the water, whether in a marina or at anchor.

Coastal BC offers a world-renowned boating experience. With modern infrastructure and a co-ordinated marketing plan, communities along the coast are able to grow marine related businesses and service offerings.

“Infrastructure improvements, like those at Deep Bay, will attract boaters who spend on things you would expect – berth space, fuel, provisions and boat repair– but also on dining, accommodation, recreation, and shopping,” explained McLaughlin.

Since completion, the project continues to exceed expectations. “The results clearly validate the need and the efforts of all involved,” said Reid.

