



SIERRA
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March 11, 2015

Port San Luis Harbor District
Attention Harbor Commissioners
3950 Avila Beach Drive, PO Box 249
Avila Beach, California 93424

Dear Commissioners,

The Sierra Club is the nation's oldest and largest grassroots environmental group. On behalf of our 2,000 members in San Luis Obispo County, we ask that you work with local wildlife experts from Pacific Wildlife Care, Morro Coast Audubon Society and Willow Tree Wildlife to improve or replace the Harford Pier fish cleaning station.

The recent designation of Avila Beach as a bird sanctuary is a perfect opportunity to make the Harford Pier safer for our local birds, especially the Brown Pelican. The current fish cleaning station is poorly designed and creates a hazardous situation for wildlife. The station allows, and even encourages, fisherman to dump fish waste and carcasses directly into the water below. Below the station wildlife compete for the carcasses often with hazardous results. The pelicans can be injured attempting to swallow large, boney carcasses they would not normally try to eat.

A redesigned completely enclosed fish cleaning station would allow fishermen to process their catch safely and without worrying about losing it to a hungry pelican or gull. The birds will be denied a free lunch and will continue to hunt their natural prey rather than becoming unnatural scavengers. A redesigned cleaning station should also divert fish oil away from sea birds to avoid contamination. A redesigned station could display educational signage so visitors can learn more about our local wildlife and how to protect it.

We would support efforts by the Port San Luis Harbor District to seek grant funding for this necessary project and encourage grant providers to recognize this problem is solvable and approve funding to protect our wildlife.

The Port San Luis Harbor District has a great opportunity to build on improvements already made. Please make redesign of the cleaning station a priority project.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michael Jencks, Chair
Santa Lucia Chapter