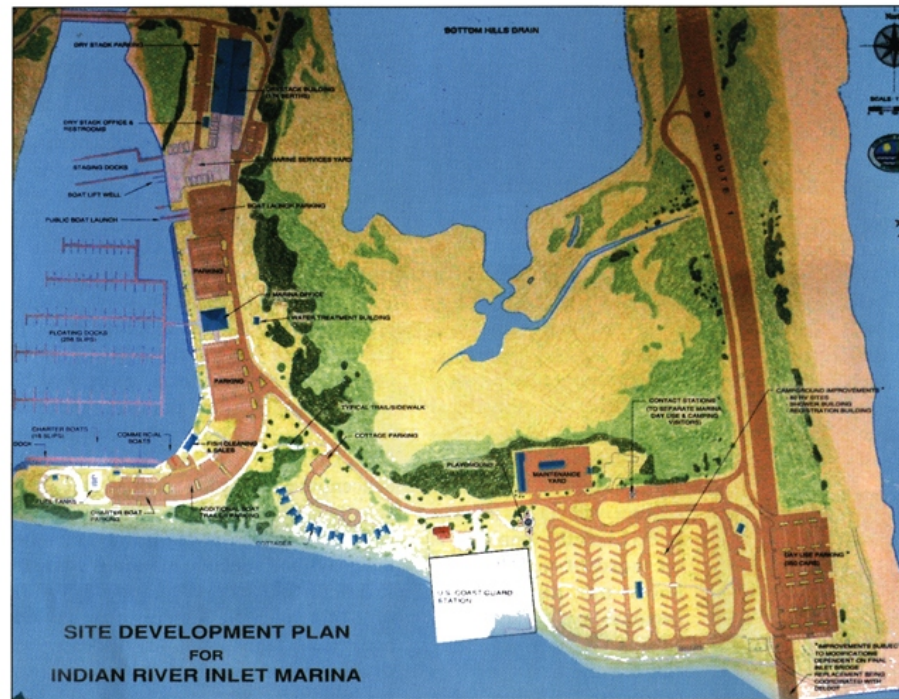


# Marina rebuild starts at Indian River



Work is now underway to rejuvenate a run-down but immensely popular state-run marina facility at Indian River Inlet, Delaware, USA. The revamp is a precisely timed operation; the result of years of planning, input from slip holders, careful budgeting and the need to ensure that, no matter what, marina operations are only minimally disrupted.

The Indian River Inlet Marina property, situated within the Seashore State Park, was purchased by the State of Delaware in June 1971. A privately run marina had operated on the site for several decades. Delaware State Parks installed a phase of docks in 1981 and undertook further expansion in 1988. Today, the marina has 292 wet slips, fuel and pump-out services, a public boat landing, marina operations building, fish cleaning station and a marine services area. The existing dock system, particularly the timber-decked floating units, has reached the end of its lifespan.

The Parks Department drew up plans for a phased improvement programme starting in 2003 and completing in 2007. In essence, it called for new floating docks to accommodate 192 boats of 35-50 feet in length and a 192-slot drystack building to house smaller vessels. A wide array of environmental and shoreline protection measures and general site improvements to increase safety and enhance appearance

were also planned and inserted into a phased development.

The plan did not, however, meet with universal approval. A report issued by the Division of Parks & Recreation in May 2003 states that the Division initially received a 'less than favourable reception' from the slipholders; specifically they stated that their interests were not being addressed in as timely a fashion as they would have liked. Slipholders objected to the decision to build the drystack first (a plan adopted by the Division in the hope of optimising cash flow early in the programme) and also objected to the loss of 25ft wet slips.

The slipholders' message was clear, states the report, "build new docks, dredge the marina basin and rectify problems on the docks as quickly as possible."

Further plan adjustment was initiated and a new schedule was drawn up to offer 274 wet slips and 174 drystack slots. Construction of half the docks with

upgraded electricity modules, half the dredging, construction of a new bulkhead and boat ramp and purchase of a travel lift are to be completed by the start of the 2004 boating season as opposed to the old plan, which would not have had these components replaced until 2006. Customers have been assured that all current slipholders will have a wet slip, if they choose, when the reconstruction is complete.

The Division hired a planning and design team led by Applied Technology Management (ATM) to address all plan refinement, regulatory permitting, design and construction documentation for the reconstruction of the marina basin and upland infrastructure. ATM worked with Baker, Inc., and McCrone, Inc., in developing the plans and bidding packages (including wet slips, drystack, fuel dock, boat ramp and bulkhead replacement, sewerage, parking enhancements and dredge planning).

According to ATM project manager, John Shaffer, the programme has been carefully phased to enable full operation to continue and also help with budgetary issues. For the latter purpose, plans to replace the existing fuel dock with a floating dock system have been postponed until the next boating year. "All else is going according to schedule," he says. "Dredging is underway now to make best use of a limited window from September

through to December and half of the old docks are being demolished - 112 replacement slips will be complete for the new season."

Prior to this, numerous safety improvement issues were addressed. The deteriorated bulkhead, which made a parallel sidewalk hazardous, underwent emergency repairs. The old sidewalk was removed and a new pathway constructed 30 feet away thus keeping pedestrians at a safer distance. The bulkhead structure will be replaced soon.

New overhead light fixtures have been installed to replace old, sometimes broken, fixtures and repairs to docks, due for replacement in 2005, completed. As an interim measure, 'Diamond-plate' aluminium plates were fitted in walkways and gussets to strengthen deteriorated sections. Around 50 new power pedestals, supplied by Marina Power & Lighting, have been installed across the site to replace any deemed electrically or structurally unsafe. These will be re-used on the replacement docks.

The first of the new floating pontoons will be installed at Docks A and B with the former offering 22 x 50ft, 24 x 45ft

and 6 x 35ft slips. Dock B will have 60 x 35ft slips. All pontoons are being provided by Sullivan Flotation Systems. The breakdown has been devised to reflect existing needs. "The slip lengths are basically similar to existing lengths because we're catering for similar clientele as 20 years ago, while widths have been adjusted for increasing beam sizes," says Shaffer. "This is not an attempt to create a destination facility but a programme to give existing customers a better marina."

Also online for phase one are two new boat ramps, a courtesy dock, construction of twelve rental cottages and creation of a commercial boat area.

Phase two (timed for completion by April 2005) will bring an end to the dredging. A total of 62,000 cubic yards of spoil will have been removed from the marina basin and shifted to an upland Confined Disposal Facility. New floating pontoons will replace old systems at the remaining docks. Slip configurations will be as follows: Dock C - 56 x 35ft; Dock D - 20 x 35ft and 30 x 25ft; Dock E - 40 x 25ft; and Dock F - 16 x 50ft. The floating fuel dock should be in place and the drystack building completed and projected to be 30% full. Parking for charter boat users and two further boat ramps and courtesy docks are also planned.

For 2006 emphasis will be on expanding



the marina operations building including marina office, rest rooms, showers and laundry and in 2007 (when the drystack is predicted to be full) final attention will be paid to renovating the fish cleaning/sales building.

Sam Phlegar, director of ATM's coastal and marina division, has worked with the state now for over five years and has seen many iterations of the development plan. He envisages that the facility will shape up into a valuable recreational resource for

residents and visitors alike to take advantage of both wonderful inland boating waters and the challenges of the Atlantic Ocean. "It's a protected basin in a unique location and the Parks Department should be commended for sticking to their objectives, incorporating public input and making the programme happen. We started planning back in the late '90s so it's exciting for us all to see the new docks and other facilities now coming into place," he confirms.

**Marina**  
World  
November/December 2003 Vol 4 Issue 2



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