

Idaho Department of Lands
Agency Case No. PH-2025-NAV-22-06
PAH Case No. 25-320-06

PREHEARING STATEMENT

The encroachment permit for the boat weigh was issued in 1986 primarily because there was a recognized need for a commercial boat service for large-sized vessels on Lake Coeur d'Alene. At the time there was no facility available for these vessels. This fact remains true almost forty years later as our facility is still the only one with the capacity to remove these vessels from the water for repair and maintenance work. The largest of these vessels are two 400 passenger tour boats that have operated on the lake for more than four decades. Tour boats on Lake Coeur d'Alene carry hundreds of thousands of passengers every year and have been an important part of the local and state economy, as well as the tourist industry in general. In addition to tour boats, there are large barges on the lake that we repair and maintain. The largest of these, owned by Stancraft Marine, a local dock building company, can only be hauled out at our facility. Without the ability to repair these large vessels and barges when necessary, they would eventually be destined for the scrap yard. Instead, they are plying the waters of our lake and river and benefitting the local and state economy, as well as the public and local businesses. We believe IDAPA 20.03.04 Section 030 addresses the favorability of Encroachments that contribute Major Economic and Social benefits, which our facility has enabled the tour boats and marine repair operations on the lake to do, for decades.

As the use of waterfront properties bordering the boat weigh has changed over the decades, it has become necessary to take extra precautions when utilizing the boat weigh for the safety of structures immediately downstream. When the downstream (westward) dock was permitted, its proximity to our boat weigh area necessitated placing two piling to support large vessels when positioning them over the cart for pull out. These piling prevent movement of the vessel downstream due to air and water current which could then potentially cause damage to the neighbor's property.

We have considered options to having the two piling fixed in place, but have not been able to find a suitable alternative. Discussions were had with an IDL representative regarding these ideas, but there was no option floated that was deemed feasible.

The length of the dock is approximately 7.5' longer than the original dimensions permitted and was lengthened to give access to a water depth that will afford sufficient draft for watercraft customarily in use on the Spokane River. We believe IDAPA 20.03.04 Section 015 allows dock extensions for this purpose. The large fluctuations in the water level of the Spokane River make it difficult to fully utilize the dock without this extension.

To address the objection raised by eastward littoral property owner, Mr. Cherokee, the piling and dock have had no negative impact on the approach to his boat slip. Boats tied to the east side of our dock are similar to the width of his L-shaped dock with a boat slip. We have no information regarding the reason for the westward littoral property owner's objection, so are unable to address his objection.