



PLEASE NOTE: WE AT THE COASTAL CURRENT ACCEPT NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FOLLOWING NOR CAN WE IMAGINE WHY WE AGREED TO PRINT IT.

Darrel Golden, manager of the Sea Ranch Marine Center is not quite the antichrist that some are portraying him to be; he's just managing a \$4.5 million dollar investment. The now closed public boat ramp is not nearly as dangerous as has been claimed; you just have to be careful and pay attention to what you're doing. Unfortunately the general public these days finds that to be close to impossible.

Here are a few examples of what the Sea Ranch has had to eat because of the stupidity of the general public and they don't include the \$1500 incurred for the clean up after a dude launched his truck along with his boat.

6/12/02- McAllen gent launches an old Grady-White and dumps 15 gallons of gas in the marina. He don't speak English and he ain't got insurance. Cost of federally required clean up \$2762.00.

8/4/02- They get a call after hours that there's oil in the marina at the boat ramp. It would appear that somebody knocked an out-drive off a boat while loading it onto a trailer and took off leaving the out-drive behind. Cost of clean up \$2151.00.

3/6/01- Valley dude launches boat and goes to Circle K for provisions. Returns to find that he forgot to put plugs in the boat and has a busted gas cap; boat sinks. When approached by Sea Ranch he tells them profanely to keep the boat and sue. Cost of clean up \$4382.00.

1/28/02- Some dudes from parts unknown launch a Scarab and wake all the boats in the marina. Damage to other boats eaten by the marina for these idiots who are never seen again \$4850 to sail boat tied up across the channel and \$8861 damage to boats tied up along the long dock.

6/12/03- Dude from Isla Blanca Park and buddies launch boat and pump bilges as they motor out. Apparently they've recently done an oil change and left the old oil in the bilge.

People scream at them to turn off the bilge pumps but they ignore the plea.

The end result is a haz-mat clean up that closes the marina and the channel for the rest of the day. End result, no flipper watch or evening fishing trips since marina is closed for clean up; cost \$2465. The boat has not been seen since.

And then there was the Big Dog. She sank by the dock on the channel. The owner had no insurance and pled poverty. Cost for salvage and clean up \$14,000 and change. You don't even want to think about the cost to settle some lawsuits from people that've fallen on the boat ramp. They could run a million or better in medical claims.

Back in June, Great American Insurance Company informed Darrell that they would no longer insure the public boat ramp because of the liability and the fact that the public ramp had no relationship with the normal operations of the Sea Ranch Marina. It seems germane to note that the above claims were never even submitted to the insurance company for payment. Had the Sea Ranch not closed the ramp they would've breached their concession agreement with the county by not providing liability insurance for all their operations. Self-insuring is not an option.

Lawyer fees alone run \$350 bucks an hour and they can't subject a \$4.5 million-dollar asset to that kind of exposure. The county also tried and failed to find an insurer for the public boat ramp. As it stands now, the only folks that can use the ramp are the Coast Guard and the other concessionaires on an appointment basis because they too have lease agreements to that effect.

A final note to the big dogs at TIFT, the cost to Sea Ranch Marina to open the ramp for two days was \$1200 bucks for an insurance binder and approximately \$200 bucks for an employee to man the ramp as required by the insurance company. The other boat ramp at the Sea Ranch is now controlled by Destinations RV Park. You'll need to talk to them about why that one is closed.



Shark caught at LKT

We welcome your fishin' photos. Drop them by 2600 Padre Boulevard on the Island, or mail them to I.B. Hooked, c/o Coastal Current Weekly, P.O.Box 2429, South Padre Island, Texas 78597. Be sure to include the name of the angler, weight and type of fish, where caught, and name of boat if applicable. Photos with SASE will be returned.