



THE FISHIN' INSIDER

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Had a chance to visit with some cotton heads at a local waterin' hole the other day. These folks ranged from newbys to old timers when it comes to winterin' on the Sandspit and they had some interesting observations about the upcoming bond election. The folks that normally make the Florida panhandle their winterin' roost were scratchin' themselves over the idea of spending five million big ones on an edifice that's gonna get trashed when the inevitable storm hits. They kinda have first hand knowledge of mama nature's wrath. You can build that sucker as high as ya want but the wave action is still gonna wash out the foundation.

They brought up somethin' that I hadn't thought about in years and that would be a blue water fishing pier. They have these suckers all over the panhandle and most even survived the storm season of 2004 with relatively little damage. These suckers are revenue positive and provide a great place to while away the day or an evening with a shot at catchin' some nice fish. They suggested that if the Sandspit's City Hall really needed expandin' they otta go out and buy a few trailers for the expansion and contract with Valley Trucking to haul'um inland when a storm approaches. Hmmm, that makes some sense to even me. A blue water pier would produce jobs and dinero. All a new city hall'll do is suck that



Since the weather was crappy these fisherfolks decided to do the fish cheer at Wrinkles.

dinero down a bottomless hole.

Got a smoke signal from the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. They're gonna have a pow-wow in New Orleans later this month. The subject of the meet is to convene the Socioeconomic Panel to review the shrimp, reef fish and red snapper amendments before they become a part of the fishery management plan. The panel is comprised of academia in the fields of economics, sociology and anthropology. This brain trust is well paid to delve into the impacts fishery regulations have on communities. We all know what effect the snapper crap has had. It's kicked in the teeth of Texas headboat operations for no good reason 'cept to protect the interests of the east of the Mississippi gang who refuse to split the Gulf into an east and west zone for recreational fishermen.

Even though Mardi Gras will be over by the time the meeting starts, I'm gonna go. I'll be happy to present any and all petitions ya'll might wish to collect to the panel at the appropriate time and also report back on what your tax dollars have wrought. The meet is at the Four Points Sheraton at the New Orleans Airport and begins at 9:00 in the morning February 24 and ends at 3:00 in the afternoon Friday the 25th. For a copy of the agenda call 813-228-2815.

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.