

Harbor Anchovies

# Santa Cruz Sen

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Sentinel Photo by Pete Amos

Santa Cruz Harbor officials say most of the dead anchovies there should be removed by Friday.

## Fish Clean-up Progress Good

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Work crews and a purse-seine fishing boat are making "good progress" in cleaning up the massive fish kill sustained at the Santa Cruz Small Craft Harbor over the weekend.

Brian Foss, district general manager, said that with any kind of luck the 400 tons or so of dead anchovies should be removed from the harbor in the next two or three days.

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But weeks will be required for the general clean-up that will have to follow to

rid the water of oil and residue resultant from the fish kill.

A longtime harbor user this morning told The Sentinel that the vast school of anchovies had appeared several weeks ago out in the bay. Then, they came in.

The fish kill resulted from overcrowding, a lowering of the water's oxygen level, an increase of the ammonia level and the inability of the slack tides prevailing to flush out the upper and lower harbor basins.

The upper harbor basin was a sick scene under a gray sky this morning, with carpets of dead fish to be seen. Foss said the water here is "dead" water. The lower harbor basin is better off, with the

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purse-seine fishing boat working here under state Department of Fish and Game authorization to remove tons of living and dead fish and thus relieve the pressure on the biomass of creatures causing further kill-offs.

Youth Conservation Corps workers were dispatched to the harbor through the efforts of U.S. Rep. Leon Panetta, D-Monterey. In all, 50 workers came, with three crews from La Honda, two from Santa Clara.

"They are very good workers," Foss said, "they are a big help and are much appreciated."

In response to harbor pleas for men, women, boys and girls to help get the fish

out of the waters, people began arriving early this morning and at one time formed a line stretching from the harbor office to the beach. Minimum wages are being paid to the clean-up crews, who are working in two shifts.

Because of the emergency the district officials are unable to answer their telephones. People interested in helping out should go to the office at 135 Fifth Ave.

The kill is the worst here since 1974, but there is a history of fish kill at the harbor going back to the 1960s. In 1965 the California Legislature enacted a special law to allow the director of the Department of Fish and Game to permit reduc-

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# Fish Kill

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tion or processing plants to harvest dead or dying fish.

This legislation followed a massive fish kill in 1964. At that time the Port District had to bear the cost of removing the fish because the processors were not allowed to do so.

Some 35 tons of fish by this morning had been taken by the Salinas Tallow Reduction Co. from the present killoff.

Oldtime residents will recall that in 1964 flame throwers had to be used to bake the smelly, oily, fatty mess from the rock riprap.

The workers now are using firehoses to blast the mess off the riprap, according to Steve Scheiblaue, harbor master.

Foss said the slack tides are due for a change with a six-foot spread in the tide expected to flush the lower harbor.

Boats are using the harbor, but Foss said a number of boaters are taking their boats out to avoid paint damage from chemical changes in the water.

A study of fish kills at the harbor is being made by Bob Byington, a marine biologist.

The fish move by the millions along the coastal waters in spring and summer and are thought to be driven into such places as the harbor by predators and/or their own quest for food.