



# NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release**

**Wednesday, May 14, 2014**

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## **Beaufort adjusts river mooring field, anchor installation plan**

Soft rock beneath parts of the Beaufort River will require a different approach for installing anchors needed for the city's new boat mooring field, city leaders said today.

The first 16 of the combined anchors and buoys have been installed and already are in use. As crews began working to secure additional anchors in deeper waters farther from shore, though, they encountered softer rock and soil at the river bottom.

"The first 16 anchors went in fine, but as the contractor moved into deeper water, they discovered that the (river) bottom changed and as they drilled, the bottom was too soft to securely hold the anchors," said Isiah Smalls, Beaufort's director of public services and facilities management.

"Because of that, we are using a different approach for the remaining anchors. We'll drive pipes that are five- to eight-inches in diameter deep into the riverbed, and then secure the floating mooring buoys to that anchor," Smalls said. The system has been used in other areas with similar riverbed conditions, including Sarasota, Florida.

The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control is aware of the pending changes.

"We considered using heavier concrete anchors instead of the pipes, but we would need each concrete block to weigh 10,000 pounds or more to safely secure the larger boats," Smalls said. "The experts we've talked to said our approach is better."

The mooring field, in the Beaufort River harbor near the Downtown Marina, will consist of three rows totaling up to 46 moorings allowed by the federal and state permits. Rick Griffin, manager of the Downtown Marina, and the City Council agreed to install 16 transient boat moorings, which will be located at the outer edge of the field.

In addition, the work crews will install 14 long-term moorings, which already have been leased to area boaters, Griffin said. Terms of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers grant require that 16 moorings be for transient boats.

Beaufort is using funding from a federal \$100,000 Boat Infrastructure Grant matched with \$31,715 of City resources and \$33,408 from Griffin Enterprises for the 16 transient moorings. Griffin's marina management company is paying an additional \$64,534 to expand the mooring field.

The federal funds originate from U.S. Fish & Wildlife and are required to be used to provide docking facilities and related infrastructure for non-trailerable, transient vessels 26 feet or longer for short-term dockage -- 10 days or less.

Thomas & Hutton is re-engineering the mooring field to take into account the different riverbed conditions. Griffin and Smalls said they anticipate the mooring field project to be completed by early June.

Moorings with a 104-foot "swing circle" will safely accommodate boats up to about 30 feet, Griffin said. The moorings with larger 160-foot swing circles can handle vessels up to about 45 feet, depending on the type of vessel and if they have a dingy on davits suspended over the stern.

Vessels larger than 45 feet typically tie up at the marina so they can connect with water and electricity.

"Our transient mooring spots are already getting good use, and we've got 14 people ready to use the permanent moorings once they're ready," Griffin said.

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