

New fish-cleaning station opens

FISH

SOUTH H AVEN

By BECKY KARK

For The Herald-Palladium

SOUTH HAVEN — It took several years, but South Haven finally has a new fish-cleaning station at Black River Park.

The station, which cost \$300,000 to build, is now open to anglers.

“With its several miles on the Black River and direct access to the Lake Michigan fishery, the City of South Haven has a long history of supporting recreational opportunities for anglers,” said Kate Hosier, assistant city manager and harbormaster. “This project creates not only one of the nicest fish cleaning facilities along the shores of Lake Michigan, but one that is free to use by both our residents and visitors alike.”

The station, modeled after a similar one in St. Joseph, has eight cleaning tables, two of which are ADA accessible. It is built of masonry and steel to allow for easy movement around the tables and a flow of air through the station to alleviate odor. All water lines will feed from the ceiling allowing easier use and control of spray, and the main tables are equipped with large sewer grinders to grind fish scales and other remains directly into the city’s sewage system. There are also power cords for knives that feed each table from above, along with a fish scaler and a cooler cleaning station.

The previous cleaning station was in a section of the park where people have to pay to park in order to access the public boat launch. However, the new station can be accessed from a

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Anglers clean, filet and package fresh-caught fish at South Haven’s new fish-cleaning station in Black River Park.

Photos provided / Tom Renner



Bob Filbrandt of South Haven begins the process of cleaning fish at South Haven’s new fishcleaning station in Black River Park. Anglers can use the station and its equipment free of charge. The \$300,000 station opened to the public this past week.

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no-fee parking area.

The city secured a \$150,000 grant from the Great Lakes Fishery Trust Fund earlier this year to offset the cost of the project. Several years ago the city tried to land a \$250,000 grant for a station, but was unable to do so. Last year the city scaled back the project a bit and successfully reeled in the \$150,000 grant.

The city's match will be paid for from the city's parks and marina funds, which are funded through user fees.

The cleaning station is part of several improvements that have either taken place or are envisioned for Black River Park, which is on the city's north side along Dunkley Avenue.

"Beginning four years ago, master planning work began for the development of a long-term vision for Black River Park," Hosier said. "Over the past few years the city has made improvements to increase access to the local fishery for people of all abilities."

Those Improvements include new skid piers, a universally accessible kayak/canoe launch and a fully accessible shoreline fishing platform.