

Attention Washington Coastal Crab Fishers;

Corps of Engineers to start Grays Harbor Outer Harbor maintenance dredging April 1

SEATTLE - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will begin annual Grays Harbor maintenance dredging in the Outer Harbor April 1, utilizing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' hopper dredge vessel Yaquina.

Working around-the-clock through April 16, the Yaquina will dredge the Grays Harbor Entrance, Point Chehalis and South Reach channels. The Yaquina will place dredged materials at the Washington State Department of Natural Resources-managed Point Chehalis open water disposal sites and the Half Moon Bay nearshore beneficial use site.

A second Corps hopper dredge, the Essayons, is scheduled to arrive sometime in mid-April and work through early May to dredge the Grays Harbor Bar, Entrance and Point Chehalis reaches. The Essayons will place dredged materials at the South Beach nearshore beneficial use site and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources-managed Point Chehalis open water disposal sites.

The vessels are expected to dredge approximately 800,000 cubic yards of material from the Bar, Entrance, Point Chehalis and South reaches combined.

Seattle District works with state and federal agencies and Native American nations to minimize harm to the aquatic ecosystem. A biological evaluation was prepared in accordance with the Endangered Species Act and Environmental Assessment and the National Environmental Policy Act.

Corps officials assure full compliance with the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act before starting. Potential dredging and disposal operations impacts are also avoided through implementation of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-designated timing restrictions. In addition, local crab fishermen assist by temporarily relocating open water equipment that may be affected during operations.

Dredges Yaquina and Essayons are assigned to the Portland District and support Seattle District Grays Harbor maintenance dredging operations.

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If you have questions, contact:

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