TILLAMOOK BAY BAR HAZARDS

BAR AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

Listen to the local broadcast on 1610 AM

CROSSING THE BAR

The bar is the area where the deep waters of the Pacific Ocean meet with the shallower waters near the mouth of the river.

Most accidents and deaths that occur on coastal bars are from capsizing.

Coastal bars may be closed to recreational boats when conditions on the bar are hazardous. Failure to comply with the closure may result in voyage termination, and civil and/or criminal penalties. The regulations are enforced by Coast Guard boarding teams.

Improper loading and/or overloading are major causes of capsizing. Improper/overloaded boats have less stability and less freeboard, which can allow seas to break into the vessel, causing the boat to become even less stable.

Boats are more likely to capsize when crossing the bar from the ocean because the seas are on the stern and the boater may have less control over the vessel.

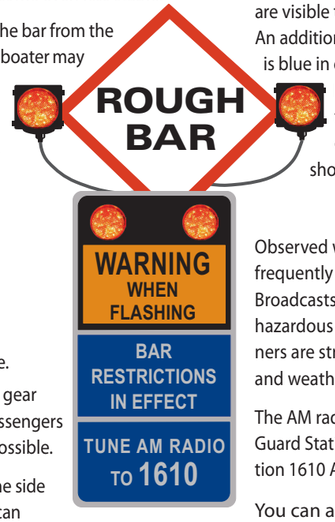
Boaters must make sure the bar is safe prior to crossing. Check with other boaters or the Coast Guard to find out the condition of the bar.

If you are caught on a rough bar running in…

- Make sure everyone aboard is wearing a personal flotation device.
- Keep the boat square before the seas.
- Keep the boat on the back of the swell. Ride the swell and stay clear of the following wave.

Avoid sudden weight shifts from passengers or gear moving around in the boat. If possible, have passengers lie down as near the centerline of the boat as possible.

Do not allow the waves to catch your boat on the side (beam). This condition is called broaching, and can easily result in capsizing.



TIDES

Tides are the vertical rise and fall of the water and tidal current is the horizontal flow of the water. There are roughly four tides each day in the Pacific Northwest. Tidal movement toward the shore or upstream is the flood current. Movement away from the shore or downstream is the ebb current. The period between the two is known as slack water. Tidal currents may gain tremendous velocity, particularly when the ebb current is augmented by river runoff.

- It is extremely dangerous to get caught on the bar during strong ebb current. Even on days that are relatively calm, fast moving ebb can create bar conditions that are too rough for small craft.
- Always know the stage of the tide!
- Avoid getting caught on the bar during an ebb tide.

It is normally best to cross the bar during slack water or on a flood tide, when the seas are normally calmest.

REGULATED NAVIGATION AREA

The Coast Guard has established a Regulated Navigation Area. If the yellow lights on this sign are flashing, indicating a restriction has been placed on recreational and uninspected passenger vessels crossing the bar. In accordance with 33 CFR 165.1325, the U.S. Coast Guard has the authority to restrict all recreational and uninspected passenger vessels from crossing the bar when hazardous conditions exist. Failing to comply with posted bar restrictions may result in a maximum civil penalty of $25,000.00.

WARNING SIGN LOCATIONS

White diamond shape signs with an orange boarder indicating "Rough Bar" and amber flashing lights are located at the Coast Guard moorings in Garibaldi and are visible to the south toward Bay City and toward the Garibaldi Boat Basin. An additional warning sign is located at the boat ramp in Garibaldi. This sign is blue in color and has amber flashing lights that read: Warning When Flashing, Bar Restrictions in Effect, Tune to 1610 AM. When the amber lights are flashing on any of the warning signs hazardous conditions are present and a bar restriction is in place and mariners should tune in to listen to the restriction information.

BAR CONDITION AND OBSERVATION REPORTS

Observed weather and bar conditions are updated every four hours or more frequently if there is a significant change in weather. Marine Information Broadcasts on Channel 16 VHF FM are conducted by the Coast Guard when hazardous bar conditions and restrictions are put into place or are lifted. Mariners are strongly encouraged to monitor channel 16 VHF/FM for all notices and weather updates.

The AM radio broadcast is audible within an 8-mile radius from the Coast Guard Station in Tillamook Bay. It provides a continual broadcast on radio station 1610 AM containing bar conditions, bar restrictions, and local weather.

You can also access current bar conditions and restriction on your smart phone or hand held device by going to, www.wrh.noaa.gov/pqr/marine/BarObs.php.

COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL DIVING

Commercial and recreational diving is popular in Tillamook Bay. Boaters and divers should exercise extra caution to ensure their safety on the water.

A rigid replica of the alpha flag must be displayed on boats engaged in diving operations whenever these boats are restricted in their ability to maneuver by the diving operation. The flag should be at least one meter high and be visible all around the horizon. The "diver's flag," a red flag with a diagonal white stripe, is a recognizable sign that a diver is operating in the area, but its display is not required by law.

Boaters who see either the alpha flag or the diver's flag should be aware that a diver is in the area and should avoid that area or operate with extreme caution. If you must approach an area where a diver is operating, turn off your motor, if possible, or slow down to idle speed and proceed cautiously.

Likewise, people engaged in diving do not have authority to block the channel or restrict navigation. Please dive responsibly.

EMERGENCIES

VHF-FM Radio: Channel 16

If in distress (threatened by grave and imminent danger):

1. Make sure radio is on
2. Select Channel 16
3. Press/Hold the transmit button
4. Speak slowly, and clearly say: MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY
5. Give the following information:
   - Vessel Name and/or Description
   - Nature of Emergency
   - Position and/or Location
   - Number of People Aboard
6. Release the Transmit Button
7. Wait for 10 seconds – If no response, repeat "Mayday" call. If not in immediate danger, switch to CH 22 and follow the same steps as above, except do not use the word "MAYDAY."

Make Sure Everyone is Wearing a Life Jacket!

Phone 911. Tell the operator that you have a marine emergency. Be ready to provide the same information required in item number 5 of the mayday call.

Coast Guard Stations:
Coast Guard Station Tillamook Bay
Garibaldi, OR
(503) 322-3531

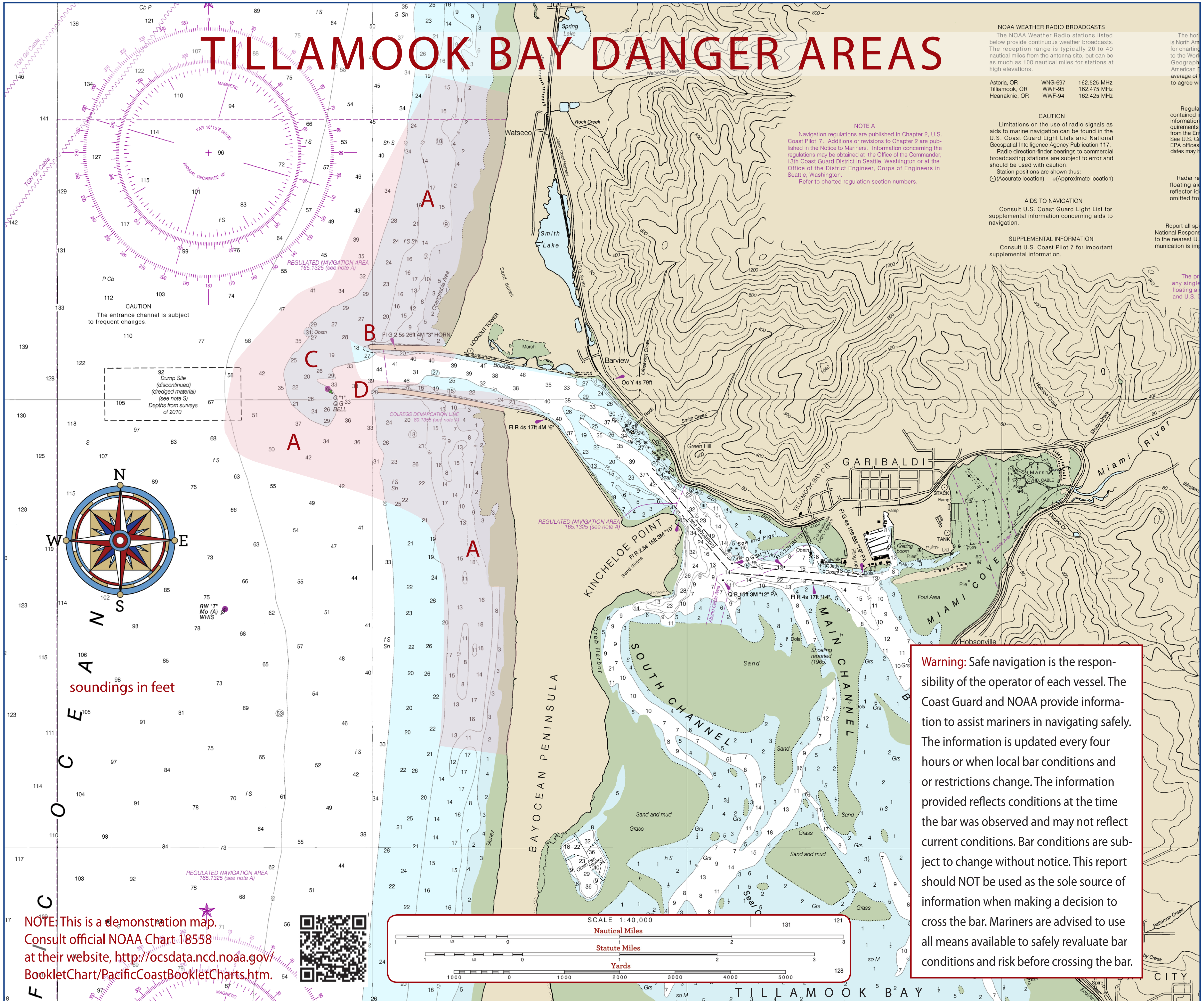
BOATING SAFETY TIPS

- Check Weather, Tide, and Bar Conditions – The latest Information Can Be Heard on 1610 AM
- File a Float Plan With Friends/Relatives
- Don't Overload Your Boat
- Wear Your Life Jacket
- Carry Flares and a VHF-FM Radio
- Stay Well Clear of Commercial Vessels
- Have Anchor With Adequate Line
- Boat Sober

CROSSING TILLAMOOK BAY BAR

More Boating Safety Information: www.uscgboating.org and www.boatoregon.com
Boating Class and Vessel Safety Check Information: www.uscgaux.org/~130/, www.usps.org or 1-800-336-BOAT (2628) (class information only)

TILLAMOOK BAY DANGER AREAS



Warning: Safe navigation is the responsibility of the operator of each vessel. The Coast Guard and NOAA provide information to assist mariners in navigating safely. The information is updated every four hours or when local bar conditions and or restrictions change. The information provided reflects conditions at the time the bar was observed and may not reflect current conditions. Bar conditions are subject to change without notice. This report should NOT be used as the sole source of information when making a decision to cross the bar. Mariners are advised to use all means available to safely revaluate bar conditions and risk before crossing the bar.

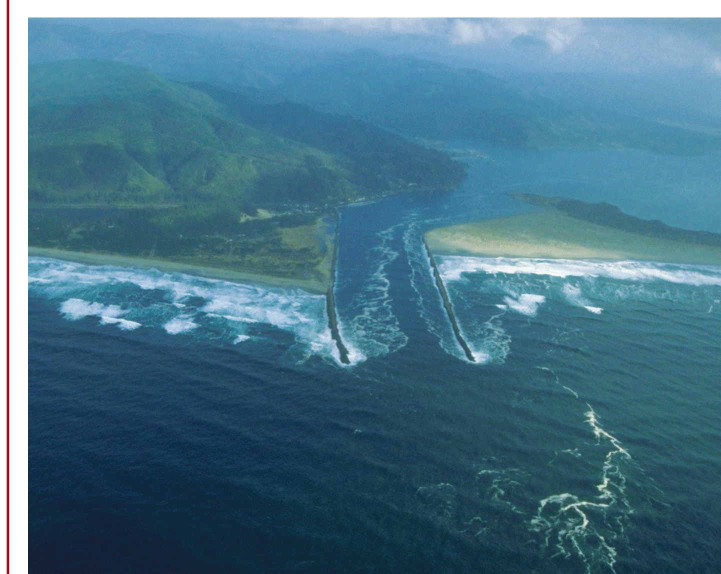
A. Bar area. The area within 1 NM radius of the Tillamook Bay jetty tips are considered the bar area. These areas are considered hazardous, and mariners should exercise extreme caution when transiting in or near the bar area. The water runs out from four to six knots on average, and is very strong. Boats proceeding out should stop in the channel east of the seaward end of the breakwater and carefully evaluate the bar. The bar area is constantly changing.

B. North jetty. Approximately 100 yards of the seaward end of the north jetty is submerged. This and all areas immediately adjacent to the jetty are extremely dangerous and should be avoided. About the last 150 yards of the outer tip of the North Jetty is curving toward the Tillamook Bay Channel. Do not proceed north or south until you are well clear of the submerged jetties (approximately 200 yards seaward of the jetty tips).

C. Middle grounds. Shoaling makes this area unpredictable and hazardous; it should be avoided.

D. South jetty. About 200 yards of the outer end of the south jetty is submerged. Extreme caution must be exercised when transiting the area.

Tillamook Bay channel lies just south of the north jetty. Boaters are urged to navigate with extreme caution as this channel changes constantly. The Sector Light marks the correct location of the navigable channel only when between the jetties. The Sector Light should not be used to make an approach to the Tillamook Bay Bar since it runs



directly over some hazardous areas west of the jetty tips. Most local mariners prefer to transit in and out of Tillamook Bay by following the “south hole” which is the deep water area that runs north and south, between the end of the submerged rocks on the south jetty and the green #1 can buoy.