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

- 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 calmer.

### BAR AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

Listen to the local broadcast on 1610 AM

### WARNING SIGN LOCATIONS

A white diamond shape sign with an orange boarder indicating “Rough Bar” and amber flashing lights is mounted on the Coast Guard lookout tower and faces up river towards Florence. If the yellow lights on this sign are flashing, a restriction has been placed on recreational and uninspected passenger vessels crossing the bar. A blue sign with amber flashing lights, “Restrictions in Effect” reads: “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. Mariners should tune in to listen to the restriction information.

### BAR CONDITIONS AND OBSERVATION REPORTS

The AM radio broadcast is audible within a 6-mile radius from the Coast Guard Station. It provides a continual broadcast on radio station 1610 AM containing bar conditions, bar restrictions, and local weather. Recorded bar and weather conditions can be obtained by calling Coast Guard Station Siuslaw River at (541) 997-3631. 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.

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

### REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS

The Coast Guard has established a Regulated Navigation Area in the area surrounding and on the Siuslaw River Bar. If the yellow lights on this sign are flashing, indicating a restriction has been placed on recreational and uninspected passenger vessels crossing the bar. As the 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 the restriction can result in a maximum civil penalty of $25,000.00

### 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 NUMBERS

- Coast Guard Stations: Siuslaw River Florence, OR (541) 997-3631

### SAFETY INFORMATION

- Boats Sober
- Stay Well Clear of Commercial Vessels
- Carry Flares and a VHF-FM Radio
- File a Float Plan With Friends/Relatives
- Have Anchor With Adequate Line
- Wear Your Life Jacket
- Don’t Overload Your Boat
- Check Weather, Tide, and Bar Conditions – The latest information can be heard on 1610 AM
- Phone 911.
- Have Anchor With Adequate Line

**Within seconds of seeing the wave, the boat flipped. The fact that I had my life jacket on kept me alive.**

Grady Davis, Survivor.
Siuslaw River Bar: Siuslaw River Bar has a very narrow channel extending out past the jetties. Unlike the larger bars on the Oregon Coast, the Siuslaw River Bar may be rendered impassable for small boats by a moderate swell, particularly at ebb tide. Boaters should use extreme caution when operating near this bar. Due to shoaling and jetty extensions, bar conditions are unpredictable. When the bar is rough, expect continuous breakers just inside the jetty tips out to 250 yards. NOTE: The entrance range may not mark best water due to the changing conditions of the bar.

A. Shoal water, northeast side of the channel. Has depth of 2 to 3 feet at high tide and extends from Siuslaw River Channel Buoy 7 to Siuslaw River Channel Light 9 and on to Siuslaw River Channel Buoy 11.

B. Shoal water, south side of the channel. Extends from Siuslaw River Channel Buoy 6 to Siuslaw River Channel Buoy 4 and approximately 50 yards out toward the south jetty tips.

C. Outer end of south jetty. Breakers are almost always present in this area. When the seas are from the southwest or west, breakers may extend to the entrance buoy, Siuslaw River Approach Lighted Whistle Buoy "S." 

D. Outer end of north jetty. Breakers are almost always present in this area. When the seas are from the west, the breakers may extend to the entrance buoy (Lighted Whistle Buoy "S").

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 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 reevaluate bar conditions and risk before crossing the bar.