

NEWS

Oregon State Marine Board

Boat Oregon!



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NOAA Grant Helps Remove Sunken F/V Western from Coos Bay

The Oregon State Marine Board was recently awarded a \$55,000 NOAA Marine Debris Removal grant to assist with the removal of the *F/V Western* from Coos Bay. The *Western* is a 69.9 foot long, 78 gross ton, wood-hulled fishing



vessel that was built in 1934. In January 2015, after breaking free from her mooring from the dock and from anchor several times, the *Western* ultimately sank near a row of pilings near the Empire Boat Ramp, in water deep enough for complete submersion. The vessel was deemed a priority to remove by several agencies and community groups because its large, near a busy navigation channel, and sunk in a sensitive fish and invertebrate habitat. However, adequate funding was not available for the approximately \$95,000 cost of removal and disposal.

The project, titled, “A partnership for the removal and prevention of abandoned and derelict fishing vessels along the Oregon Coast”, includes \$17,500 matching cash from the Marine Board and \$22,500 from the Department of State Lands as well as in-kind services from Oregon SeaGrant, South Slough NERR, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Environmental Quality, and staff from the coastal public ports and marinas. The Marine Board

will contract with a salvage company for removal of the *F/V Western* from the water and dispose of the vessel through approved methods on land. The work will begin in October, 2016.

The grant also stipulates that in addition to removal of the *Western*, the Marine Board initiate and lead an Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Task Force with participation from Oregon coastal ports, law enforcement, commercial vessel owners, and other stakeholders to strategize and implement actions that will help prevent future abandoned and derelict vessels along the coast. A majority of coastal ports struggle with commercial fishing vessels that are no longer in use and have not been maintained for seaworthiness, left abandoned or in derelict condition. A goal of this task force will be developing an inventory of abandoned and derelict commercial vessels along the Oregon coast and develop plans and prioritize actions for future removal efforts.

The NOAA Marine Debris Program's "Community-based Marine Debris Removal" federal funding program provides funding to support locally-driven, marine debris assessment and removal projects that benefit coastal habitat, waterways, and NOAA trust resources. Projects awarded through this grant competition implement on-the-ground marine debris removal activities, with priority for those targeting medium- to large-scale debris, including derelict fishing gear and abandoned and derelict vessels.

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