

Summary of CR Bar Pilots Wave Buoy Funding Initiative

The Columbia River Bar Pilots (CRBP) continue to demonstrate proactive leadership in maritime safety and risk mitigation through their efforts to secure funding for three spare wave buoys. These buoys provide critical offshore and near-bar weather and sea-state information essential to safe pilotage operations, vessel traffic management, and overall maritime safety along the Columbia River Bar.

The three spare wave buoys were funded through a combination of a Connect Oregon grant (70%) and industry support through Saddle Mountain Inc. (30%). The current grant, awarded in 2024, represents the second successful Connect Oregon grant supporting these capabilities. The initial grant, awarded in 2010, funded the original wave buoy system.

This initiative is strategically focused on maintaining spare wave buoys on hand so they can be rapidly deployed when an operational buoy breaks free, fails, or otherwise becomes inoperable. This approach minimizes downtime and ensures continuity of critical weather and wave-height reporting for pilots, mariners, and maritime stakeholders operating in one of the nation's most challenging pilotage environments.

The Connect Oregon grant program is a competitive Oregon Department of Transportation funding program with reimbursement tied to milestone completion. The buoys themselves are manufactured by Datawell BV, a Dutch company recognized globally for producing the "world standard" in wave measuring buoy technology for more than 60 years.

This effort reflects a strong partnership between the Columbia River Bar Pilots, industry stakeholders, and the State of Oregon to enhance maritime safety, operational reliability, and resilience for the Columbia River Maritime Transportation System.