



## NEWS RELEASE – *for immediate release*

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# Columbia River abandoned vessels and illegal camping sites focus of joint cleanup action

SALEM, Ore. – A coalition of state agencies, local government, law enforcement and community action groups are engaged in cooperative action to reduce the number of abandoned boats and long-term, unpermitted camping sites on the Willamette and Columbia rivers in north Portland.

The most recent action began today in north Portland on the Columbia River when the Oregon Department of State Lands and Oregon State Marine Board jointly began clearing several abandoned/derelict vessels from the water. The vessel removal will occur throughout the weekend.

Recently in the same area, DSL partnered with the Port of Portland, city of Portland, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office, Metro and the Oregon State Police on September 10-13 to remove several unauthorized beach encampments. Over seven tons of garbage was removed during the beach cleanup.

Prior to the beach cleanup, DSL posted signage announcing emergency restrictions and notices of upcoming cleanup actions at locations in North Portland Harbor along North Marine Drive and west of the Railroad Bridge. The Multnomah County Sheriff's Office River Patrol also posted pre-seizure notices on abandoned boats in the area for this weekend's action.

The camping restrictions mirror recent DSL action to prohibit camping and campfires at these locations, and to prohibit all activity between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. DSL took similar action in July at Swan Island and in May in Eugene. The agency will ask the State Land Board in October for approval to initiate formal rulemaking to make permanent these new use restrictions.

“Together we are chipping away at this problem a bit at a time,” said DSL North Operations Manager Chris Castelli. “The various partners all play different roles here, and we all support each other to achieve a common goal. We’re making progress but have a long way to go.”

“The accumulation of abandoned and derelict vessels in the waterways around Portland have become a significant concern for recreational boaters in recent years,” said Josh Mulhollem, Policy and Environmental Program Manager for the Oregon State Marine Board. “Some of these vessels obstruct safe navigation, not to mention the water quality impacts. The Marine Board’s primary concern is to ensure the safety of the boating public, and these boats and other debris removal efforts support that goal.”

Recognizing the social and human aspect of the problem, the partner agencies are making every effort to coordinate and connect individuals impacted by the cleanup work with social service providers in the Portland area.

DSL and the Marine Board split the costs associated with the vessel removal, while DSL coordinated with Metro for proper solid and hazardous waste disposal, as well as personal property storage, for the cleanup of beach encampments.

As steward of state-owned lands, DSL has authority over all publicly owned submerged and submersible lands (the “beds and banks”), which include beaches and other riverfront property up to the Ordinary High Water line. The agency often cooperates with upland property owners to manage the use of such properties.

***About the State Land Board and the Department of State Lands:*** *The State Land Board consists of Governor Kate Brown, Secretary of State Bev Clarno and State Treasurer Tobias Read. The Department of State Lands administers diverse natural and fiscal resources. Many of the resources generate revenue for the Common School Fund, such as state-owned rangelands and timberlands, waterway leases, estates for which no will or heirs exist, and unclaimed property. Twice a year, the agency distributes fund investment earnings to support K-12 public schools. The agency also administers Oregon’s Removal-Fill Law, which requires people removing or filling certain amounts of material in waters of the state to obtain a permit. For more information on DSL and state-owned waterways, please visit: [Use of state-owned waterways](#).*

*The Marine Board is directly funded by boaters in the form of registration, title, and permit fees, as well as through marine fuel taxes. **No lottery, general fund tax dollars or local facility parking fees** support the agency or its programs. Boater-paid fees support the boating public through boating safety services (on-the-water law enforcement, training, and equipment), boating safety education, grants for the construction and maintenance of boating access facilities, and environmental protection programs. For more information about the Marine Board and its programs, visit [www.boatoregon.com](http://www.boatoregon.com).*

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