

Cutter: Astoria designated 'Coast Guard City' in 2010



U.S. Coast Guard photo

The Sentinel-class Fast Response Cutter (FRC) is a new Coast Guard patrol boat that is capable of deploying independently to conduct missions that include port, waterways and coastal security; fishery patrols; search and rescue; and national defense. Named after Coast Guard enlisted heroes, the FRCs are replacing the aging Island-class 110-foot patrol boats.

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including but not limited to: mission needs, distance to primary operating area, work-life, logistics support, current and future infrastructure costs, and environmental impacts," Saylor said in an email.

The Coast Guard's Sector Columbia River headquarters and Air Station Astoria are based at the Astoria Regional Airport in Warrenton. Astoria is also host to the guard's 210-foot medium endurance cutters Steadfast and Alert, and the 180-foot buoy tender Fir, but does not have one of the Island-class patrol boats.

The Island-class Orcas is homeported in Coos Bay and the Cuttyhunk is at Port Angeles, Wash.

Coast Guard officials said privately that while the new Sentinel-class

cutters are meant to replace the Island-class patrol boats, they may not be assigned to the same ports.

Landing one or both of the new cutters would expand the Coast Guard's footprint in Astoria, where it already has a significant presence. Astoria was designated a "Coast Guard City" in 2010, one of only 16 in the United States. Newport received the designation in 2005.

The Coast Guard is planning for 58 Sentinel-class cutters. Twelve cutters have been delivered so far and assigned to Miami and Key West, Fla. Other future home ports, according to the guard, could be San Juan, Puerto Rico; Cape May, N.J.; Pascagoula, Miss.; Ketchikan, Alaska; Honolulu, Hawaii; Portland, Maine; Atlantic Beach, N.C.; and San Pedro, Calif.

WANT TO COMMENT?

Public comments about the Coast Guard's potential homeporting of two fast response cutters in Astoria or Newport can be sent to: Diana Soriano, USCG Civil Engineering Unit Oakland, 1301 Clay St., Suite 700N, Oakland, Calif., 94612; or diana.soriano@uscg.mil; or fax at 510-637-5726.

The deadline to comment is March 30.

Ports: 'It's a complicated choreography' West Coast port statistics, 2013

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It will take at least a month for the 73 terminal operators and shipping lines that belong to the PMA and 13,600 longshoremen to review and ratify the contract, said Steve Getzug, a PMA spokesman.

Meanwhile, longshoremen resumed a normal work pace with the Saturday night shift, Feb. 21, beginning the task of clearing tens of thousands of containers plugging dockyards at the ports, Getzug said.

"It's a complicated choreography," he said of moving the loaded and empty containers, clearing paths to get to ships.

As of Feb. 23, 22 ships were being worked at dockside at Los Angeles and Long Beach, Getzug said. Thirty-five others were at anchor in those harbors waiting to get in and two dozen more were on their way, he said.

He didn't have numbers for other ports but said Los Angeles and Long Beach would have the most ships and containers since they are the largest ports.

The only problem was at Oakland, where a disagreement over work breaks held up operations until Sunday night, he said.

Shipper leaves Portland

Another issue is the loss of Hanjin Shipping at the Port of Portland Monday. Earlier in February, Hanjin announced it would end service at the port because it was taking too long for its ships to be unloaded and loaded.

Hanjin carries 78 percent of the cargo out of Portland, and two smaller shipping lines don't have the capacity to pick up the slack, said Steve Johnson, port spokesman. Port managers are working to get Hanjin back or attract other shipping lines, he said.

Otherwise, ag exporters will have to truck or send by rail their cargo to other ports at \$600 to \$1,000 more per container, he said.

While agricultural exporters are pleased ports are operating again, they already have lost an estimated \$1.75 billion worth of sales per month for two to three months, said Peter Friedmann, executive director of the Agriculture Transportation Coalition.

And losses will continue for the several months it takes ports to get back to normal, he said.

Containers of apples, hay, frozen potato products, meats and other goods are stacked up and waiting for the 15-day ocean crossing to Asia.

The number of containers on a ship varies from 5,000 to 18,000 but the average on the West Coast is 7,500 to 8,000, Friedmann said. The normal turn-around time to unload and load a ship varies from one to five days, depending on the size of the ship and how much is being unloaded and loaded, he said.

Shelly Boshart Davis, vice president of international sales at Bossco Trading, a rye grass straw exporter in

Locations by region

Washington

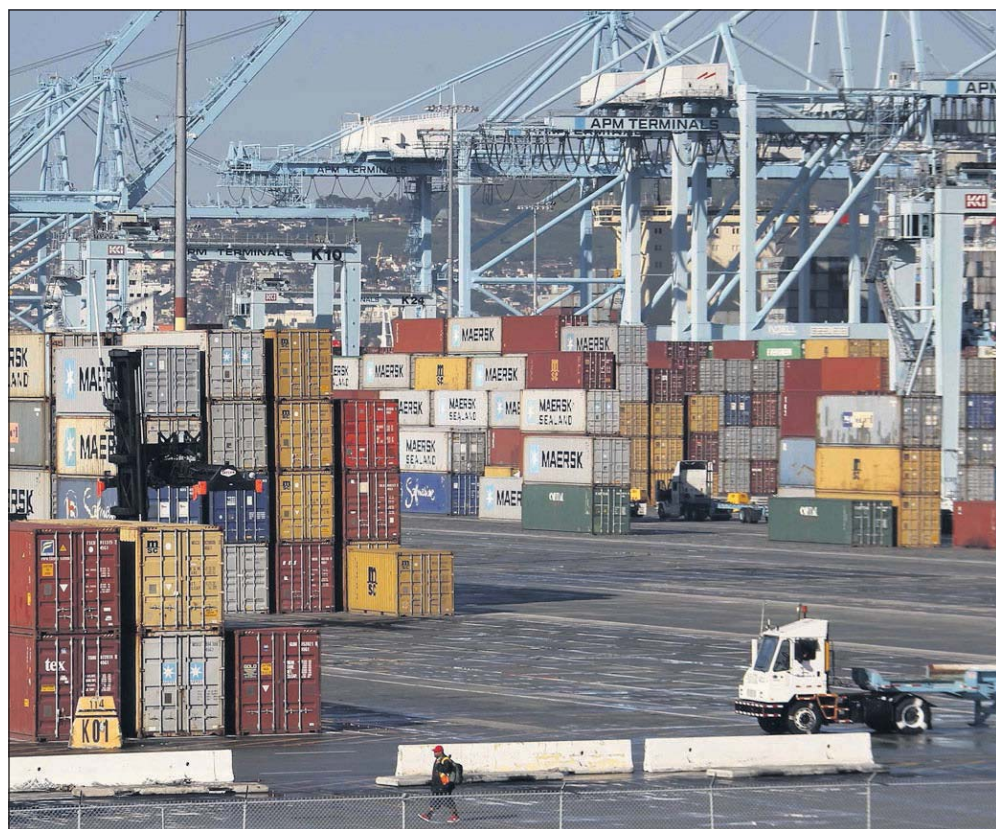
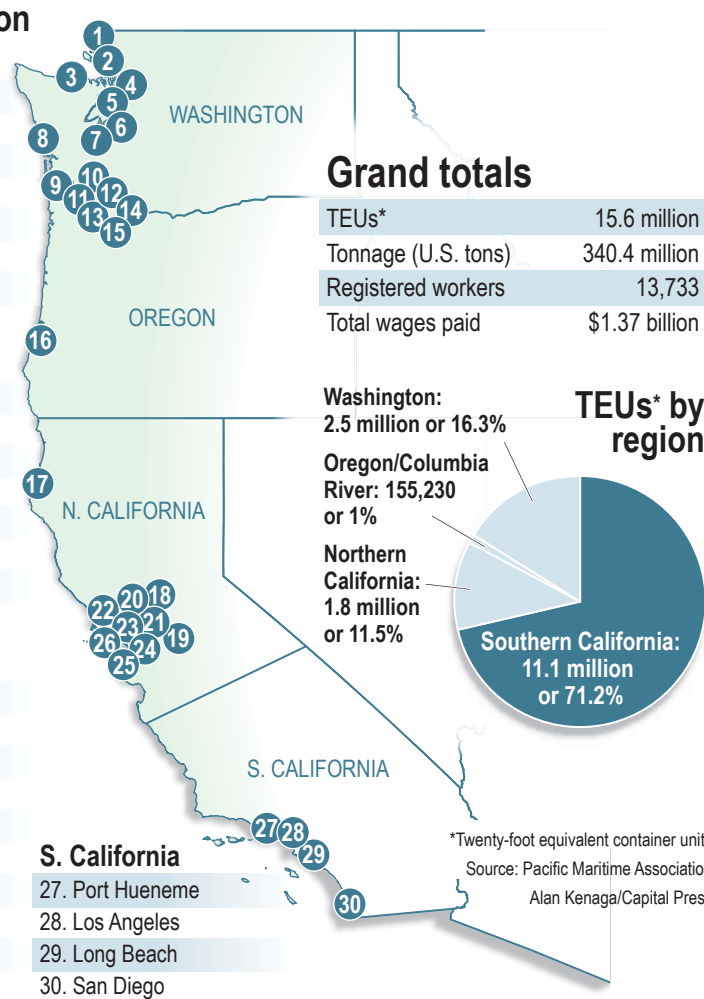
1. Bellingham
2. Anacortes
3. Port Angeles
4. Everett
5. Seattle
6. Tacoma
7. Olympia
8. Aberdeen/Grays Harbor

Oregon

9. Astoria
10. Longview
11. Rainier
12. Kalama
13. St. Helens
14. Vancouver
15. Portland
16. N. Bend/Coos Bay

N. California

17. Eureka
18. W. Sacramento
19. Stockton
20. Port Chicago
21. Benicia
22. Crockett
23. Richmond
24. Oakland
25. Redwood City
26. San Francisco



AP Photo/Nick Ut

A dock worker arrives at the Port of Los Angeles Feb. 23. Nearly all West Coast seaports began the week with dockworkers hustling to load and unload cargo ships that were held up amid a months-long labor-management dispute.

Tangent, said her company has had 140 containers of straw, worth \$500,000 to \$700,000, at the ports of Portland, Tacoma and Seattle since Jan. 15.

"We need to get containers moving," she said. "We will be OK if we can, but we can't do another six months of this."

Three more months to get ports back to normal may push some exporters to bankruptcy, she said.

Changing the law?

It remains to be seen whether the new port contract will embolden exporters and members of Congress to try to change federal labor law to prevent future disruptions.

"...(I)t is appropriate to evaluate all options that would end the economic threat posed by such disputes

in the future," Rep. Dan Newhouse, R-Wash., said in a statement.

Chris Schlect, president of the Northwest Horticultural Council in Yakima, Wash., said often interest in changing the laws wanes once disputes are resolved.

But, he said, this crisis was big enough that people may be more willing to look at it, and more will be interested after the contract is ratified because comments could no longer derail it.

Schlect said he has not heard of anyone going bankrupt because of the port slowdown but wouldn't be surprised if some tree fruit growers do because of many factors that have made it a poor year. A record large harvest, lower prices and factors such as the Russian boycott of European Union and U.S. fruit have combined with the

port slowdown to hurt the industry.

European apples have been displacing Washington apples in Asian markets because of the slowdown, and it will take "a lot of brand building to get ourselves back into the marketplace and top in minds of consumers," said Todd Fryhoyer, president of the Washington Apple Commission in Wenatchee.

Friedmann said the coalition is "totally for" changing labor law to prevent future disruptions and will continue to push the Pacific Maritime Association and the ILWU to improve West Coast port productivity.

"U.S. agriculture can recover but only with a collective effort," he said. The PMA and union need to improve the pace of terminal operations, automation and eliminate outdated labor and management practices, he said.



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Hazel Barendse, looks out from her deck at the water line of the flooding on her property Monday. A broken tide gate near her house has caused water levels to rise about one foot per day. The broken gate was spotted Sunday by the Clatsop No. 1 Drainage Improvement Co.

Tide gate: County commissioners plan to pass an emergency declaration

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"I'm not worried. We have five days," Barendse said about the water that rose one foot per day.

The tide gate likely broke off from six decades of wear and tear, Rhone said. He estimates the tide gate is about 65 years old. It controls the flow on Grizzly Slough.

"They worked all yesterday and late at night to effect a temporary solution and as a result, it averted disaster," Rohne said. "The water was getting to a point where it was going to ruin people's homes."

The Clatsop County

Board of Commissioners is planning to pass an emergency declaration Wednesday to possibly be eligible for federal funding for a permanent tide gate replacement.

The Sheriff's Office sent its underwater dive team to the site Sunday to investigate the damaged gate. The Clatsop County Public Works and Emergency Management departments offered backup support to the drainage improvement company, if needed.

"The people in Brownsmead who pulled this off have never done this before, but displayed intelligence and resolve," Rohne said.



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Crews pull out the door of the broken tide gate. A metal sheet will be placed over the broken tide gate to try and prevent more flooding.

Charged: Arraignment hearing set for March 13

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murder, conspiracy, robbery I, assault I and theft. Both suspects appeared in front of Judge Paula Brownhill in Clatsop County Circuit Court on Monday. Security was set at \$250,000 for each man, which means they would have to post \$25,000 to be released from jail, according to the Clatsop County District Attorney's Office.

Brownhill appointed each man an attorney and set the next arraignment hearing for March 13 to present the outcome of the interim grand jury proceeding.

Seaside detectives believe the "two men have been involved in additional criminal activity and possibly other assaults," the release states.

"We have yet to receive any tip information, but over the course of the weeklong investigation, many people were interviewed and we believe that there may be additional victims unrelated to the current charges that were previously unwilling to report or have not yet reported the circumstances to the police," said Seaside Police Detective Sgt. Jason Gooding.

The investigation is ongoing so he could not provide specific details. Anyone with information related to Burnham and Fitch or believed criminal activity should contact Gooding or Detective Gary Welborn. An anonymous tip line also can be used to provide information by calling 503-738-0222.