

Government ship left alone while going south

GOLD BEACH (AP) — The Greenpeace vessel Rainbow Warrior left Oregon Monday after leading local fishermen in three days of demonstrations to disrupt government-sponsored exploration for offshore gold and strategic metals.

Left alone by environmentalists and fishermen, the 143-foot research ship Aloha went south toward Brookings and continued to map placer deposits of mineral-rich black sands in a joint project sponsored by the state of Oregon and the U.S. Department of Interior.

The 181-foot Rainbow Warrior, flagship of the environmental group Greenpeace, left Gold Beach about 10 a.m. for San Francisco, where it was to show off ocean drift nets captured during unrelated confrontations in the Pacific, said

Greenpeace spokeswoman Cynthia Rust.

Carol Alexander, ocean ecology campaigner for Greenpeace, said she was staying behind in Oregon a couple of days to continue working with local opponents of offshore mining.

"There have been many areas of contention between Greenpeace and the fishing community in the past," she said. "However, ultimately we have the same goal, which is the health of the oceans and the marine environment."

Environmentalists and fishermen fear the exploration will lead to offshore mining that will devastate local fisheries.

"I think we rallied the fishermen together and I think that the fishermen will be successful in the future in getting

themselves organized and getting themselves together to stop this type of thing," Diana Desnoyers said from on board the Rainbow Warrior.

Desnoyers, 30, was one of 13 people arrested Sunday as fishermen on two dozen fishing boats and Greenpeace activists harassed the Aloha.

Desnoyers boarded the Aloha and climbed a large A-frame structure on the stern, where she chained herself. The Coast Guard also seized three Greenpeace motorized rafts and the fishing boat Top Gun out of Port Orford.

The seven Greenpeace activists and six people from fishing boats were released from the Curry County Jail early Monday. There was no immediate word on future court appearances.

The Aloha went on with its work Monday escorted by the 213-foot Coast Guard Cutter Acushnet out of Eureka, Calif., and at least two surf rescue boats, Chief Petty Officer John Reis said.

"It's pretty peaceful out there this morning," he said.

The ship embarked Friday for a two-week cruise off the southern Oregon Coast to assess the commercial value of black sands that have washed out of the Klamath Mountains over millennia into the Pacific Ocean. Preliminary work has identified gold, chromite, titanium and other metals in the sands.

The demonstrations disrupted some of the Aloha's work, but didn't significantly delay it, said Dennis Olmstead, a petroleum engineer for the Ore-

gon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries. The state agency is part of the Placer Minerals Technical Task Force, which sponsored the two-week research voyage.

Alexander said the demonstrations Friday through Sunday prevented the Aloha from following its published plans to put out an array of listening equipment to do seismic tests. The seismic tests map the locations of black sand deposits on the ocean floor so that 20-foot core samples can be taken.

"They are three days behind schedule," she said, referring to a research schedule filed with the U.S. Department of Interior. "My understanding is they were able to get some grab samples."

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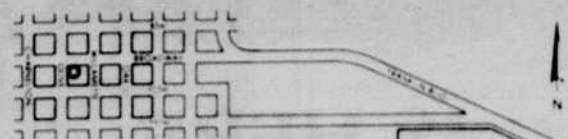
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