



United States Coast Guard Timeline

1790-2015

The history of the U.S. Coast Guard is best viewed as the amalgamation of five federal agencies over time. Unlike most federal agencies created to maintain things, the Coast Guard emerged as an agency charged with promoting important national purposes – maritime safety, trade, and transportation. This legal distinction may be a primary reason the organization is famous around the globe for its talent for leaning forward operationally. The Revenue Cutter Service (Aug. 4, 1790), the Lighthouse Service, the Steamboat Inspection Service, the Life-Saving Service, and the Bureau of Navigation were originally independent but had overlapping authorities that were streamlined by the creation of one service, named the U.S. Coast Guard, in 1915. Coast Guard Day is celebrated on Aug. 4 each year in order to mark the birth of the service when the federal government first deployed cutters (a nautical term denoting vessels built for speed) to guard the nation's coasts.

Aug. 4, 1790:

President George Washington signed the Tariff Bill, passed earlier by Congress, into law and endorsed Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton's request for 10 armed cutters and creation of the Revenue Cutter Service.

May 11, 1792:

Capt. Robert Gray crossed the Columbia River Bar aboard the Columbia Rediviva, anchored in Baker Bay and began trading with the Chinook people from nearby beaches.

Sept. 18, 1853:

The vessel Oriole arrived at the mouth of the Columbia River with building materials for the Cape Disappointment Light but ran aground and was a total loss.

1850:

The first navigation buoys were placed in the channel between the Columbia River bar and Astoria, Ore.

1849:

A Coast Survey Team of the Treasury Department's Lighthouse Establishment (later to become the Lighthouse Service) recommended 16 lights be built for the Oregon and Washington coastlines. This yearlong survey was part of the requirements of the act establishing the new territory.

1790

Aug. 30, 1830:

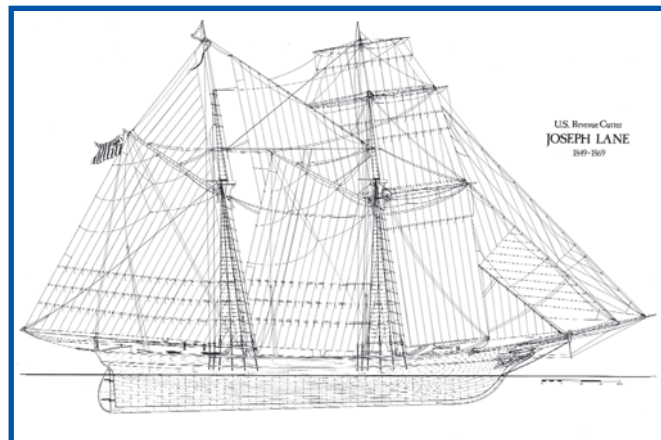
The Steamboat Inspection Service is established and charged with inspecting vessels for compliance with safety regulations.

June 18, 1848:

The U.S. Life-Saving Service is established.

Aug. 14, 1848:

The Act to Establish the Territorial Government of Oregon passes the Congress and included provisions that enabled the federal government to manage the burgeoning maritime trade in the Pacific Northwest. The act for the new territory (which included modern day Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, and parts of Wyoming and Montana) called for lighthouses, and the establishment of buoys in the Columbia River, and buoys in the harbor in Astoria, Ore.

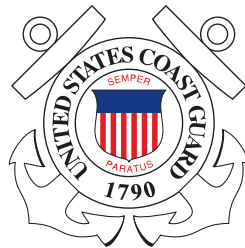


Mar. 20, 1856:

The Revenue Cutter Joseph Lane was stationed in Astoria, Ore., becoming the first full-time presence of what is now the U.S. Coast Guard in the Columbia River area.

Jan. 20, 1915:

Congress passed the Act to Create the Coast Guard, and combined the Life-Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service into the Coast Guard.



Oct. 15, 1856:

The lighthouse at Cape Disappointment, called the Cape Hancock Light, was completed at a cost of \$38,500, and was first lit. It is the oldest operational lighthouse in the Pacific Northwest.

Jan. 21, 1881:

The Tillamook Rock Light is completed after nearly two years of construction and was known as the most difficult of all lights on the West coast to build – and most expensive at \$123,493 – because of its challenging environment.



Apr. 11, 1892:

Columbia River Lightship LV-50 became the first lightship on the west coast and marked the entrance to the channel for ships navigating the bar.



October 1983:

Air Station Astoria adds two HU-25A Falcon jets for long-range support. A third HU-25A was added in June 1988. The jets are no longer used anywhere in the Coast Guard, but an example is on display at the Sector Columbia River base.



September 1987:

Three HH-65A Dolphin helicopters replaced the HH-3F Pelicans at Air Station Astoria during a one-month transition.



1900

1939:

Tongue Point Station transitioned to a port for buoy tenders.

1961:

Testing of a new 44-foot motor lifeboat is conducted at Cape Disappointment and the "sea trials" of this vessel and many other prototypes over the years led to the creation of the National Motor Lifeboat School there by 1980.



Aug. 14, 1964:

Air Station Astoria was established at Tongue Point Naval Air Station with two HH-52A Seaguard helicopters.

Feb. 25, 1966:

The air station was moved to the Clatsop County Airport in Warrenton, Ore.



March 1973:

The HH-52A helicopters at Air Station Astoria were replaced with three HH-3F Pelican helicopters in a monthlong transition.

June 1, 1992:

The Coast Guard announced it was going to assign two medium endurance cutters to Astoria, Ore. Both the Steadfast and Alert had recently undergone maintenance availability refurbishments in Baltimore, Md., and the two re-vamped "210s" replaced the Resolute. The 17th Street dock at the Columbia River Maritime Museum was improved to accommodate both cutters.



Jan. 11, 1991:

A Station Cape Disappointment 44-foot motor lifeboat crew responded to a call for help from the fishing vessel Sea King, which had lost power and was taking on water on the Columbia River bar. Three Coast Guardsmen lost their lives to save the four men aboard Sea King.



May 28, 1995:

Three HH-60J Jayhawk helicopters replaced the Dolphin helicopters and HU-25 Falcon jets at Air Station Astoria. Those helicopters have since been upgraded, and Sector Columbia River still features three MH-60J Jayhawks and approximately 80 aviators to fly and maintain them.

Nov. 8, 2003:

The buoy tender Fir is commissioned in Astoria, Ore., and is charged with maintaining all aids to navigation along the rugged Oregon and Washington coasts. An earlier buoy tender named Fir had serviced lighthouses and buoys in the Pacific Northwest from 1939-91.



Mar. 1, 2003:

The Coast Guard was transferred from the Department of Transportation to the new Department of Homeland Security.



May 2004:

In an effort to better align command structures in U.S. ports, the Coast Guard begins creating "Sectors" to combine the authorities of Marine Safety Offices, Air Stations, and other operational units under the tactical control of a single commanding officer.

Aug. 4, 2010:

Group Astoria, Air Station Astoria and Marine Safety Office Portland merge to become Sector Columbia River, headquartered at the Warrenton-Astoria Regional Airport. Air Station Commanding Officer Capt. Doug Kaup becomes the first Sector Commander.

May 1, 2010:

The U.S. Congress designates Astoria, Ore., an Official Coast Guard City.

June 9, 2011:

Capt. Bruce Jones assumed duties as Sector Columbia River Commander from Kaup, who retires in Astoria.

June 27, 2014:

Capt. Dan Travers assumes duties as Sector Columbia River Commander from Jones, who also retires in Astoria.

2015