

Wreck: The Hero's weight of about 600,000 pounds presents a challenge

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Cleanup update

The state Department of Ecology has been working with Global Diving & Salvage to monitor and clean up the spill. Crews are still regularly visiting the ship, which is docked on the South Fork of the Palix River near the entrance to Willapa Bay, to take water samples and to remove and replace materials used to contain and soak up petroleum products and dirty water.

In mid-March, Global divers explored a section of the boat that had previously been inaccessible. They found no new stores of oil but absorbent materials did become saturated.

Starting around March 17, the oil-sheen and petroleum odor started to abate, Department of Ecology staffer Linda Pilkey-Jarvis said in an update on the Hero cleanup webpage. Absorbent materials are also soaking up less oil.

The department plans to continue taking water samples, photographing the site, and monitoring the boat for any changes, Pilkey-Jarvis said.

Informal approach

"As far as the Hero goes, there was never a real spill. There was a sheen," state Department of Health Environmental Engineer Mark Toy said.

The Department of Health has the authority to shut down an area affected by an oil spill. However, the agency didn't take that step, because the spill was relatively small, and the two oyster companies with facilities close to the boat — Bay Center Mariculture and Taylor Shellfish — voluntarily stopped selling any oysters that might have been affected.

"We basically tried to deal with it informally because the growers were not harvesting. But if it had turned out that there was a continuous leakage coming from the ship, we would have formally closed the area," Toy explained.

How much is too much?

Food and water safety laws, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration offer guidelines about when to open an area again, but each situation is unique.

"Sheen can be very misleading about what the actual concentration is," Toy said. Some spills look bad, but aren't especially toxic. Some spills do

sicken people, plants and animals. Others aren't dangerous, but affect the taste or appearance of fish and shellfish.

In this case, "The main issue, as far as when to reopen an area, isn't health impacts," Toy said. "It's something called 'taint' — an 'off' odor or taste. We have obligations under food-safety laws not to allow adulterated product onto the market." Toy said these undesirable tastes or odors can be a persistent problem even the shellfish wouldn't be dangerous to consume.

For now, the Department of Health is communicating with growers and other agencies, and waiting to see what happens.

"It's very difficult to make a subjective call," Toy said.

Wilson said his company doesn't harvest oysters near the Hero, but they do sometimes hold product in the water right downstream from the boat.

"We didn't take any chances there," Wilson said. "We're just not going to use this area for a while."

Wilson said he thought the spill "could have been a real disaster," if oyster-growers had not pressed authorities to remove oil from the boat a couple of years ago.

"Otherwise, we would have had stuff streaming out of there forever. In an old boat, it's in everything — the bilge and everywhere," Wilson said.

Too many boats, too little money

The location, funding and condition of the Hero are presenting an unprecedented challenge to those charged with getting it out of the river, said Troy Wood, derelict vessel removal program manager for the state Department of Natural Resources.

"We will eventually have to deal with it at some point," Wood said. "It's an old wooden vessel and old wooden vessels break down. It would spread that wreckage."

In early 2015, "It was reported to us that it was ugly-looking, but it's not against the law to be ugly," Wood said.

The boat's presumed owner, Bay Center resident Sun Feather LightDancer, had the right to keep his privately-owned boat moored at his private dock, and the Hero wasn't polluting the river then, so it didn't qualify for the derelict vessel program's list of "Vessels of Concern."

Once it sunk, it made the list, because it's illegal to pollute state waters, Wood explained.

Owners are responsible for dealing with their problem boats, and any damage they cause, but it doesn't always work out that way. There are about 147 known derelict boats around the state. Wood's program has limited ability to deal with these boats.

"We are not a response agency, and we are the last resort, and only when funds are available," Wood said. The program has about \$120,000 left until the next two-year funding cycle starts in July 2018.

"Those (dollars) would be for little boats at this point, because we have so little funding available, and every option we've explored with the Hero would exceed our budget," Wood said.

Heavy lift

The Hero weighs about 600,000 pounds. Back when it was plowing through the ice in Antarctic backwaters, that heft was an advantage. Now that the state needs to get it out of the Palix River before it breaks into splinters, it's a problem.

Sometimes, the Department of Natural Resources can make a boat float again, or simply seal up all the big leaks, and put it on hold until there's a plan and enough money to deal with it. Sometimes, it's possible to dismantle a boat and remove it piece by piece. Due to its location, the state also considered towing the Hero away. But boat is in such a state of decay, and currents around it so swift that none of those options would work.

"Unfortunately, we would have to raise the vessel," Wood said, "but the cost would drain our account."

The state also considered taking it out by land, and discovered that it wouldn't be physically possible.

"To get a crane to lift it out of the hole it's in — it's not feasible at this point, because of the distance to the road," Wood said.

With all the obvious options exhausted, the derelict vessel staff "(is) considering other options," Wood said, but he didn't want to say what they had in mind.

"I would hesitate to go into it at this point because some of them are so far outside of the box that they would be considered whimsical," Wood said. "No idea is too silly."



Damian Mulnix/For EO Media Group

The Hero is posing a challenge for cleanup crews.

APRIL 6

Pulitzer Prize Winning Author and Journalist Buzz Bissinger

A Columbia Forum Presentation



Buzz Bissinger is among the nation's most honored and distinguished writers. A native of New York City, Buzz is the winner of the Pulitzer Prize, the Livingston Award, the American Bar Association Silver Gavel Award and the National Headliners Award, among others. He is also a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University. He is the author of the highly acclaimed nonfiction books: Friday Night Lights, A Prayer for the City, Three Nights in August, Shooting Stars and Father's Day.

Buzz has been a reporter for some of the nation's most prestigious newspapers; a magazine writer with published work in Vanity Fair, The New York Times Magazine and Sports Illustrated; and a co-producer and writer for the ABC television drama NYPD Blue. Two of his works were made into the critically acclaimed films: Friday Night Lights and Shattered Glass. Three more are in active development. Friday Night Lights also served as the inspiration for the television series of the same name.

TO ATTEND:

For Members: Dinner & Lecture: \$25 each; Lecture only: no charge

For Non-Members: Dinner & Lecture: \$35 each; Lecture only: \$15 ea.

Appetizers will be available at 6 p.m. • Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m.

The speaker will begin after the dinner service is complete and non-dinner members and guests of the audience take their seats.

Forum to be held at the CMH Community Center at 2021 Exchange St., Astoria.



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TV LISTINGS

Evening listings WEDNESDAY

WEDNESDAY EVENING													MARCH 29	
A	L	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30	
2	KATU	(2) KATU News at 6		Jeopardy!	Wheel of Fortune	The Goldbergs (N)	Imaginary (P) (N)	Modern Family (N)	Black-ish (N)	Designated "Commander-in-Chief" (N)		KATU News at 11	(35) Jimmy Kimmel	
3	KOMO	(4) KOMO 4 News		Jeopardy!	Wheel of Fortune	The Goldbergs (N)	Imaginary (P) (N)	Modern Family (N)	Black-ish (N)	Designated "Commander-in-Chief" (N)		KOMO 4 News	(35) Jimmy Kimmel	
5	KING	(5) NBC Nightly News	KING 5 News	KING 5 News	Evening	Blindspot "Solos" (N)		Law & Order: S.V.U. "Net Worth" (N)	Chicago P.D. "A Little Bit of Light" (N)		KING 5 News	(35) Tonight Show		
6	KOIN	(6) KOIN Local 6 at 6	CBS Evening News	Extra	Ent. Tonight	Survivor: Changers "Dirty Deed" (N)		Criminal Minds "Hell's Kitchen" (N)	C.Minds: Borders "Pretty Like Me" (N)		KOIN 6 News @ 11	(35) Colbert		
7	KIRO	(7) KIRO 7 News	CBS Evening News	The Insider	Ent. Tonight	Survivor: Changers "Dirty Deed" (N)		Criminal Minds "Hell's Kitchen" (N)	C.Minds: Borders "Pretty Like Me" (N)		KIRO News	(35) Colbert		
8	KGW	(8) KGW News at 6:00 p.m.		Live at 7	Inside Edition	Blindspot "Solos" (N)		Law & Order: S.V.U. "Net Worth" (N)	Chicago P.D. "A Little Bit of Light" (N)		KGW News at 11	(35) Tonight Show		
9	KRCW	(9) Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	Modern Family	Modern Family	Arrow "Disbanded" (N)		The 100 "God Complex" (N)	KGW News at 10	Two and a Half	Two and a Half	Met Your Mother		
10	KOPB	(10) Journeys in Japan	Business (N)	PBS NewsHour		Nature "Yosemite" (N)		Nova "Secrets of the Viking Sword"	Secret Dead "Nero's Sunken City" (N)		MAKERS "Women in War"			
12	KPTV	(12) 6 O'Clock News		Family Feud	Family Feud	Shots Fired (N)		Empire "Play On" (N)	10 O'Clock News		11 O'Clock News	2 Broke Girls		
13	KPDx	(13) Mike & Molly	Mike & Molly	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	FOX 12's 8 O'Clock News on PDX-TV		FOX 12's 9 O'Clock News on PDX-TV	Family Guy	Family Guy		Cleveland Show		
14	KCPQ	(14) Modern Family	Modern Family	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Shots Fired (N)		Empire "Play On" (N)	Q13 News at 10		Q13 News	The Simpsons		
20	TBS	(20) Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Full Frontal (N)		Conan (N)		
22	KZJN	(22) Two and a Half	Two and a Half	Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	Modern Family	Modern Family	Q13 News at 9	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Friends	Friends		
29	ESPN2	(29) NBA Countdown	NBA Basketball	Golden State Warriors at San Antonio Spurs Site: AT&T Center -- San Antonio, Texas (L)		SportsCenter		College GameDay	Baseball Tonight	Jalen & Jacoby (N)	NFL Live	Jalen & Jacoby		
31	NICK	(31) Henry Danger	Henry Danger	Hunter Street (N)	Rank the Prank (N)	The Thundermans	Game Shakers	Full House	Full House	Full House	Friends	Friends		
32	DISN	(32) Bunk'd	Bizaardvark	K.C. Undercover	Good Luck Charlie	Stuck in Middle	Good Luck Charlie	Liv and Maddie	Liv and Maddie	Bunk'd	Jessie	Jessie		
34	FAM	(34) The Twins: Happily?	Working Girls	*** National Lampoon's Vacation '83	Beverly D'Angelo, Chevy Chase.			*** National Lampoon's European Vacation '85	Chevy Chase.		The 700 Club			
35	FMC	(35) (5:00) The Heat '13	Sandra Bullock.	(20) ** The Heat (2013, Comedy)	Melissa McCarthy, Michael McDonald, Sandra Bullock.			(4:40) FXM Presents	** The Five-Year Engagement '12, Com	Emily Blunt, Chris Pratt, Jason Segel.				
36	LIFE	(36) Little Women: Atlanta "Bad Romance"		LW Atlanta "Bobbleheads Will Roll"		Little Women: Atlanta "Spill the Tea"		LW Atlanta "In It to Twin It" (N)		Ballers "Playing With Fire" (N)		Little Women: Atlanta "In It to Twin It"		
38	ROOT	(38) Wild Places	In Depth	MLB Baseball Spring Training Los Angeles	Dodgers vs. Seattle Mariners Site: Peoria Stadium -- Peoria, Ariz.			Stadium -- Peoria, Ariz.		Fight Sports MMA (N)		Fight: Kickboxing (N)		
39	F51	(39) UFC Top Ten	UFC Sound Waves	UFC Classics "Heavyweights" (N)		UFC Tonight		Speak for Yourself		Skip and Shannon: Undisputed Opinions on the biggest sports topics of the day.				
43	SPIKE	(43) (5:00) Snitch (2013, Action)	Jon Bernthal, Dwayne Johnson.	** Now You See Me (2013, Crime Story)	Common, Mark Ruffalo, Jesse Eisenberg.			Kalief Browder Sto	Injustice for All" (N)		Now You See Me '13	Jesse Eisenberg.		
44	COM	(44) (20) Futurama "A Big Piece of Garbage"	(55) South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	ComedyJam (N)	South Park	The Daily Show (N) @midnight (N)		
45	HIST	(45) American Pickers	Space Oddities	American Pickers	Slim Pickings			Amer. Pickers "Extreme Collectors" (N)	(:05) Amer. Pickers	Risks and Rewards"	(:05) Amer. Pickers	"Pam's Labyrinth"		
46	A&E	(46) Duck Dynasty	Duck Dynasty	Duck Dynasty	Duck Dynasty	Duck Dynasty (N)		Duck Dynasty "End of an Era" (N)	Jep and Jessica (N)	Jep and Jessica (N)	Jep and Jessica (N)	Duck Dynasty		
47	TLC	(47) My 600-lb Life "Tracy's Story"		My 600-lb Life "Tracy's Story"		My 600-lb Life "Steven and Justin's Story Part 1"	Steve and Justin's father seeks help for his sons. Pt. 1 of 2 (N)					600-lb "Steven and Justin's Story Part 1"		
48	DISC	(48) The Last Alaskans "Dark Winter"		The Last Alaskans "Fire and Ice"		The Last Alaskans "Winter's Dawn"		Last Alaskans "A Taste of Freedom" (N)	Bering Sea Gold "Murky Waters" (N)		The Last Alaskans "A Taste of Freedom"			
49	NGEO	(49) Alaska Troopers "Campground Crazy's"		Drugs, Inc. "Designer Drugs"		Drugs, Inc. "Snitch Cities"		Heroin Explosion (N)	Drugs, Inc. "Big Apple Coke"		Drugs, Inc. "Cancun Spring Break"			
50	TNT	(50) Bones "The Secret in the Siege"		Bones "The Secrets in the Proposal"		Major Crimes "Bad Blood"		Major Crimes "Intersection" (N)	Good Behavior		Hawaii Five-0 "Wawahi Moe'Uhane"			
51	AMC	(51) (5:00) *** The Rock (1996, Action)	Nicolas Cage, Ed Harris, Sean Connery.	*** Lethal Weapon (1987, Action)	Danny Glover, Mel Gibson.			NCIS "Squall"	NCIS "Chasing Ghosts"		Modern Family	Modern Family		
52	USA	(52) NCIS "Prime Suspect"		NCIS "Seek"		Chopped Junior		Chopped "Make Me a Judge: Finale" (N)	Cooks vs. Cons "Gone Bananas" (N)		Cooks vs. Cons "Juicy Resolutions"	Cooks vs. Cons "Lunchbox Bonanza"		
53	FOOD	(53) Chopped Junior		Chopped Junior		Property Brothers "Modern Must-Have"		Property Brothers	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters	Property Brothers			
54	HGTV	(54) Buying & Selling "Feeling the Squeeze"		Buying and Selling "Escape to the City"		Property Brothers "Modern Must-Have"		Property Brothers	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters	Property Brothers			
55	FX	(55) (4:00) The Avengers Robert Downey Jr.		*** X-Men: Days of Future Past (2014, Adventure)	Ian McKellen, Patrick Stewart, Hugh Jackman.			Anderson Cooper 360	Anderson Cooper 360		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon			
57	CNN	(57) Anderson Cooper 360		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		Anderson Cooper 360	Anderson Cooper 360		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon			
58	FNC	(58) Tucker Carlson Tonight		Hannity		The O'Reilly Factor		Tucker Carlson Tonight	Hannity		The First 100 Days			
61	CNBC	(61) Shark Tank		Deed Chicago "Fires on Every Floor" (N)		Shark Tank		Shark Tank	Deed Chicago "Fires on Every Floor"		Paid Program	Paid Program		
63	BRVA	(63) Real Housewives "Reunion Part 2" 2/3		Real Housewives "Reunion Part 3" 3/3		Housewives Atlanta "Maui Mayhem"		Housewives Atl. "Aloha and Goodbye"	Atlanta "Baby Nups and Breakups"		WatchWhat	Beverly Hills		
64	TRM	(64) (5:00) Diary of a Madman Vincent Price.		Le Plaisir (1952, Drama)	Jean Galland, Jean Gabin, Claude Dauphin.			** Mademoiselle Fifi (44, Dra)	John Emery, Simone Simon.	[Masculin-Feminin	(66, Dra) Chantal Goya, Jean-Pierre Léaud.			
65	SYFY	(65) Need for Speed (2014, Action)	Imogen Poots, Dominic Cooper, Aaron Paul.			Magicians "The Girl Who Told Time" (N)		The Expanse "Cascade" (N)			Jonah Hex (2010, Action)	Josh Brolin.		
69	RFD	(69) Cowboy TV	Cowboy Moments	Women's Rodeo	Equestrian Nation	Total Team Roping	Rural Eve. News	The Final Spin	WesternSport	Cowboy TV	Cowboy Moments	Product Showcase		

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