



Josh Bessex/The Daily Astorian

The Coast Guard cutter Alert, shown here returning to Astoria in 2015, is undergoing repairs.

## Coast Guard cutter Alert returns to Astoria early

Mechanical failures cut patrol short

By JACK HEFFERNAN  
The Daily Astorian

A counternarcotics patrol in the eastern Pacific Ocean involving the Coast Guard cutter Alert was cut short earlier this month due to a series of engine failures.

Overheating and clogged strainers caused some of the 35 mechanical failures over the first 19 days of the trip. The more than 65 Coast Guard members on board were unable to perform any patrols.

The final straw was a crankcase explosion in the main diesel engine caused by a failed lube oil pump.

"It's not safe to operate with only one engine," Cmdr. Tobias Reid said. "The other casualties would not have brought us back home."

The trip was originally scheduled to last until Wednesday. The cutter is back at the 17th Street Dock, where it will undergo repairs

for at least six weeks.

Companies stopped building engines used on the 49-year-old cutter around the time of its commission.

"It's fairly normal for an old ship like this to have a high number of breakdowns," Reid said. "Whenever we get parts, they're for engines that are not being produced anymore. That causes most of our problems."

The Alert is one of 14 remaining 210-foot Reliance-class medium endurance cutters in the Coast Guard's fleet and one of three on the West Coast. Astoria was selected in April as the home of two new 154-foot Sentinel-class cutters by 2021.

In good condition compared to the other 210-foot cutters, the Alert will likely remain in commission for another 10 to 15 years, Reid said. He is optimistic, though, that future cutters can be retired sooner.

"I'm really enthused about the shipbuilding process we have now," Reid said. "It's very important for our service that we keep building new ships."

# Lewis & Clark Timberlands to require recreation permits

By BRENNA VISSER  
The Daily Astorian

Starting in June, people who like to recreate on Lewis & Clark Timberlands will need a permit.

Since the mid-1990s, the timberlands have been open and free for recreation from hiking and biking to bow hunting. It will stay that way, said Mark Morgans, the area manager of Lewis & Clark Timberlands. No costs will be associated with the permit and the requirement will only apply to property in Oregon.

The permit idea came from a local desire to find a better way to communicate via text about closures, safety issues and any other policy changes, Morgans said.

Better communication could have been used in situations like last fall when the property was closed for fire danger, Morgans said. After a bout of rain, the fire hazard was low enough to allow about a week's worth of recreation.

"But we had no method



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Permits will be required for recreation on Lewis & Clark Timberlands this summer.

to be able to (communicate) that," Morgans said. "We could have opened up a week during bow hunting season. There's a significant portion of our county where that's what they do. That's their sport, they wait all year for it."

Providing a larger feeling of community and sense of security is another benefit to asking people to sign up for the annual permit, Morgans said. Someone will be

hired to patrol the 140,000 acres of timberland in Oregon to enforce the new permit system.

While as area manager he rarely receives complaints about suspicious or illegal behavior on the property, Morgans said many users have said they would appreciate the oversight.

"People were saying they would feel more secure out there, knowing we know who is out there," he said.

Though 140,000 acres is a hefty amount of acreage to patrol, Morgans said outside of hunting season most visitors stay around the perimeter within a couple of miles, making the task more manageable.

Morgans said the permit application is not intended to be "intrusive." Outside of providing a working email or textable phone number, people should feel at liberty to share however little or as much as they want on the application. Anyone caught without a permit, however, will be barred from ever receiving one in the future, Morgans said.

But getting a permit shouldn't be much of a hassle, he said. People can sign up for free online on the Greenwood Resources website once the it launches in May, or scan a QR code with a smartphone at any of the property entrances to get a permit on site.

"Forest landowners have a responsibility, unwritten or not, to benefit the community by allowing legal use of their timberland," Morgans said. "It's a philosophical thing."

## Washington phases out Atlantic salmon farming

By PHUONG LE  
Associated Press

SEATTLE — Washington state will phase out marine farming of Atlantic salmon and other nonnative fish by 2022 under legislation signed Thursday by Gov. Jay Inslee.

Net pens growing Atlantic salmon in state waters have operated for several decades but the practice came under heavy criticism after tens of thousands of nonnative fish escaped into waterways last summer.

Inslee has said the risks are not acceptable given the high priority—and hundreds of millions of dollars spent — on bringing back declining populations of native Pacific salmon runs.

The legislation sponsored by state Rep. Kristine Lytton, an Anacortes Democrat, would end state leases and permits for operations that grow nonnative finfish in state waters when current leases expire.

It targets Canada's Cooke Aquaculture Pacific, the largest producer of farmed Atlantic salmon in the U.S., whose net pens in northwest Washington collapsed Aug. 19.

"While our company and our rural sea farming employees are deeply disappointed by the governor's decision to ignore the science and sign the bill, we will certainly respect the wishes of the Legislature," Cooke's vice president Joel Richardson said in an emailed

statement Thursday.

He added that the company will "take the time we need to fully evaluate our operations and investments in Washington and explore all our available options."

State officials in January blamed Cooke's negligence for

failing to maintain its net pens. They said the escape of the salmon put the state's ecosystem at risk and fined the company \$332,000. Up to 263,000 invasive Atlantic salmon escaped into Puget Sound, raising fears about the impact to native Pacific salmon runs.

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