

[Japan Confirms Beached Dock Came From March 2011 Tsunami](#)

Local News

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - The Japanese government has confirmed that the dock that made landfall on the coast of Washington state was washed into the Pacific Ocean during the Japanese tsunami of March 11, 2011. The dock has been positively identified as coming from Aomori Prefecture based on a fender production serial number discernible in one of the photographs sent by Washington state and federal responders. The dock beached in December on a remote shore within the boundaries of both the Olympic National Park and Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. Scientists suspected the dock was from Japan, since state and federal responders found dozens of plant and animal species on the structure that were native to Japan, not Washington state. The dock was similar to the structure that washed ashore near Newport, Ore., last summer which was also confirmed to be from the Japanese tsunami. Pinpointing the origin of marine debris is challenging. When possible, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) works closely with the government of Japan to determine whether an item originated in the tsunami impact zone. To date, 19 items have been [definitively traced back to the tsunami](#), typically by registration number or some other unique marking. This is the fourth confirmed item found on the shores of Washington state.

In making this identification, NOAA and Washington state worked with the Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle. Washington state and the U.S. government appreciate the expertise and assistance of the numerous agencies in the U.S. and Japan that assisted with the dock identification, including: The Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle, The Secretariat of Headquarters for Ocean Policy, Cabinet Secretariat of the Government of Japan, The Fisheries Agency of Japan, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, The Aomori Prefectural Government. In order to minimize damage to the coastline and marine habitat, federal agencies are moving forward with plans to remove the dock. In addition to being located within a designated wilderness portion of Olympic National Park, the dock is also within NOAA's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary and adjacent to the Washington Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex. NOAA has announced a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit proposals from professional marine salvage contractors. Information can be found at: <https://www.fbo.gov/spg/DOC/NOAA/WASC/...C-13-RP-0144/listing.html>. The deadline for submitting proposals is 2 p.m. Pacific on Jan. 22, 2013. Marine debris is an ongoing problem with everyday impacts. Anyone sighting significant marine debris that may be from the tsunami is asked to report it to DisasterDebris@noaa.gov. For the latest information on tsunami debris please visit <http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/tsunamidebris/> and <http://marinedebris.wa.gov/>. **For more information:** [Videos of the dock](#) are posted on Ecology's Flickr site (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ecologywa/sets/72157632519730495/>) [Photos of the dock](#) are posted on Ecology's Flickr site (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ecologywa/sets/72157632473219008/>) [Forks Docks Incident Website](#) (<http://marinedebris.wa.gov/incidents/ForksDock.html>) [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\) Marine Debris Program](#) (<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/tsunamidebris/>)