

DNR removing two 125-foot derelict vessels from Guemes Channel

Local News

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OLYMPIA — The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced today it is removing two 125-foot derelict vessels from a dilapidated dock on the Guemes Channel in Anacortes. The two vessels are being transported by Global Diving and Salvage to safer moorage at the Port of Seattle. DNR's Derelict Vessel Removal Program took custody of the vessels on April 1 due to concerns that the vessels posed a threat to navigational safety in the channel, the structural integrity of the nearby Guemes Ferry Dock, and the health of the area's marine ecosystem. On February 25, during high westerly winds, the two vessels, the *Port de la Reine* and the *Port Quebec*, began to pull away from the old Shannon Point Seafoods pier, causing the northwest portion of the pier to collapse into the channel. This section of pier is located on state-owned aquatic lands, which DNR manages. DNR was concerned that the vessels could cause further damage to the pier and adjacent property. When the owner of the vessel failed to move the two vessels to a safer location as requested, DNR proceeded to obtain custody as [granted by statute](#).

"I'm pleased that we were able to move these vessels out of harm's way before they became a hazard to navigation, public safety, and the environment," said Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark. "Having the ability to proactively deal with derelict vessels is a much more cost-effective approach than spending taxpayer's money on clean up, removal, and possible disposal." The two former Canadian Navy vessels have been tied up to the old pier for more than a decade. The vessels were on DNR's list of vessels of concern, but prior to the February 25 incident, they didn't appear to pose an immediate threat to navigational safety or environmental health. DNR maintains an [inventory of vessels of concern](#) and works to remove those that pose the greatest risk first. Currently, there are 165 vessels on this list. DNR is working to strengthen the Derelict Vessel Removal Program through legislation. ([ESHB 1245](#).) Since the February 25 incident, an interagency team has been working together to monitor and prevent the vessels from becoming a hazard to public health and the environment. The team comprises DNR, Washington Department of Ecology, U.S. Coast Guard, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the City of Anacortes. The vessels are being towed by two tugs, *Island Viking* and *Island Spirit*. You can track their progress at www.marinetraffic.com/ais/. In the "Ships Map" section, enter one of the vessel's names. DNR's Derelict Vessel Removal Program

DNR's Derelict Vessel Removal Program provides funding and expertise to public agencies to assist with the removal of abandoned and derelict vessels from state-owned aquatic lands, which DNR manages. At any given time, there can be several hundred derelict vessels on the rivers, lakes, and estuaries of Washington. Primary funding for the program comes from a \$3 surcharge placed on annual vessel registration fees and an additional \$5 charge added to non-resident vessel fees. For more information about DNR's Derelict Vessel Removal Program, visit: bit.ly/dnr_dvrp.