

# COQUILLE RIVER BAR HAZARDS

## BAR AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

**Listen to the local broadcast on 1610 AM**

### CROSSING THE BAR

The bar is the area where the deep waters of the Pacific Ocean meet with the shallower waters near the mouth of the river.

Most accidents and deaths that occur on coastal bars are from capsizing.

Coastal bars may be closed to recreational boats when conditions on the bar are hazardous. Failure to comply with the closure may result in voyage termination, and civil and/or criminal penalties. The regulations are enforced by Coast Guard boarding teams.

Improper loading and/or overloading are major causes of capsizing. Improper/overloaded boats have less stability and less freeboard, which can allow seas to break into the vessel, causing the boat to become even less stable.

Boats are more likely to capsize when crossing the bar from the ocean because the seas are on the stern and the boater may have less control over the vessel.

Boaters must make sure the bar is safe prior to crossing. Check with other boaters or the Coast Guard to find out the condition of the bar.

If you are caught on a rough bar running in...

- Make sure everybody aboard is wearing a personal flotation device.
- Keep the boat square before the seas.
- Keep the boat on the back of the swell. Ride the swell and stay clear of the following wave.

Avoid sudden weight shifts from passengers or gear moving around in the boat. If possible, have passengers lie down as near the centerline of the boat as possible.

Do not allow the waves to catch your boat on the side (beam). This condition is called broaching, and can easily result in capsizing.

### TIDES

Tides are the vertical rise and fall of the water and tidal current is the horizontal flow of the water. There are roughly four tides each day in the Pacific Northwest. Tidal movement toward the shore or upstream is the flood current. Movement away from the shore or downstream is the ebb current. The period between the two is known as slack water. Tidal currents may gain tremendous velocity, particularly when the ebb current is augmented by river runoff.

- It is extremely dangerous to get caught on the bar during strong ebb current. Even on days that are relatively calm, fast moving ebb can create bar conditions that are too rough for small craft.

- Always know the stage of the tide!
- Avoid getting caught on the bar during an ebb tide.

It is normally best to cross the bar during slack water or on a flood tide, when the seas are normally calmest.

### REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS

The Coast Guard has established a Regulated Navigation Area. If the yellow lights on this sign are flashing, a restriction has been placed on recreational and uninspected passenger vessels crossing the bar. In accordance with 33 CFR 165.1325, the U.S. Coast Guard has the authority to restrict all recreational and uninspected passenger vessels from crossing the bar when hazardous conditions exist. Failing to comply with posted bar restrictions may result in a maximum civil penalty of \$25,000.00.

### WARNING SIGN LOCATIONS



A white diamond shape sign with an orange border indicating "Rough Bar" and amber flashing lights is located on the Old Coast Guard Station facing up river toward the Port of Bandon. When the amber lights are flashing, hazardous conditions are present and a bar restriction is in place. Mariners should tune in to radio 1610 AM to listen to the restriction information.

### BAR CONDITIONS AND OBSERVATION REPORTS

Observed weather and bar conditions are updated every four hours or more frequently if there is a significant change. Marine Information Broadcasts on Channel 16 VHF FM are conducted by the Coast Guard when hazardous bar conditions and restrictions are put into place or are lifted. Mariners are strongly encouraged to monitor channel 16 VHF/FM for all notices and weather updates.

The AM radio broadcast is audible within a 3-mile radius from the Coast Guard Station in Bandon. It provides a continual broadcast on radio station 1610 AM containing bar conditions, bar restrictions, and local weather.

The Coast Guard Station on the Coquille River is operational when the boating activity is significant enough to warrant the patrol, usually Memorial Day through Labor Day.

You can also access current bar conditions and restrictions on your smart phone or hand held device by going to, <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/pqr/marine/BarObs.php>.



### EMERGENCIES

VHF-FM Radio: Channel 16

If in distress (threatened by grave and imminent danger):

- Make sure radio is on
- Select Channel 16
- Press/hold the transmit button
- Speak slowly, and clearly say: MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY
- Give the following information:
  - Vessel Name and/or Description
  - Nature of Emergency
  - Position and/or Location
  - Number of People Aboard
- Release the Transmit Button
- Wait for 10 seconds – If no response, repeat "Mayday" call. If not in immediate danger, switch to CH 22 and follow the same steps as above, except do not use the word "MAYDAY."

**Make Sure Everyone is Wearing a Life Jacket!**

Phone 911. Tell the operator that you have a marine emergency. Be ready to provide the same information required in item number 5 of the mayday call.

### Coast Guard Stations:

Coquille River (seasonal) Bandon, OR (541) 347-2038	Coos Bay Coos Bay, OR (541) 888-3267
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### BOATING SAFETY TIPS

- Check Weather, Tide, and Bar Conditions – The latest information can be heard on 1610 AM
- File a Float Plan With Friends/Relatives
- Don't Overload Your Boat
- Wear Your Life Jacket
- Carry Flares and a VHF-FM Radio
- Stay Well Clear of Commercial Vessels
- Have Anchor With Adequate Line
- Boat Sober



## CROSSING THE COQUILLE RIVER BAR

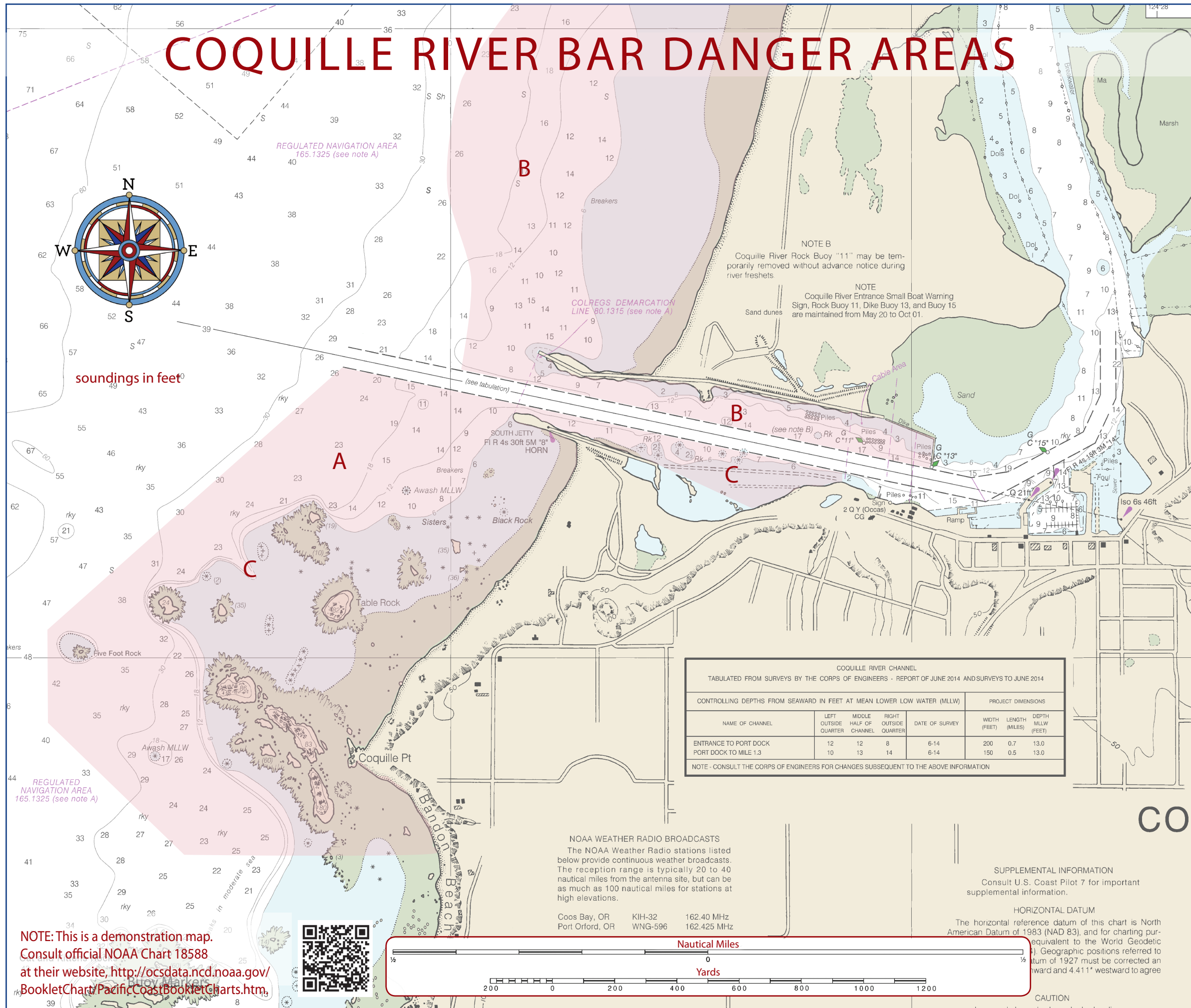


More Boating Safety Information: [www.uscgboating.org](http://www.uscgboating.org) and [www.boatoregon.com](http://www.boatoregon.com)  
Boating Class and Vessel Safety Check Information: [www.uscgaux.org/~130/](http://www.uscgaux.org/~130/),  
[www.usps.org](http://www.usps.org) or 1-800-336-BOAT (2628) (class information only)





# COQUILLE RIVER BAR DANGER AREAS



**A. South side of Coquille river entrance.** The area to the south of the entrance can be very dangerous. There are several rocks just below the surface that cannot be seen except during heavy seas. There is a prevailing northwest wind during the summer months, and the sea currents run to the south. These two conditions could combine to send a powerless boat into this area and onto the rocks.

**B. North jetty.** Stay clear of the end of this jetty, because the sea breaks almost continuously in this area. A shallow area with partially submerged rocks extends from the abandoned lighthouse to the end of the jetty. Large swells that occur in this area could put a boat onto these rocks.

**C. South jetty.** It is always dangerous to get too close to the end of a jetty. An unexpected breaker could carry a small boat onto the end of the jetty with great force. The inside of the south jetty is dangerous, and boaters should remain clear. The prevailing northwest wind could set a powerless boat onto the jetty.



**Warning:** Safe navigation is the responsibility of the operator of each vessel. The Coast Guard and NOAA provide information to assist mariners in navigating safely. The information is updated every four hours or when local bar conditions and or restrictions change. The information provided reflects conditions at the time the bar was observed and may not reflect current conditions. Bar conditions are subject to change without notice. This report should NOT be used as the sole source of information when making a decision to cross the bar. Mariners are advised to use all means available to safely reevaluate bar conditions and risk before crossing the bar.

**NOTE:** This is a demonstration map. Consult official NOAA Chart 18588 at their website, <http://ocsdta.ncd.noaa.gov/BookletChart/PacificCoastBookletCharts.htm>.

