

# YAQUINA BAY 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 center-line 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, indicating 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

Warning signs are posted in two locations in the port. Two white diamond shape signs with orange borders indicating "Rough Bar" and amber flashing lights are located on a tower approximately half way between the Coast Guard moorings and the Yaquina Bay Bridge on the north bank of the river. One sign is visible to the South Beach Marine area and the second sign is facing up river toward the Port Docks and facilities. An additional warning sign is located at the South Beach boat ramp. This sign is blue in color and has amber flashing lights that read: **Warning When Flashing, Bar Restrictions in Effect, Tune to 1610 AM.** When the amber lights are flashing on any of the warning signs, hazardous conditions are present and a bar restriction is in place and mariners should tune in 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 in the conditions. 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 4-mile radius from the Coast Guard Station in Newport. It provides a continual broadcast on radio station 1610 AM containing bar conditions, bar restrictions, and local weather.

You can also access current bar conditions and restriction 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):

1. Make sure radio is on
2. Select Channel 16
3. Press/Hold the transmit button
4. Speak slowly, and clearly say: MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY
5. Give the following information:
  - ◆ Vessel Name and/or Description
  - ◆ Nature of Emergency
  - ◆ Position and/or Location
  - ◆ Number of People Aboard
6. Release the Transmit Button
7. 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.

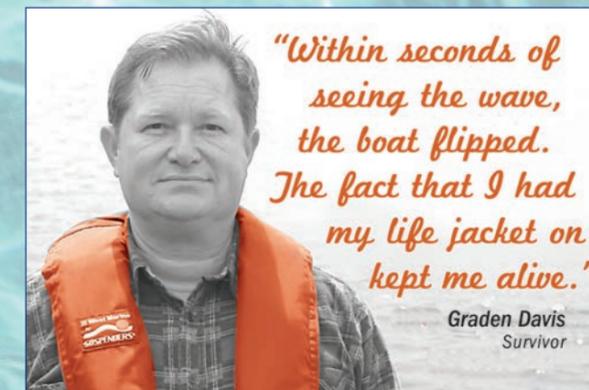


### Coast Guard Stations:

Yaquina Bay  
Newport, OR  
(541) 265-5381

## BOATING SAFETY TIPS

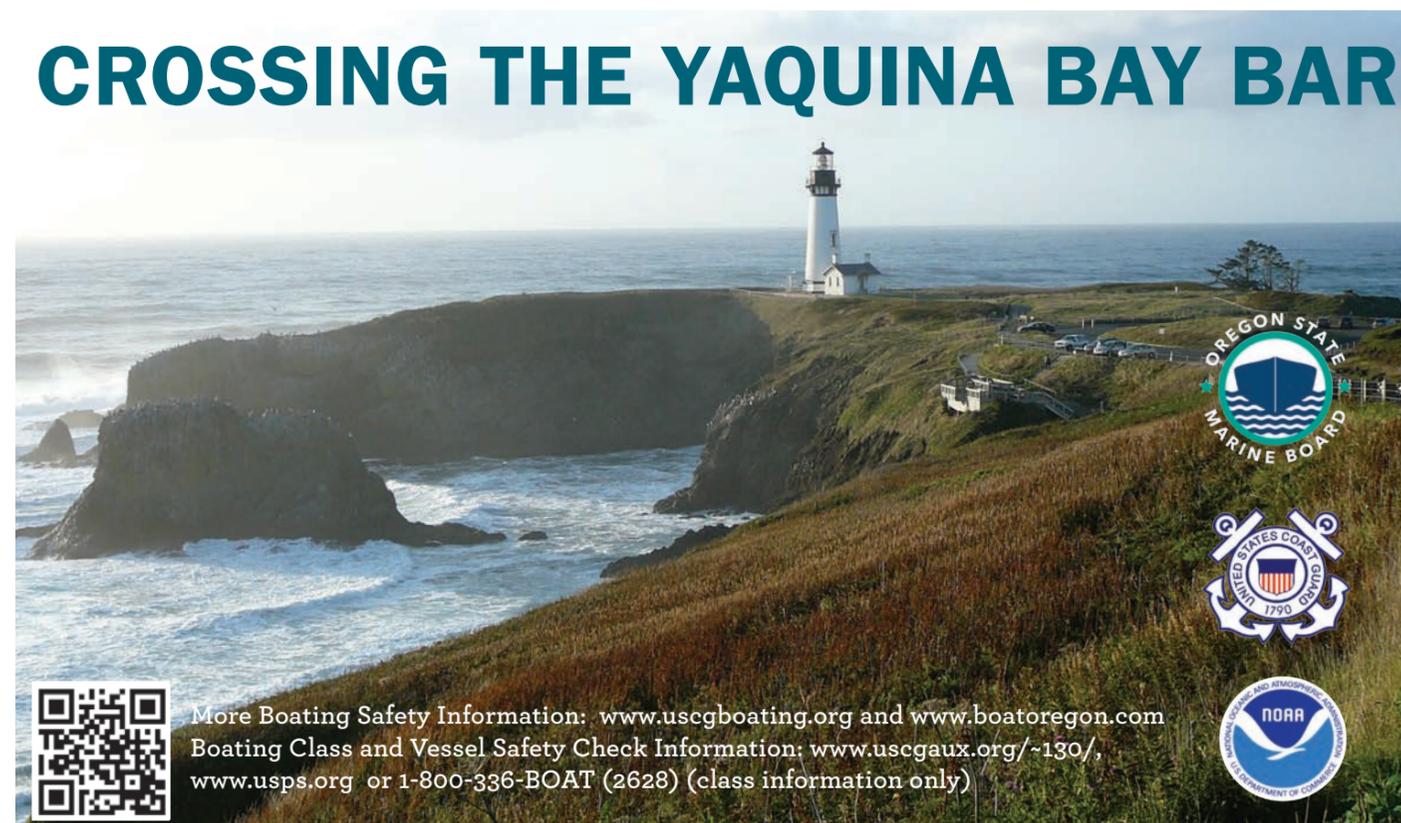
- ◆ Check Weather, Tide, and Bar Conditions - The latest Information Can Be Heard on 1610 AM
- ◆ File a Float Plan With Friends/Relatives
- ◆ Don't Overload Your Boat
- ◆ Wear Your Life Jacket
- ◆ Carry Flares and a VHF-FM Radio
- ◆ Stay Well Clear of Commercial Vessels
- ◆ Have Anchor With Adequate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



*"Within seconds of seeing the wave, the boat flipped. The fact that I had my life jacket on kept me alive."*

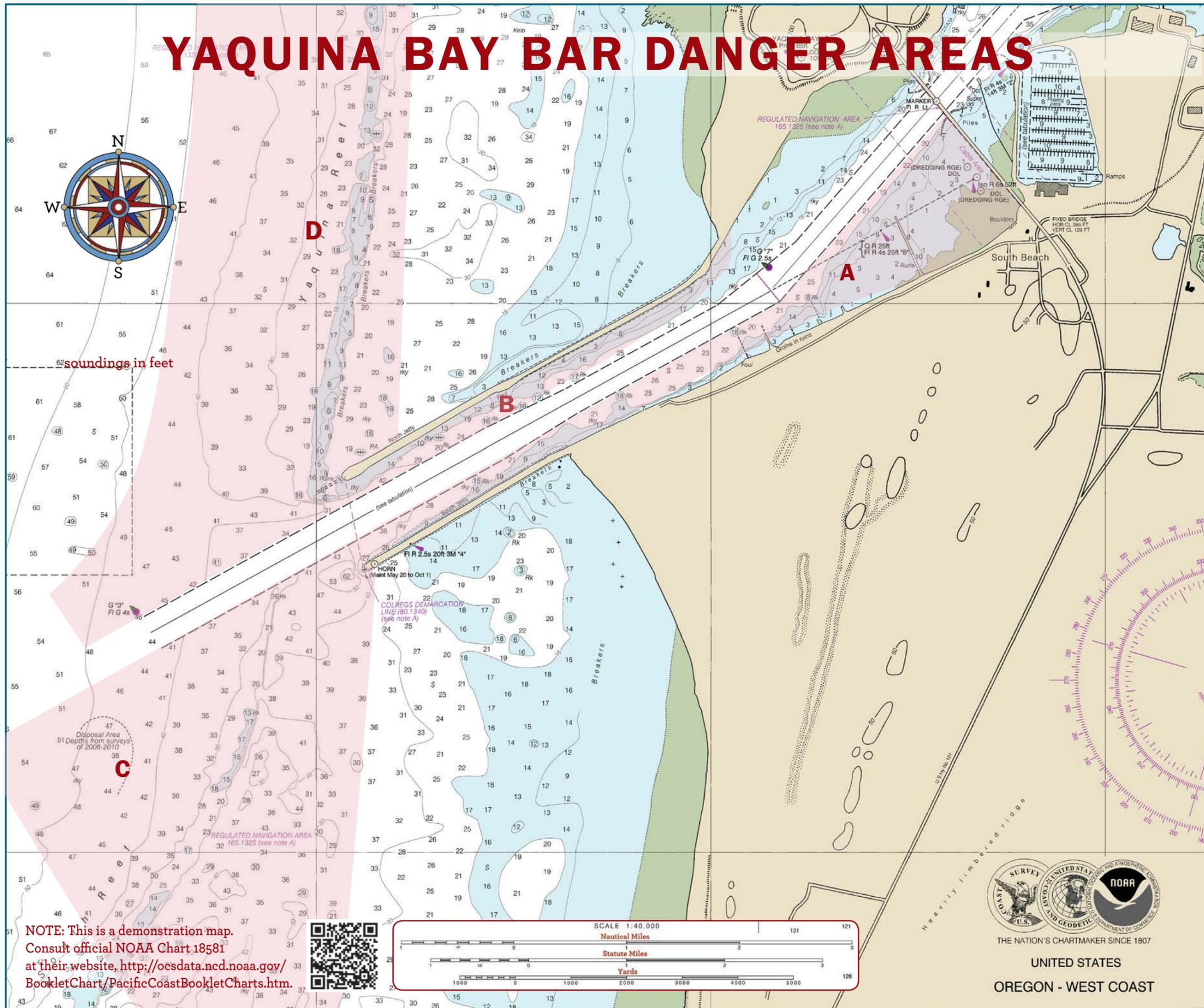
Graden Davis  
Survivor

# CROSSING THE YAQUINA BAY 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)

# YAQUINA BAY BAR DANGER AREAS



**A. South jetty.** There are submerged rocks along the length of the jetty; do not hug the jetty on either side. Boaters should remain in the channel entering and leaving the river so that if their engines fail, they will have time to anchor before the current or wind sweeps them into the rocks.

**B. North jetty.** This jetty affords excellent protection from northerly winds. However, the same caution should be exercised in running close to it as with the south jetty. Be especially cautious of submerged rocks near the tip of the north jetty. On an ebb tide, stay well clear, up to the end of the north jetty, as there is danger of being swept into the breakers at the extreme end. Remain in the channel outbound until you pass buoy #1 at the south end of Yaquina reef. This applies to entering the river as well as leaving.

**C. South reef.** This reef can be considered an extension of Yaquina reef and is equally dangerous because it has the same surf conditions. When going south, continue out the channel to the entrance buoy before turning south.

**D. Yaquina reef.** This reef is extremely dangerous, even when the winds are light and few breakers can be seen. A large swell coming from seaward can cause a tremendous breaker on this reef with little or no warning, even when the sea is otherwise calm. Never fish close to the reef and do not turn north between the end of the north jetty and buoy #1.



**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 18581 at their website, <http://ocsddata.ncd.noaa.gov/BookletChart/PacificCoastBookletCharts.htm>.

