

NOAA Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Case Study

Derelict Vessel Removals in Charleston County, SC

Contributor:

S.C. Sea Grant Consortium and S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control



Project Overview

Reason for project: Derelict vessels threatening safety of navigable waterways and health of essential fish habitat

Date project was first initiated: July 1, 2014

Project duration: July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2016

Number of vessels removed: 8-13 (anticipated)

Project Location

Location: Charleston County, Charleston, South Carolina

Site Name(s): Charleston Harbor

General description of location: Working waterfront/marinas or mooring fields adjacent to tidal wetlands and oyster reefs

Average Site Depth: 0-15 ft.

Habitat/Substrate Type Impacted: Salt marsh, oyster reef

Jurisdictions: City of Charleston, State of South Carolina



Project Narrative

History: The presence of derelict vessels within South Carolina's coastal waterways is a chronic problem. Since 2004, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) has worked with federal and state partners to leverage the removal of over 100 derelict vessels from South Carolina's coastal waters; however, there are currently an estimated 112 derelict vessels in the coastal counties of Beaufort, Charleston, and Georgetown -- 69% of these vessels are located in Charleston County. Many of these identified vessels have been abandoned outright or are neglected at unauthorized moorings/anchorages. The project location is used heavily by recreational and transient watercraft due to the proximity to Charleston Harbor, scenic Ashley River and accessibility to marinas and mooring fields.

Why was the project initiated: To improve the safety of navigable waterways and the health of essential fish habitat, 13 derelict vessels weighing approximately 22-26 tons will be removed from the Charleston Harbor.

Who initiated the project: S.C. DHEC in cooperation with S.C. Sea Grant Consortium, the City of Charleston and Charleston City Marina.

Lead agency or organization: S.C. DHEC

Other collaborators/stakeholders involved: S.C. Sea Grant Consortium, City of Charleston and Charleston City Marina

Funding source(s): NOAA, FY2014 Community-based Marine Debris Removal (\$75,000), S.C. DHEC (\$29,000), City of Charleston (\$20,000), Charleston City Marina (\$10,000)



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Threats from ADV

Environmental: Potential environmental impacts include damage to marsh and benthic habitat.

Critical habitats involved: Salt marsh and oyster reef habitats.

Public safety and health: Public safety potentially affected.

Navigation: Navigable waterways are affected.

Commerce: Ashley River/Charleston Harbor are major recreational/commercial waterways.

Aesthetic: Viewsheds in the Harbor are affected.

Summary of ADV Removals

Number of vessels removed: 10 to date/exact number TBD

Primary type of vessels removed: Recreational watercraft

Typical hull type of vessels: Reinforced fiberglass

Average size of vessels removed: 27ft in length

Amount of acres restored via removal: Operations resulted in the removal of debris from approximately 10 acres, though restoration was not part of this effort.

Approximate removal cost per vessel: Depending on the size of the vessel, salvage costs, including removal and disposal/recycling, can range from \$10,000 to \$14,000 per vessel.

Other cost information: ~ \$2,000 is spent on advertising/public notice of vessels to be removed.

Additional types of debris removed: Misc. debris at removal sites from previously sunk ADV.

Project Removal Actions

Start date: 31 August 2015

End date: Initial phase concluded on September 8, 2015.

Removal options considered: Voluntary removal by owner exhausted

Environmental Considerations: Prioritization given to vessels that directly threaten public health and safety and impact to habitat.

Removal Methods: Crane loading onto barge and clam-shell dredge.

Authorities used to take Possession of Vessels: Exhaustion of state administrative enforcement and municipal police authority.

Permits Required: None

Salvage Contractor(s): Salmon's Dredging, Charleston, SC

Contractor Selection Process: Competitive bid administered by the City of Charleston

Vessel Disposal Process/Issues: ADV loaded onto barge and transported to contractor facility for break-down and transportation to landfill.

Project Challenges

Funding: South Carolina and its constituent counties and municipalities do not receive recurring funding to remove ADV.



New tools, techniques or developments

DHEC released a new tool via its MyCoast, which is a South Carolina specific mobile application that allows efficient reporting of ADV sites by the general public. Using a smart phone app, individuals may submit a photograph and description of the site. The MyCoast application then appends GPS coordinates, date/time, tide stage and other information to the report before pinning the location on a publicly accessible web-based map (<http://mycoast.org/sc>). MyCoast is available on iTunes and Google Play as well.

Contact Information

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Images Online:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/scdhec/>

Media:

Authorities removing abandoned, condemned boats from Charleston waters

<http://www.live5news.com/story/29983241/authorities-removing-abandoned-condemned-boats-from-charleston-waters>

Salvage crews clear waterways of sunken, abandoned boats

<http://www.abcnews4.com/story/29983882/salvage-crews-clear-waterways-of-sunken-abandoned-boats>

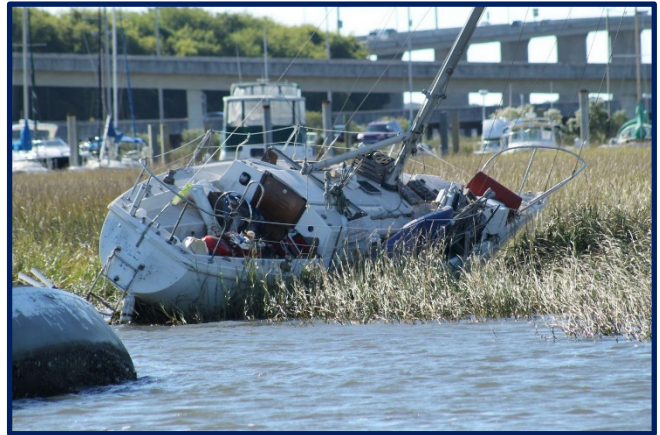


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Images: Peter Kingsley-Smith, SCDNR





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Vessels Removed

Vessel name	Vessel Type	Time abandoned	Incident	Length	Hull material
N/A	Sail	Reported 10/2014	Derelict	27'	Fiberglass
N/A	Sail	N/A	Derelict	34'	Fiberglass
N/A	Sail	N/A	Derelict	30'	Fiberglass
Second Wind	Sail	Reported 4/2014	Derelict	27'	Fiberglass
N/A	Sail	Reported 10/2014	Derelict	30'	Fiberglass
N/A	Houseboat	Reported 10/2014	Derelict	30'	Fiberglass
N/A	Powerboat	Reported 10/2014	Derelict	30'	Fiberglass
N/A	Sail	N/A	Derelict	30'	Fiberglass (scuttled with concrete)
N/A	Sail	N/A	Derelict	32'	Wooden
N/A	Sail	N/A	Derelict	27'	Fiberglass