

NOAA Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Case Study



S/V Velero

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Vessel Overview

Name: Velero
Incident: Vessel grounding
Date reported: 8/28/2012
Vessel type: Sailing Vessel (double mast)
Vessel ID#: Document no. 910098
Hull material: Ferro cement construction
Length: 48.8 feet
Beam: 13.2 feet
Tonnage: 23 gross tons



Vessel Location

Location: The vessel was grounded approximately 1 mile offshore near Kalepolepo, Maui
Site Name(s): Kihei, Hawai'i
General description of location: Offshore reef located on the south shore of the Island of Maui
Coordinates: Latitude 20' 45.824 N, Longitude 156' 27.728 W
Average Site Depth: 3 feet
Habitat/Substrate Type Impacted: Coral reef habitat
Jurisdictions: The State of Hawai'i gained jurisdiction over this vessel after the U.S. Coast Guard removed the remaining diesel fuel onboard and abated the pollution threat.

Incident Narrative

History: The sailing vessel Velero was found grounded on a coral reef roughly a mile offshore of Kalepolepo, Maui. The vessel was lying on its port-side in about 3 feet of water. After being informed of the abandoned vessel and its location Hawai'i's Department of Land and Natural Resources immediately solicited a bid from marine salvage contractors for the removal and disposal of the vessel. Because of the abandoned vessels remote location and the special equipment required to patch or dismantle a cement hull vessel the bids that were received were all above \$250,000 which was considered a prohibitive amount by the state for the removal of a single vessel. Before any further decision could be made and removal efforts started the hull collapsed and the vessel sank below the surface. Because no pollution or marine debris was spotted near the area where the vessel sank, no further action to date has been taken by the state to remove this vessel.

Lead agency or organization: State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation (DOBOR)

Other collaborators/stakeholders involved: State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR)

Funding source(s): Funding for the removal of this vessel was provided by the DLNR Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation Special Fund.



Threats from ADV

Environmental: The spread of marine debris, pollution from fuel and oil, and additional coral damage were the primary environmental threats identified. A Coast Guard contractor removed 80 gallons of diesel fuel prior to the vessel sinking.

Critical habitats involved: Coral reef habitat was the primary habitat impacted by the grounding.

Public safety and health: Threats to the public were minimal due to remote and isolated location.

Navigation: No threats were reported, possibly because the hull collapsed and sank below the surface of the water.

Aesthetic: The vessel grounded offshore on a scenic stretch of Maui's coastline which is frequently scene by visitors.

Vessel Removal Actions:

Start date: 8/28/2012 (solicitation for bids only)

End date: Due to the vessel sinking this issue is still unresolved

Authorities used to take Possession of Vessel: Possession of the vessel was acquired under Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) § 200-41, which addresses abandoned vessels on public and private property.

Removal options considered: The removal method that was considered involved patching the vessel on the reef, pumping out the water and refloating the vessel. Because of possible damage to the reef corals it was recommended that the salvage crew remove the vessel from the seaward side of the reef and float the vessel in a way that would allow it to remain on its side in order to minimize the chance of the keel or the hull touching the reef and coral as it is being towed seaward and off-shore.

Environmental Considerations: Limiting damage to the live corals under the vessel and in the immediate area around the vessel during the removal process was a high priority.

Permits Required: No permits were pursued due to the vessel breaking apart and sinking.

Removal Methods: Prior to the start of the removal process the vessel broke apart and sank so no further action has been initiated to date.

Salvage Contractor(s): Bids were solicited but no contractor was chosen due to the vessel sinking and the high estimated costs.

Contractor Selection Process: Lowest bid

Approximate removal costs: \$250,000 was the lowest contractor bid.

Vessel removal summary: The vessel broke apart and sank before the removal process could begin.

Project Challenges

Environmental: The vessel was grounded on a coral reef off the coast of Maui making it susceptible to wave action and tidal fluctuations which could disrupt the vessel during the removal process and increase risks to the workers.

Geographical: The remote location of the grounded and abandoned vessel would have posed substantial challenges during the removal process.



S/V **Velero**



Funding: The remote location of the vessel, the sensitivity of the area, and the special equipment required to dismantle a cement hull vessel increased the estimated costs of removal and disposal to \$250,000, which was considered a prohibitive amount.

Lessons Learned:

Due to the high estimated costs of this removal (\$250,000) it has become a priority for DLNR to develop regulations that require vessel owners and operators to carry appropriate insurance coverage. Currently, DLNR requires all vessels housed in its managed facilities to be covered by a \$500k insurance policy; however, trailered boats and vessels coming from other locations are not required to carry vessel insurance.

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