



October 16, 2015

Meg Gardner  
Environmental Programs Coordinator  
Oregon State Marine Board  
P.O. Box 14145  
435 Commercial Street NE  
Salem, OR 97309

Dear Meg,

On behalf of the Port of Astoria, I am providing this letter in strong support of your proposal to the NOAA Marine Debris Prevention Program. The objectives that are outlined in the OSMB's proposal are those that must be achieved if we are to preserve the health and efficiency of our waterways.

The efforts to remove the sunken derelict vessel *F/V Western* from Coos Bay are critical first steps in a long-overdue journey. There are currently hundreds of derelict vessels in the Pacific Northwest in danger of sinking and causing significant environmental damage. Many of these vessels have been abandoned in Ports and Marinas throughout the Pacific Northwest and thus have become the responsibility of those that oftentimes do not have the resources to deal with them. Unless attention is quickly drawn to this issue, I fear that the *F/V Western* will only be the beginning. Your leadership for the Oregon Abandoned and Derelict Vessel Task Force will be essential to developing a prioritized derelict vessel disposal plan that will benefit the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

As you know, the Port of Astoria is very familiar with the consequences surrounding unattended derelict vessels. In February 2015, the abandoned vessel *F/V Cap'n Oscar* sank at the Port of Astoria's Tongue Point and caused significant damage. **The hard lesson the *Cap'n Oscar* taught us was that it is much better to invest in disposition of a derelict vessel while there is opportunity to do so. Waiting for a vessel to founder only serves to exponentially increase costs, environmental damages and public distrust. As responsible stewards of our waterways, we simply cannot afford the consequences of this procrastination.**

The Port of Astoria offers its full support. If you should need assistance in this endeavor, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt McGrath  
Operations Manager  
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