



# Rogue River

## Ocean Salmon... Safely



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### DANGER AREAS

**A. Shoal water, south side.** Along the south side of the Rogue River channel are shoal water and gravel bars. This shoal water breaks to a height of six feet when a swell is running. Many

boaters fishing inside the river or trolling between the jetties find themselves set into this dangerous area by northwest winds. If a vessel breaks down in the channel and is not anchored, the northwest wind and ebb tide will set it into this dangerous area within a matter of minutes.

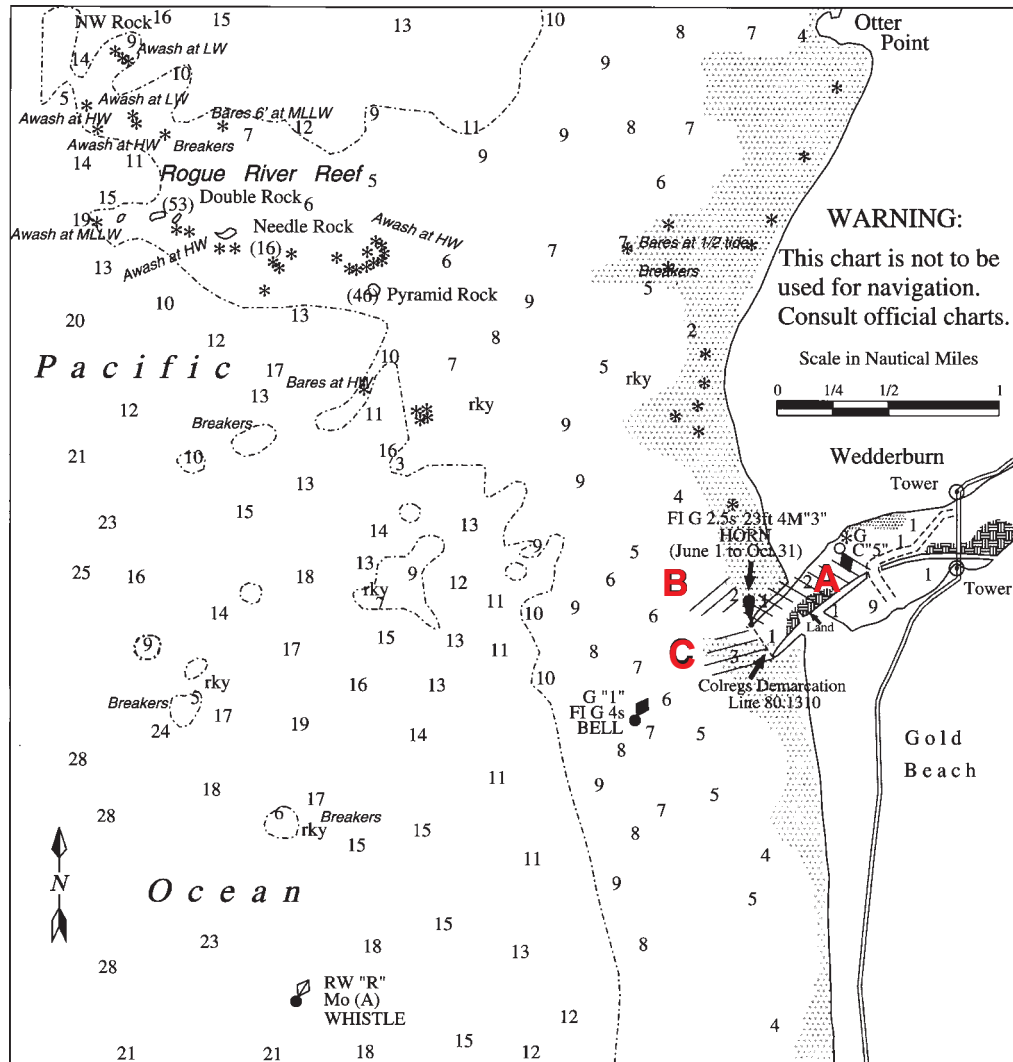


**B. Outer end, north jetty.** Breakers are almost always present here because of shoal water. When the sea is running from the west or southwest, it is particularly dangerous.

**C. Outer end, south jetty.** Breakers are almost always present. Even when it appears calm, there may be occasional breakers 1,000 feet outside the south jetty. When this sea is running from the west or southwest, this area is very dangerous.

### CHANNEL

The Rogue River channel lies along the north jetty. Under existing conditions, a channel 13 feet deep and 200 feet wide, extending from the ocean to the inner end of the north jetty, is provided. Boaters are urged to use and stay within this channel. The river entrance is subject to frequent shoaling and depth changes. Do not rely on charted depths.



### FISHING INSIDE THE CHANNEL

During recent years small boats, which do not usually go out into the ocean, fish just inside the bar and troll in an area between the north and south jetties. Frequently, there are a great number of boats in this area, and they tend to crowd each other. Because trolling is the most frequent fishing method, lines can get caught accidentally in a boat propeller. Should this happen, the disabled boat should anchor immediately or call for aid. A northwest wind or ebb tide could set a boat into a dangerous area in a matter of minutes.

### COAST GUARD PRESENCE

Coast Guard mans a seasonal station from approximately Memorial Day through Labor Day. This unit is located on the north jetty. During times when this station is not active, persons should call Coast Guard Station Chetco River for assistance.

# Hazards

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

Improper loading and/or overloading are major causes of capsizings. Improperly/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.

## Rough Bar Advisory Signs

Be aware of the location and status of rough bar advisory signs. These signs are 6ft by 6ft white, diamond shaped daymarks, with the words "ROUGH BAR" in black letters. Two alternating amber lights on the signs are activated when observed seas on the bar exceed 4 feet in height and are considered dangerous.

### **DO NOT CROSS THE BAR WHEN THE LIGHTS ARE FLASHING!**

If the lights are not flashing, there is no guarantee that sea conditions are favorable.

Coastal bars may be closed to recreational boats when conditions on the bar create a hazardous condition. 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.

## Tides

Tides are the vertical rise and fall of the water and tidal current is the horizontal flow of the water.

There are roughly two tides each day in the Pacific Northwest.

Tidal movement toward the shore or upstream is the flood current. Movement away from shore or downstream is the ebb current. The period between 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 a strong ebb current. Even on days that are relatively calm, a 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.

## 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**, follow the same steps as above, except do not use the word "MAYDAY."

*Make Sure Everybody is Wearing a Life Jacket!*

**Telephone: 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.