

# COOS BAY

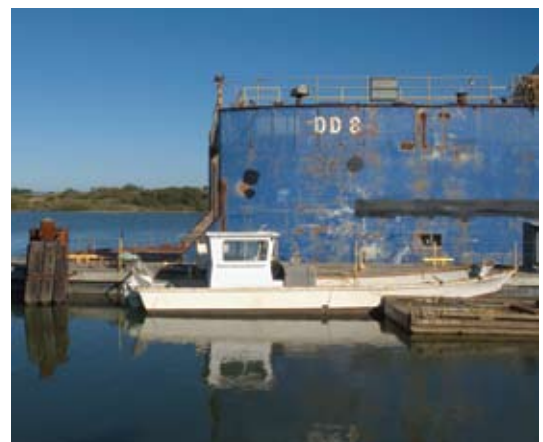


*Tying up at Charleston*

## About the harbor

Farming and coal were the earliest enterprises in and around Coos Bay, but by the 1880s ship-building and timber had taken center stage and were turning this deepwater harbor into a major south coast port. Logging and lumbering dominated the economy thereafter for nearly a century, and in the 1950s the city of Coos Bay called itself “Lumber Shipping Capital of the World.” Commercial fishing also made its mark.

Coos Bay is working hard to build a new economy to replace the formerly dominant logging and fishing. Tourism is not so prominent here as it is in coastal towns farther north, even though the area’s natural beauty is quietly stunning.



*Dry dock on Coos Bay waterfront*

**Hazardous areas**

**A. Sand spit, South Slough.** The spit extends north from the Charleston boat basin, parallel to the channel, from South Slough buoy #4 about 450 yards to South Slough light #2. The north end is marked by nun buoy #2T. Do not cross this area.

**B. Submerged jetty.** When departing the Charleston boat basin in the South Slough channel, and are directly between South Slough light #4 and can buoy #5, you will see South Slough light #1. It marks the end of the submerged jetty, which is visible only at low water. Stay to the left of light #1 at all times.

**C. Sand spit, north beach.** This area is dangerous because of shoals, submerged jetties, and strong breakers, particularly on an ebb tide. Commercial traffic can get heavy at times. Stay out of the way of the bigger vessels, which cannot stop for smaller ones.

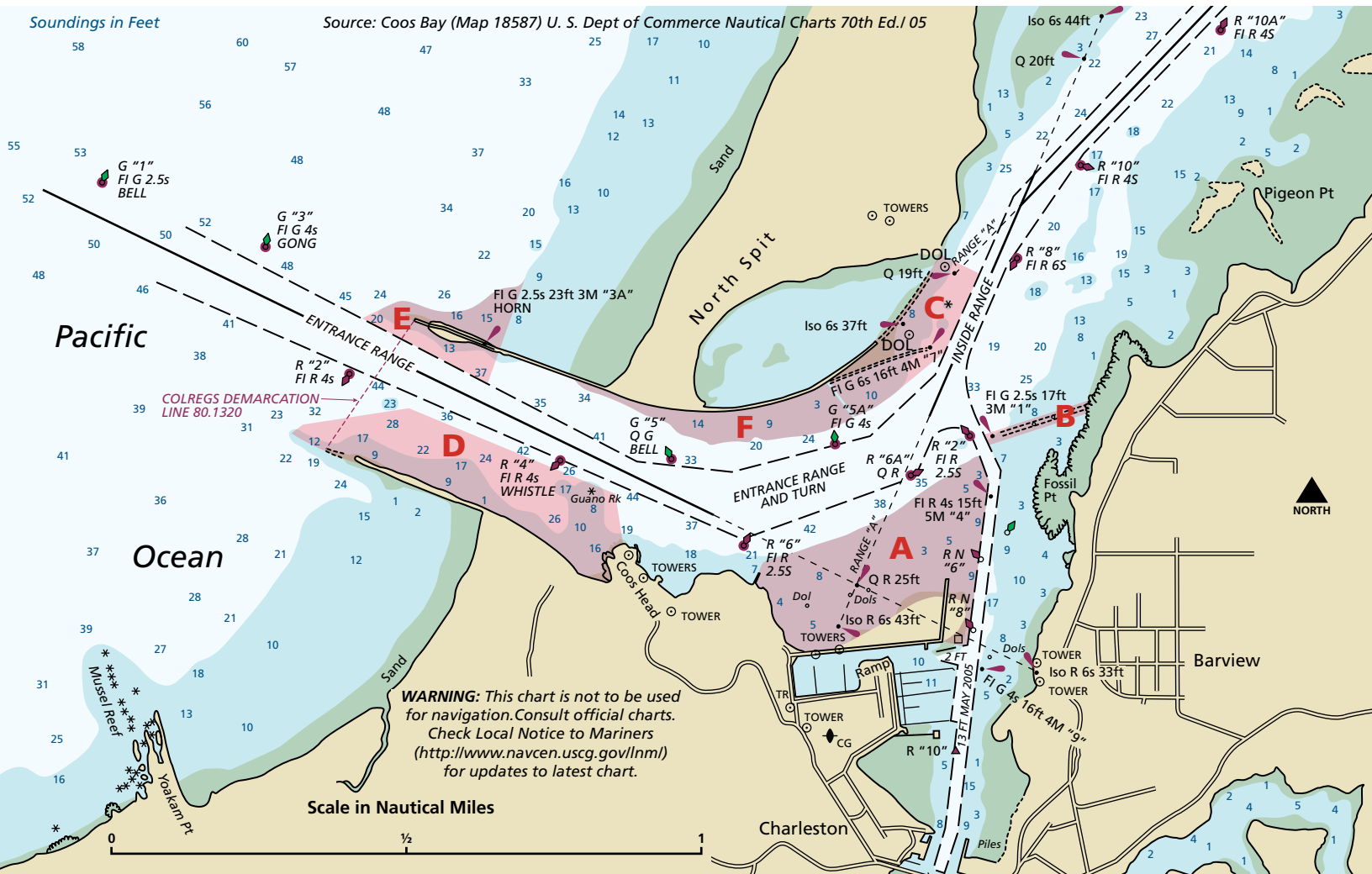
**D. South jetty, Guano Rock area.** Very dangerous because of shoals extending from the south jetty into the channel. Breakers are frequently present from the lighted whistle buoy #4 out to just past the end of the jetty. Be extremely cautious in this area, especially on an ebb tide.

**E. Submerged north jetty.** The north jetty extends about 200 yards to the west. The outward end is submerged from the visible end out to buoy #3. Breakers are nearly always present. Do not cross this area—pass the buoy before turning north.

**F. North of buoy #5.** Very dangerous because large swells or an ebb tide can produce heavy breakers. Freak breakers are common. Avoid the area.

**Rough-weather advisories and information**

- Coast Guard station at Charleston: (541) 888-3267.
- Weather and wind warning flags are displayed during office hours at the Port of Coos Bay office at Charleston.
- The rough-bar advisory sign is positioned 8 feet above the water on the jetty just north of the boat basin. The sign faces the basin and also faces South Slough light #2.







*Seafood for sale*



*Warehouse at Charleston*



*The Coos Bay Boardwalk*

## What to do in and around Coos Bay

Charleston, just inside the bar at the head of South Slough, is the headquarters of the Port of Coos Bay and home of the bay's large commercial and charter fishing fleet. Recreational boaters use Charleston's facilities, too: of the port's 600 marina slips, about 200 are used for recreational boats. Charleston's docks contain a cluster of bait and tackle shops, gift shops, and a few restaurants, with a couple more across the South Slough bridge.

North Spit, the slender sandy protuberance sheltering Coos Bay from the ocean, is the southernmost reach of the Oregon Dunes. On the ocean side of the spit, roughly across from the town of Empire, lie the rusted remains of the *New Carissa*, wrecked just north of the bar in February 1999.

The bay takes a bend at Pony Slough to the city of North Bend, where shipbuilder and lumber baron Asa Meade Simpson built his first sawmill. The older part of this sprawly town, the blocks between the bay and Highway 101, can be reached on foot from the California Street boat ramp.

The city of Coos Bay is southeast of North Bend along the upper bay. The city dock on Bayshore Drive provides 624 feet of transient moorage space. The dock leads up to a waterfront park with historical and interpretive displays, including a historic tugboat and a saltwater aquarium. The old Marshfield Sun newspaper office, now a museum, features a history of printing processes and of the community.





A nearby visitor center offers information on local attractions and activities. Coos Bay's compact downtown is a short walk from the dock. One notable stop is the Coos Art Museum, in the old marble post office on Fourth and Anderson. A tour boat company offers cruises of Coos Bay harbor.

Charleston is a favorite place for crabbing, and the South Slough tide flats are good places to dig clams. Anglers fish for fall chinook and fin-clipped coho throughout the bay, from the bar up to Isthmus Slough. Sturgeon lurk in holes above the McCulloch Bridge.

### Coos Bay attractions

- 1** Oregon Institute of Marine Biology
- 2** Charleston Marina Complex
- 3** North Spit
- 4** Marshfield Sun Printing Museum
- 5** Coos Bay Boardwalk
- 6** Tugboat Museum
- 7** Coos Art Museum
- 8** Egyptian Theater
- ?** Visitor information

### Boating facilities

- A** Charleston Marina & Boat Ramp  

- B** Empire  

- C** California Street Boat Ramp  

- D** City Dock  

- E** Eastside  
