



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

PO Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600 • 360-407-6000

November 19, 2024

United States Coast Guard
ATTN: Mark L. Porvaznik
2703 Martin Luther King Ave. SE
Washington, D.C. 20593-7816

Re: Coastal Zone Management Federal Consistency Decision for Special Purpose Craft -
Heavy Weather (SPC-HWX) II Acquisition, Pacific & Columbia River waters, Washington

Dear Mark L. Porvaznik:

On October 10, 2024, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) submitted a Consistency Determination with the Washington State Coastal Zone Management Program (CZMP). Ecology issued a 21-day public notice on October 22, 2024, and received no comments.

The USCG proposes to acquire and operate at least four, but up to six, Special Purpose Craft – Heavy Weather second generation (SPC-HWX II) within the U.S. Pacific Northwest (PNW) from the shore out to 150 nautical miles. The proposed action area includes waters along Washington’s Pacific Coast and within the Columbia River, as well as waters offshore.

USCG responsibilities include Search and Rescue (SAR) inshore, offshore, and in the coastal zone, in extreme weather conditions to prevent loss of life, injury, and property damage at sea. For the past 60 years, the Coast Guard operated four 52-foot first generation Special Purpose Craft – Heavy Weather (SPC-HWX) to serve in these challenging surf conditions. However, in 2020, the Coast Guard restricted the four aging SPC-HWX vessels from operating in seas above 4 feet, and in 2021, the fleet was removed from service. Prior to removal from service, all four SPC-HWX were assigned to stations in the PNW: Grays Harbor (Washington), Cape Disappointment (Washington), Yaquina Bay (Oregon), and Coos Bay (Oregon).

To meet the USCG’s mission, the USCG must replace the capabilities of the first generation SPC-HWX servicing the PNW. The proposed action is for the acquisition of up to six SPC-HWX II, four in operation and training status and two as Maintenance Relief Hulls. The SPC-HWX II would be designed to replace the capabilities provided by the SPC-HWX servicing the PNW while implementing today’s industry standards with regards to safety, environmental compliance,

and other standards. The SPC-HWX II would implement modern design changes to optimize performance and improve standardization.

The SPC-HWX II would perform the following activities in compliance with their assigned missions:

1. Searching for and rescuing passengers and/or crew that fall overboard from recreational, commercial, or government vessels or for victims of crashed aircraft in the water, sometimes requiring a USCG rescue swimmer to enter the water to place the person in a harness or rescue basket to be winched into a hovering helicopter.
2. Rescuing persons on vessels in medical scenarios requiring evacuation by USCG helicopter or USCG rescue vessel; towing and escorting crippled vessels to safety.
3. Marine Safety: conducting maritime security operations, before, during, and after a threat (e.g., terrorist incident) occurs against the U.S. Maritime Domain.
4. Drug Interdiction: respond to calls to support the boarding and inspection of suspect vessel, detention of suspects, towing of vessels, and transfer of contraband.
5. Migrant Interdiction: respond to calls to support the boarding and inspection of suspect vessel, detention of suspects, towing of vessels, and transfer of migrants.
6. Aids to Navigation (ATON) & Waterways Management: carry appropriate equipment and respond to calls to verify the navigation aids on stations within the limits of the station crew's navigational capability, and to provide platform for mobile ATON teams to verify aid locations.
7. Marine Environmental Protection: provide the first line of defense in the MEP program by being the first to respond to a reported incident and coordinating the subsequent actions. Conduct routine MEP patrols, towing oil containment booms, and transferring specialized personnel and equipment to the incident scene.
8. Living Marine Resources: patrol to determine impacts of marine traffic on the protected species, to prevent traffic in protected areas and critical habitats, and to inspect fishing vessels for compliance with federal laws; and
9. Other Law Enforcement Activities: conduct patrols, monitoring illegal activity, coming alongside other vessels for boarding, and interdicting domestic or foreign vessels that may be engaged in illegal operations.

Pursuant to Section 307(c)(3) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 as amended, Ecology concurs with the USCG's determination that the proposed work is consistent with Washington's CZMP.

If you have any questions regarding Ecology's decision, please contact Teresa Pucylowski at teressa.pucylowski@ecy.wa.gov.

Your right to appeal

You have a right to appeal this decision to the Pollution Control Hearings Board (PCHB) within 30 days of the date of receipt. The appeal process is governed by RCW 43.21B and WAC 371-08. "Date of receipt" is defined in Chapter 43.21B.001(2) RCW.

To appeal, you must do all of the following within 30 days of the date of receipt of this decision:

- File your notice of appeal and a copy of this decision with the PCHB (see filing information below). "Filing" means actual receipt by the PCHB during regular business hours as defined in Chapter 371-08-305 WAC and -335. "Notice of appeal" is defined in Chapter 371-08-340 WAC.
- Serve a copy of your notice of appeal and this decision on the Department of Ecology by mail, in person, or by email (see addresses below).

You must also comply with other applicable requirements in Chapter 43.21B RCW and 371-08 WAC.

Address and Location Information

Filing with the PCHB

For the most current information regarding filing with the PCHB, visit: <https://elaho.wa.gov/> or call: 360-664-9160.

Service on Ecology

Street Addresses:

Department of Ecology
Attn: Appeals Processing Desk
300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503

Mailing Addresses:

Department of Ecology
Attn: Appeals Processing Desk
PO Box 47608
Olympia, WA 98504-7608

E-Mail Address:

ecologyappeals@ecy.wa.gov

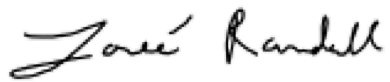
Special Purpose Craft - Heavy Weather (SPC-HWX) II Acquisition

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Loree' Randall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Loree' Randall, Section Manager

Aquatic Permitting & Protection Section

Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program

Sent via e-mail: mark.l.porvaznik@uscg.mil

E-cc: Paul Andron, USCG

Teresa Pucylowski, Ecology

fedconsistency@ecy.wa.gov