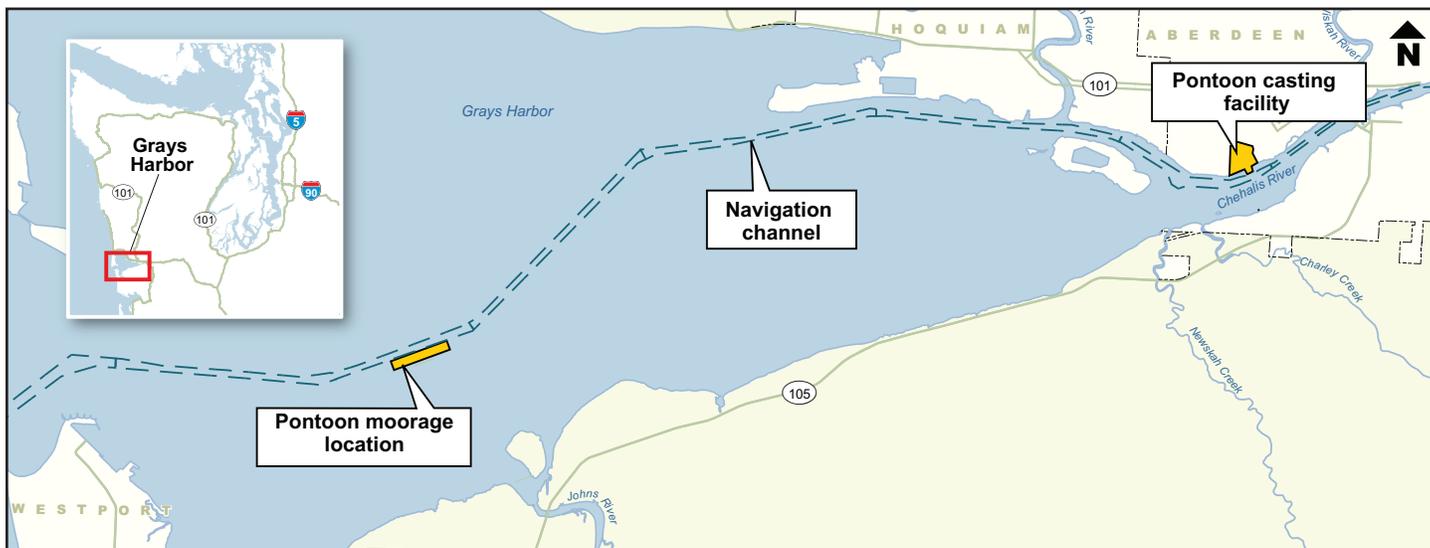




### WSDOT prepares to store pontoons in Grays Harbor

June 2011

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is advancing pontoon construction to restore the SR 520 floating bridge in the event of a catastrophic failure or to store the pontoons until they are needed. The pontoons will be moored in Grays Harbor outside of the navigation channel, secured in place by anchor chains and monitored regularly by WSDOT.



The moorage area is located in Grays Harbor, outside of the navigation channel.

#### What is moorage? Why is WSDOT storing the pontoons in water?

Pontoon moorage is a method of anchoring the pontoons for storage in Grays Harbor until they are needed for the bridge replacement. Because the largest pontoons are a football field in length and weigh 11,000 tons each, they must be stored and transported in water.

#### Where in Grays Harbor will the pontoons be moored? How will they get there?

The pontoon moorage area is located on the south side of the Grays Harbor navigation channel. This location is approximately 1.5 nautical miles from the Grays Harbor shoreline near the Johns River. The moorage area is about 1 mile long, 700 feet wide, and set back 200 feet from the navigation channel.

When each batch of pontoons is complete, crews will flood the casting basin to float out the pontoons. Tug boats will tow the pontoons to the moorage location where they will be secured and stored.

#### Why was this moorage location selected?

We worked with regulatory agencies, tribes and the local marine community to identify the pontoon moorage location. This location was selected because it met key requirements, including:

- Adequate water depth
- Adequate protection from wind and waves
- Clearance of charted navigation channels

#### What is WSDOT currently constructing in Grays Harbor?

We are currently building a casting basin facility at the 55-acre Pontoon Construction Project site in Aberdeen. The facility will feature a concrete batch plant, on-site water treatment and a 4-acre casting basin, where pontoon construction will occur.

At the facility, crews will construct 33 pontoons. The largest 21 pontoons will be 360 feet long, 75 feet wide, and nearly 30 feet tall, making them the largest ever built in Washington, for the planned replacement of the SR 520 floating bridge.



Maintenance crews will conduct routine inspections to ensure safety.

### When will the moorage occur and how will the pontoons be moored?

We are hiring a contractor to conduct the pontoon moorage work. This fall through the end of the year, the contractor will make arrangements to install anchors, anchor chains, buoys and mooring lines to accommodate up to four rafts of two to four pontoons at one time in the Grays Harbor moorage area.

There will be approximately 300 feet of separation between the rafts. The moorage area will be ready to receive pontoons before the first batch of six pontoons is ready in spring 2012.

### What measures will WSDOT take to ensure the pontoons are moored safely?

- WSDOT will outfit the pontoons with navigation lighting in compliance with U.S. Coast Guard requirements.
- During moorage, we will conduct routine inspections of the chains and lines to help ensure that the pontoons are moored safely. The anchoring system is designed to keep the pontoons secured and limit drifting.
- We will monitor the pontoons and anchors regularly to ensure they remain securely in place.
- Pontoons will always float at least 7 feet above the harbor bottom, even during the lowest tides.

### Where will the pontoons go next?

Pontoons will be moored until needed for the construction of the SR 520 floating bridge, beginning in spring 2012, and opening to traffic as soon as 2014. The pontoons will be towed from the moorage site to Lake Washington.



The pontoons will be towed to their moorage location by a tug boat.

### SR 520 Pontoon Construction Project contact information:

**Phone:** 1-888-520-NEWS (6397)

**E-mail:** [Pontoons@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:Pontoons@wsdot.wa.gov)

**Website:** <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520/Pontoons>



**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

Materials can be provided in alternative formats for people with disabilities by contacting Shawn Murinko at 360-705-7097 or [murinks@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:murinks@wsdot.wa.gov). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may contact the Office of Equal Opportunity through the Washington Relay Service at 711.

### Title VI:

WSDOT ensures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin or sex in the provision of benefits and services resulting from its federally assisted programs and activities. For questions regarding WSDOT's Title VI Program contact Jonté Sulton at 360-705-7082 or [SultonJ@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:SultonJ@wsdot.wa.gov).