

U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander  
Thirteenth Coast Guard District

915 Second Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98174-1067  
Staff Symbol: dpw  
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16000  
November 18, 2019

Mary Schamehorn  
Mayor, City of Bandon  
PO Box 521  
Bandon, OR, 97411

Dear Mayor Schamehorn and citizens of Bandon,

Thank you for your letters and emails regarding Coquille River South Jetty Light 8 (LLNR 8700). I appreciate the City of Bandon's passionate response and various perspectives as to the proposed change of modifying the current sound signal to a Mariner Radio Activated Sound Signal (MRASS).

After evaluating the history, purpose, environmental impact and our current Coast Guard wide modernization and standardization efforts of equipment, I have decided to move forward with converting the continuous sound signal to the MRASS equipment. Navigational safety is paramount and remains our primary focus. As technology advances our ability to provide for mariner safety and at the same time be better stewards of environmental noise, I find that the MRASS equipment meets these objectives.

This new device reduces the negative effects that a continuous sound signal has on wildlife and migratory bird populations as well as the people that live in close proximity to the jetty, while providing the mariner an on-demand sound signal. It is also fiscally advantageous, costing taxpayers on average \$3,000 to maintain over a period of 10 years, vice the \$27,000 the Coast Guard has spent on the currently installed continuous sound signal over the past 10 years. Changing to a signal that operates at the call of the mariner will significantly reduce operations and subsequently enable a decrease in outages to the horn and electronics thus improving reliability and consistency of this audible aid to navigation.

While I understand your concern regarding small craft not having the ability to activate the signal, a small handheld VHF radio is all that is required to key the sound signal for operation. A paddle craft user can affix this radio to their life jacket or dry bag in the event of low visibility and an audible signal be desired. Mariners should not rely solely on sound signals to determine their position and distance cannot always be accurately determined by sound intensity.

Our local Coast Guard units will be fully committed to community outreach and will provide hands on instruction for the MRASS equipment to the Port of Bandon and the waterway users as to proper activation of the sound signal.

Thank you again for providing your input regarding Coquille River South Jetty Light 8. Should you have any further questions, you may contact me at (206) 220-7283 or [brendan.j.harris@uscg.mil](mailto:brendan.j.harris@uscg.mil) for assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brendan J. Harris".

Brendan J. Harris  
Commander, U.S. Coast Guard  
Chief, Waterways Management Branch  
Coast Guard District Thirteen