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Two More Ships to Leave James River Reserve Fleet

Contracts announced with firms in Chesapeake, Va., and Brownsville, Texas

Two more ships will soon be leaving the James River Reserve Fleet in Newport News, Va., and heading to recycling yards, under contracts announced today by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration.

The *State*, which was first launched as the *President Jackson*, was awarded to Bay Bridge Enterprises of Chesapeake, Va., which will recycle the ship at a cost of \$851,194 to the U.S. Government. The *Cape Clear* will be dismantled at Esco Marine in Brownsville, Texas, at a cost of \$537,726. Under the terms of both contracts, the ships must leave the fleet site within 30 days. When they depart, they will be the 58th and 59th ships to leave the James River site since January 1, 2001. After their departure, there will be 43 ships slated for disposal left at the site.

"This progress has been made possible by close cooperation among the Maritime Administration, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and members of Congress," said Maritime Administrator Sean T. Connaughton. "We can now look forward to a day when we can dispose of ships as soon as they become obsolete."

When the *State* was first launched as a passenger ship in 1950, it was considered a prime example of futuristic streamline design. The ship was taken over by the Navy and served as a troop transport named USNS *Barrett*. While the *State* has been in the James River site, it has occasionally been used by army units as a platform for exercises. The *Cape Clear* is a freighter built in 1963.

The Maritime Administration keeps ships in the National Defense Reserve Fleet sites to support Armed Forces movements and to respond to national emergencies. When the ships become obsolete, the Maritime Administration arranges for their disposition in an environmentally sensitive manner.

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