

Why is artificial Reefing a good use of surplus naval vessels?

Although other alternatives are also used to reduce the Navy's inventory of inactive ships that have been stricken from the Naval Vessel Register, artificial reefing has many benefits. These benefits include enhancing ecological resources by increasing the amount of productive hard-bottom habitat, using artificial reefs as marine protected and conservation areas, or using artificial reefs to provide alternative reefs for recreational fishing and diving so that natural reefs can be protected and conserved. Artificial reefs can also provide economic benefits to local communities by increasing tourism and commercial activities associated with fishing and diving on the reef.

Why should states support Artificial Reefing?

The use of NAVY ships complements existing state-sponsored artificial reefing programs and provides states with additional inventory and opportunities. In addition, it generates substantial income for local economies through unique diving opportunities and sport fishing.

Which Federal agencies are involved in transferring obsolete vessels for use as artificial reefs?

The U.S. Navy has an inventory of obsolete vessels that may be available for transfer for use as artificial reefs. Additionally, the General Services Administration (GSA) may transfer small vessels and craft (i.e., under 1,500 tons) that are obtained from the Navy, USCG, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, and other federal agencies to States for use as artificial reefs or other purposes.

What is the difference between Navy and MARAD ships?

The Navy has the responsibility for the disposal of obsolete warships (e.g., aircraft carriers, battleships, cruisers, destroyers, frigates, and submarines) whereas MARAD has the responsibility for the disposal of obsolete merchant type vessels that are part of the National Defense Reserve Fleet (NDRF). The NDRF includes some former Navy amphibious and auxiliary type ships that had been title transferred to MARAD. The Navy intends to only make conventionally-powered warships available for use as artificial reefs.

Under what authority can the Navy transfer warships to States for use as artificial reefs?

Public Law 108-136 section 1013 (10 U.S.C. 7306b) provides the Navy with the authority to transfer any vessel stricken from the Naval Vessel Register to any state, commonwealth, possession of the U.S., or any municipal corporation or political subdivision thereof, for use as an artificial reef.

Under what authority can MARAD transfer merchant type ships to States for use as artificial reefs?

Public Law 92-402 (16 U.S.C. 1220, et. seq.) provides the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD), under the Department of Transportation, to transfer obsolete ships to any state for use as an artificial reef. This authority was amended by Public Law 107-314 section 3504 to allow MARAD to provide financial assistance to states for environmental preparation, towing, and/or sinking and by Public Law 108-136 section 3516 to allow MARAD to transfer obsolete vessels to U.S. territories and foreign countries for use as artificial reefs.

Under what authority can GSA transfer vessels less than 1,500 tons to States for use as artificial reefs?

Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949.

Is there Navy funding available for artificial reefing?

P.L. 108-136 provides that the Navy may share with the recipient any of the costs associated with transferring the vessel for use as an artificial reef. As part of their application for transfer of Naval vessels for reefing, States may offer a cost-sharing proposal that will be considered as part of the best value analysis for selection of the donee.

What type of permit is required for an artificial reef?

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits artificial reefs in response to state applications in accordance with 33 CFR 320 and 33 USC 2104.

How does one apply?

Applications must be submitted through the state (et al) artificial reef program manager.

Applications for obsolete and Navy vessels may be submitted by States, Commonwealths, and Territories and possessions of the U.S., municipal corporations or political subdivisions thereof. Applications from domestic municipalities must be submitted to the artificial reef coordinator of the State, Commonwealth, or U.S. possession for each specific vessel or type of vessel advertised.

Besides artificial reefing, how else does the Navy dispose of ships?

Artificial reefing is just one disposal method. The Navy's ship disposal program also includes methods such as Foreign Military Sales Transfers; Deep-water sink exercise targets for Navy fleet training; Donation for public display as museums or memorials, and ship dismantling.

What is involved in preparing a Navy ship for artificial reefing?

In May 2006, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency completed the national guidance document entitled Best Management Practices for Preparing Vessels Intended to Create Artificial Reefs. The Navy's contract with Resolve Marine Group for remediating ex-Oriskany, which was awarded on 29 Sep 03, was based on the draft Best Management Practices document. The scope of work to prepare ex-Oriskany for sinking as an artificial reef includes the removal and disposal of liquid hydrocarbons (fuels and oils) throughout the ship so that the ship is essentially petroleum free; removal and disposal of any loose or detached friable asbestos containing material; removal and disposal of all capacitors, transformers, or other liquid PCB containing components; sweep-up and disposal of all loose paint accumulated on deck surfaces; removal and disposal of all trash, loose debris, cleaning materials, and any floatable materials that are not permanently attached to the ship or could be transported into the water column during sinking of the ship; and removal and disposal of all batteries, halons, mercury, antifreeze, coolants, fire extinguishing agents, black and gray water, and chromated ballast water.