



Hood Canal Bridge Project: pontoons R, S and T

August 2006



R, S and T moored in Port Gamble Bay, May 2005

Retrofitting Pontoons R, S and T

Three pontoons, built during the west-half bridge replacement in the early 1980s, will be retrofitted and used as part of the new Hood Canal Bridge east half.

The pontoons, named R, S and T, will be towed from Port Gamble Bay to the Seattle area in December 2006 to begin rehabilitation.

During retrofitting, the pontoons will be reused but the roadway deck and columns will be demolished and rebuilt to match the height and width of the new pontoons. In addition, minor structural modifications will be made to the pontoons, hatch covers will be added and lighting systems will be updated. Work on R, S and T should be completed by December 2007.

It has always been WSDOT's intention to use R, S and T as part of the east-half replacement project. The pontoons were built according to modern design standards and were made to last.

Pontoons R, S and T are:

- 900 feet long, the same length as three football fields (not including the end zones)
- 60 feet wide, slightly wider than a basketball court.
- 22,000+ tons, equivalent in weight to 300 Boeing 747 airplanes

R, S and T were originally built to decrease the amount of time the bridge was out-of-service after the 1979 storm. By putting R, S and T in the place of the current west-half draw span, engineers were able to open the bridge to traffic a year before the draw span was completed.

Retrofitting pontoons R, S and T helps the Hood Canal Bridge Project meet its 2009 float-in schedule. If three more new pontoons had to be built, the project schedule would increase by at least one year.

The work will be done safely to protect the pontoons, the people and the environment. Before the pontoons are moved, they will be thoroughly inspected and prepared to make the journey to Seattle.

A bird's-eye view of the new east-half of the bridge

