



MEDIA RELEASE

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PLANS BEING DEVELOPED FOR OIL SPILL RESPONSE BASE in FRIDAY HARBOR

In a joint effort between the [Port of Friday Harbor](#), the [Islands' Oil Spill Association](#) (IOSA), and [San Juan County](#), plans are underway for construction of an oil spill response operations base in Friday Harbor, Washington.

The intent of the project is to provide office space, maintenance bays for upkeep of boats and trailers, storage for equipment, flexible open space for both training and a response command post, and parking and dock space for spill response trailers and vessels.

When complete, this facility will be an essential resource to the San Juan Islands, dramatically improving response capability and providing a long needed base of operations for the Islands' Oil Spill Association, a local non-profit community based spill response organization.

The facility will be sited on the [Jensen's & Sons Marina property](#) now owned and operated by the Port of Friday Harbor.

Initial construction funding is being provided by \$225,000 via a State of Washington capital funding request championed by WA Senator Lovelett and WA Representative Lekanoff, \$200,000 in funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and supporting funding from the Port of Friday Harbor. The final stage of facility construction will be supported by a future fundraising effort. Anyone interested in contributing or learning more may contact IOSA at board@iosaonline.com.

Construction is scheduled to begin mid-year 2020, with completion by late 2021 or early 2022. Project management will be provided by the Port of Friday Harbor.

San Juan County Council Member and IOSA Board Member Jamie Stephens highlights the importance of this project, "In this time of ever increasing shipping traffic near the islands, and the risk that comes with it, ensuring local response capacity is vital to the islands. Keeping the oil out of the water to begin with is our main goal, but we also need to prepare for what could happen in a worst case scenario."

Port of Friday Harbor Executive Director Todd Nicholson further details the need, “In addition to the risks of a large spill, we also see many smaller spills each year. These are less newsworthy, but it is still vital that we evaluate and respond to those incidents. Our local marine environment is too important and fragile not to. This facility is a huge step forward in building response capability and something the Port of Friday Harbor is eagerly supporting.”

In addition to providing a critical location to support IOSA’s operations, the facility will also provide flexible transient workspace for key spill response partners, including the Washington State Department of Ecology, The US Coast Guard, and a number of Pacific Northwest spill response organizations and response providers. The goal is to help enhance close coordination between the entire spill response community, whether it be for training or an actual response.

IOSA Board President J Havner explains the benefits, “While IOSA will continue to maintain caches of essential spill response equipment across the islands, this facility will take IOSA to a whole new level of capability. IOSA is in the late stages of a full organizational reset, and with the generous support from the citizens and leaders of San Juan County via a voter approved levy, the State of Washington, and the Port of Friday Harbor via their leadership, vision, and financial support, IOSA is well situated to continue to provide spill response to the islands for another 30 years.”