

# Stamford Harbor Master's Report 08/16/2016

## Moorings.

- Renewals are now more or less complete. Mooring status (*as of 8/16/2016*);
  - Approved - 74
  - Awaiting inspection - 04
  - Under review - 05
  - EXPIRED Renewal not received - 06
  - Held inactive for 2016 season - 06
  - Not being renewed - 11
  - Revoked - 01
- A mooring permit holder who has been in continual non-compliance with mooring regulations for over a year has now 'given-up' his mooring and left the harbor.
- The Ford North shell fish lease mooring issue is again due before a Judge this Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>.

## Harbor Activity

- Sunday July 24<sup>th</sup> was very busy with high tide allowing tug/barge operation from noon onwards. The very good weather resulted in high levels of recreational traffic in the west branch (including all forms of water transport known to man) resulting in a request from 'tugs' for assistance 'if possible' to safely transit. The harbor boat was so occupied for almost 2½ hours. During this evolution, one paddle boarder and his board were physically plucked from the water within 100 feet of an incoming tug/barge. The patrons of the rental kayak/paddle boards seem to completely lack situational awareness on the water which repeatedly places them in conflict with both recreational and commercial vessels. Without increased guidance and supervision, a collision in the West Branch is inevitable potentially with resulting serious injury.
- I have had a number of complaints regarding the wake disturbance to moored boats from wake-boards and their specialist tow boats in the area inside the harbor breakwater. I have seen the boats operating, they remain outside of the speed restriction area and they do not appear to be operated in a manner that is unsafe.
- During heavy thunderstorms on July 25, 2 barges (one light and one loaded) partially broke free from O&G dock in the West Branch. Notification was received from both manager at the temporary boat yard and O&G, who were able to promptly coral and re-secure the barges with their on-site push boat. Enquiries show that the barges remained attached with one line while a second one had chaffed through and parted. No third party damage was reported.
- Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>. 10 barges (6 fully laden with gravel/aggregate and 4 empty) along with tug *Buchanan I* were found secured to the barge mooring. This equated to an estimated gross weight of approximately 35,000 tons.



I spoke with the Captain and Mate on the tug and with their head office. The tug immediately moved 4 barges

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and returned on the evening tide to relocate further barges. It is of interest that there was only 1 barge alongside at the O&G docks.

I have sent an official warning letter to Buchanan (the second within 12 months) with copies to CT-DEEP and USACOE.

- 8/16/2016 follow-up; the day after the above incident, (Monday 15<sup>th</sup>), a commissioner reported 6x laden barges back on the mooring. After several long telephone calls to both Buchanan and their owning company US Waterways Transportation LLC (USWT), the barges were moved by the tug *Mr. Jim*. I spoke directly to the tug later that evening to confirm the situation. As last year, it is '3<sup>rd</sup> party' tugs that are abusing the mooring, often with non-Buchanan barges and without authorization to use the mooring. I am working with USWT to try and control the situation.
- The vast quantities of Bunker (fish) that have been resident in the harbor all summer have started their annual die-off. The cause is natural, hypoxia (suffocation/lack of oxygen). State Marine Fisheries scientists confirm there is no risk to people. This information may be given to any enquiries from the public, or refer them to me.
- I have been invited to a meeting on 9/22/2016 between the Chair of the Connecticut Port Authority (CPA) and the City Mayor to discuss the future of Stamford Harbor within the overall State strategies.
- There is ongoing concern regarding the coming Harbor Fest fireworks display that may impact safe vessel transit of the Federal Channel within the harbor. I have attended various meetings (along with Sgt. Monck) regarding the days' events and expressed concerns regarding safety of the on the water activities. WE have identified provisional anchorage areas for spectators, but that is still a work-in-progress.
- Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>. Another mooring broke free (no boat attached this time) and the buoy drifted through the harbor washing up at SYC. The owner has been contacted. The failure was such that it would not necessarily have been identified during a routine inspection.
- Over the past month, the number of local boats travelling through the harbor at speed have increased many fold. This will increasingly effect safety in the harbor. I believe that this is due to lack of official presence on the water due to reduced resources available to the Police Harbor Unit. I respectfully request that the Commission make representation to City Government to make available funding to train additional marine officers so that manpower is available to ensure a presence on the water during the summer, especially evenings and weekends from 08:00 to 23:59.

These comments should not in any way be taken as criticism of the Police Harbor Unit personnel who provide an excellent service within duty limitations.

### Garbage and Debris

- No appreciable change from last month.

### Expenses outstanding

- Harbor Master \$ 0.00

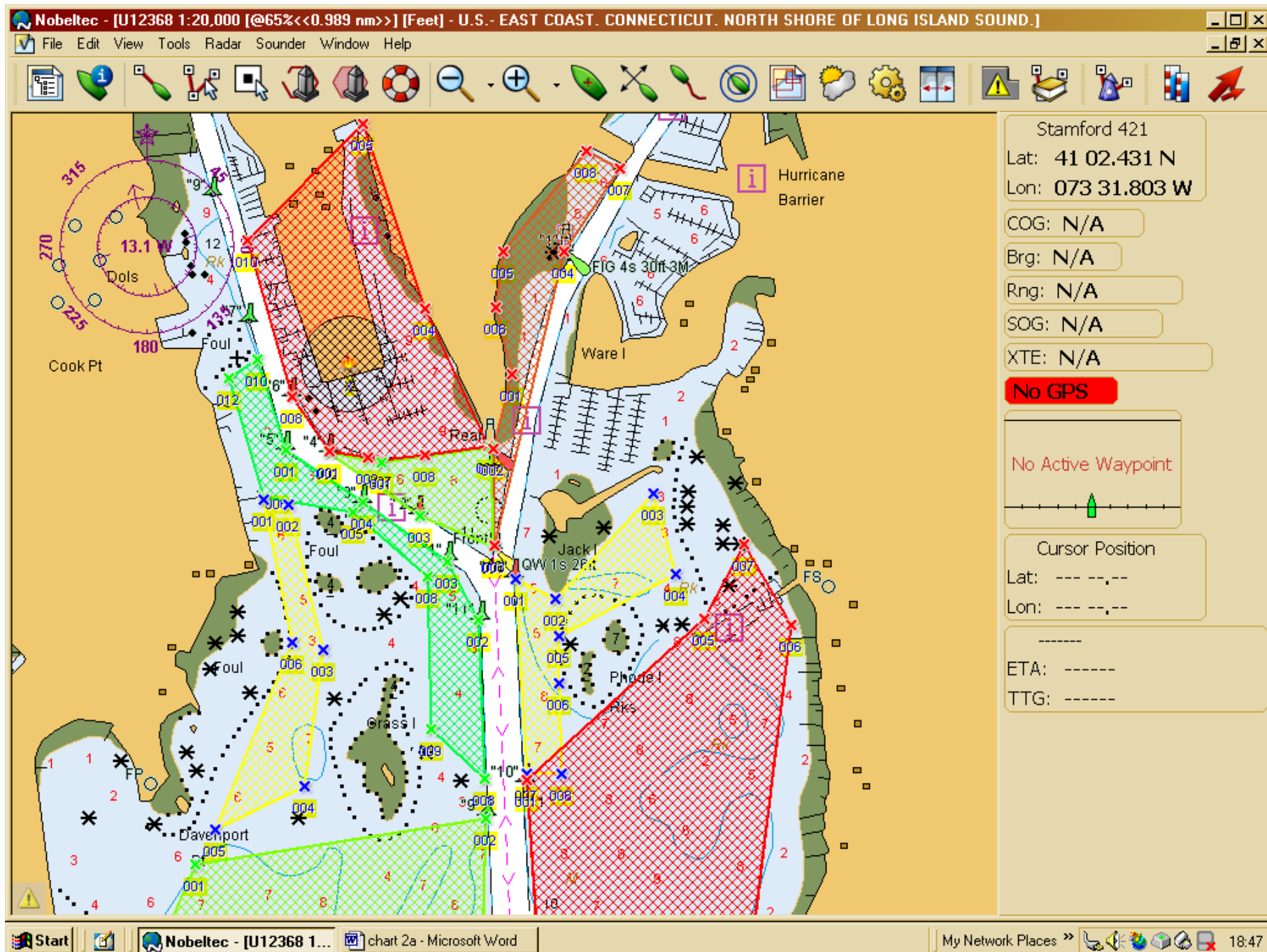
Respectfully submitted

Captain Eric Knott

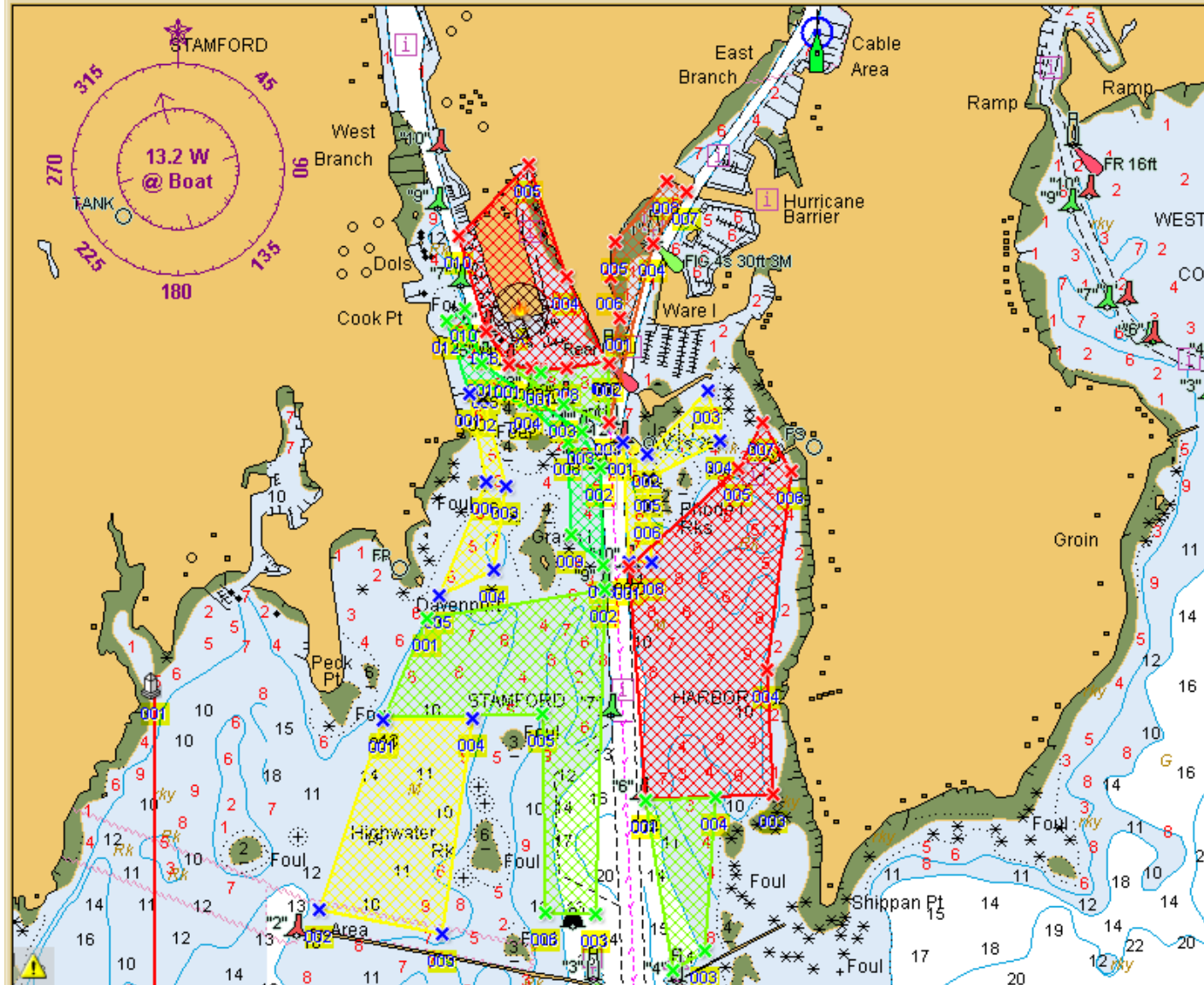
State Harbor Master

Captain Yale Greenman

State Deputy Harbor Master







Stamford 421  
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 Lon: 073 31.803 W

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Brg: N/A

Rng: N/A

SOG: N/A

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