

CATALYST / ARSBC

The Artificial Reef Project

Powell River, BC

Catalyst paper and the Artificial Reef Society of British Columbia (ARSBC) are pleased to announce the sinking of the first of four surplus vessels as an artificial reef in Powell River, BC. The project moves into its final phase with the sink date for the first barge planned for the morning of 23 June 2018.



The sinking of YOGN-82 is scheduled for Saturday, 23 June between 11am and 12 noon. Spectator viewing is possible near Willingdon Beach. Watercraft will be required to maintain a distance of 2000 feet, and the area will be patrolled to ensure this safe distance is maintained.

Preceding the sinking, the command tug boat will sound 12 short whistle signals, followed by a two minute

interval before a final warning signal. After the sinking, the area will remain closed to the public for 36 to 48 hours, allowing the ARSBC technical divers to survey the wreck site.

The ARSBC, which has sunk more ships and aircraft than any other non-profit group in the world to create marine habitat, has worked and consulted with Catalyst Paper for the sinking of their vessel YOGN-82. In addition to the letters of endorsement from the Tla'amin Nation (Sliammon), the Regional District of Powell River and the City of Powell River, approvals have now been granted by federal government agencies.

The four ships planned for reefing are currently part of the mill's 10-vessel breakwater infrastructure. YOGN-82, a surplus US Navy gasoline barge, is the first vessel to be prepared and will be sunk in early summer 2018.

The break-water vessels are all American Second World War surplus which were purchased over time by the mill. Constructed from cast reinforced concrete, they have survived afloat and have been part of Powell River's seascape, acting as a breakwater system protecting the mill's log pond and foreshore.

Ranging from 109 to 128 meters long, and weighing between 6000 and 8000 tons, these historic relics are the last of their kind afloat anywhere in the world.

Consequently, this project has the potential to become a

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PHOTOS Top YOGN-82 moored pierside at Midway island in the North Pacific, 1956

Centre Composite Inspection Team (Inspectors, Emergency Response Team, Catalyst Paper, ARSBC and Pacific

Blasting) **Left** YOGN-82 alongside her jetty in Powell River





significant scuba dive tourism attraction for the City of Powell River.

The ARSBC completed its eighth major project on April 4, 2015 with the successful sinking of the former HMCS Annapolis in Halkett Bay off Gambier Island, BC.

Reef Society President Howie Robins believes this exciting new project will build on the organization's successful record of accomplishment of converting ships into productive long term reef habitat. "This will be the most unique and creative marine habitat project ever undertaken by our Society. The challenge

YOGN-82 was one of 22 unpowered B7 A2 gasoline barges built by Concrete Ship Constructors in National City, CA. Sister ships include the USS YO-144 (left, 1943) and YOGN-42 (below), aground on Shipwreck Beach, Lanai, Hawaii.

will be to place up to four of these large vessels in a group formation at variable depths ranging from 25 to 35 meters. Divers of all skill levels seek novelty, and this will be a dive back into maritime history for adventure divers worldwide," said Howie Robins.



Accessible only by watercraft, the ships will be prepared in succession and sunk within easy scuba swimming distance from each other, effectively creating a cluster of historic wrecks.

These wartime relics are already well past their lifespan. In essence they are already floating artificial reefs, based on the generations of biodiversity in place on

their hulls. When fully submerged, these ships will form a pinnacle oasis for marine flora and fauna settlement with scale and habitat complexity.

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Since 1991, the Artificial Reef Society has sunk seven ships and one Boeing 737 in the waters off BC's west coast. YOGN-82 will be the ARSBC's ninth reef project.

- 9 YOGN-82 2018
- 8 Annapolis 2015
- 7 Boeing 737 2006
- 6 Cape Breton 2001
- 5 Saskatchewan 1997
- 4 Columbia 1996
- 3 Mackenzie 1995
- 2 Chaudière 1992
- 1 GB Church 1991

YOGN-82 Joins the ARSBC's Reefs



The Artificial Reef Society of British Columbia (ARSBC) is a registered non-profit society based in Vancouver, British Columbia. The Society has an experienced team of specialists who consult on the creation of long term stable marine habitats using ethical means of vessel preparation. As well as protecting environmentally and historically sensitive marine habitats, these new reefs also provide opportunities for eco-adventure scuba diving tourism.