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Public Affairs Detachment New York
U.S. Coast Guard

***U.S. Department of
Homeland Security
United States
Coast Guard***



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Public Affairs
(212) 668-7114

Press Release

COAST GUARD CUTTER PENOBSCOT BAY RETURNS AFTER JOINT MISSION WITH CANADIAN COAST GUARD

NEW YORK- The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Penobscot Bay will return to Bayonne, N.J. Tuesday, Apr. 15, after conducting joint ice-breaking missions on the St. Lawrence Seaway with the Canadian Coast Guard since Mar. 5.

"The Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway saw their worst ice season in over a decade," said Lt. j.g. Jamie Collins, the Executive Officer of the Cutter Penobscot Bay. "On the lakes themselves, the percentage of ice cover was the highest it's been this late in the season in 12-13 years."

The Canadian Coast Guard made a formal request for assistance from the United States, the first time such a request has been made in four to five years.

"For a crew of just 18 U.S. Coastguardsmen to spend 45 days hundreds of miles away from home engaged in this mission is incredibly impressive," said Lt. Michael Sarnowski, commanding officer of the Penobscot Bay. "Icebreaking on the St. Lawrence Seaway is one of those unique Coast Guard mission areas that require international teamwork - not just at the diplomatic level, but at the crew-to-crew level between two ships from the Coast Guards of two different countries."

The Penobscot Bay is the first cutter to be deployed to the Seaway. The last cutter from the east coast to deploy in support of operations on the Great Lakes was the Coast Guard Cutter Morro Bay in 2003.

The St. Lawrence Seaway crosses international boundaries and it is the only shipping link between the Atlantic Ocean, the American Midwest and the Canadian heartland, including Toronto.

The Penobscot Bay will be arriving at approximately 10:00 a.m. Media interested should arrive no later than 9:30 a.m.

Media interested in covering the story should contact Petty Officer 3rd Class Seth Johnson by 8:30 a.m. tomorrow, April 15, at 212-668-7114 or 917-218-1717 for after hours pager.

Media will be required to bring ID and credentials.

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