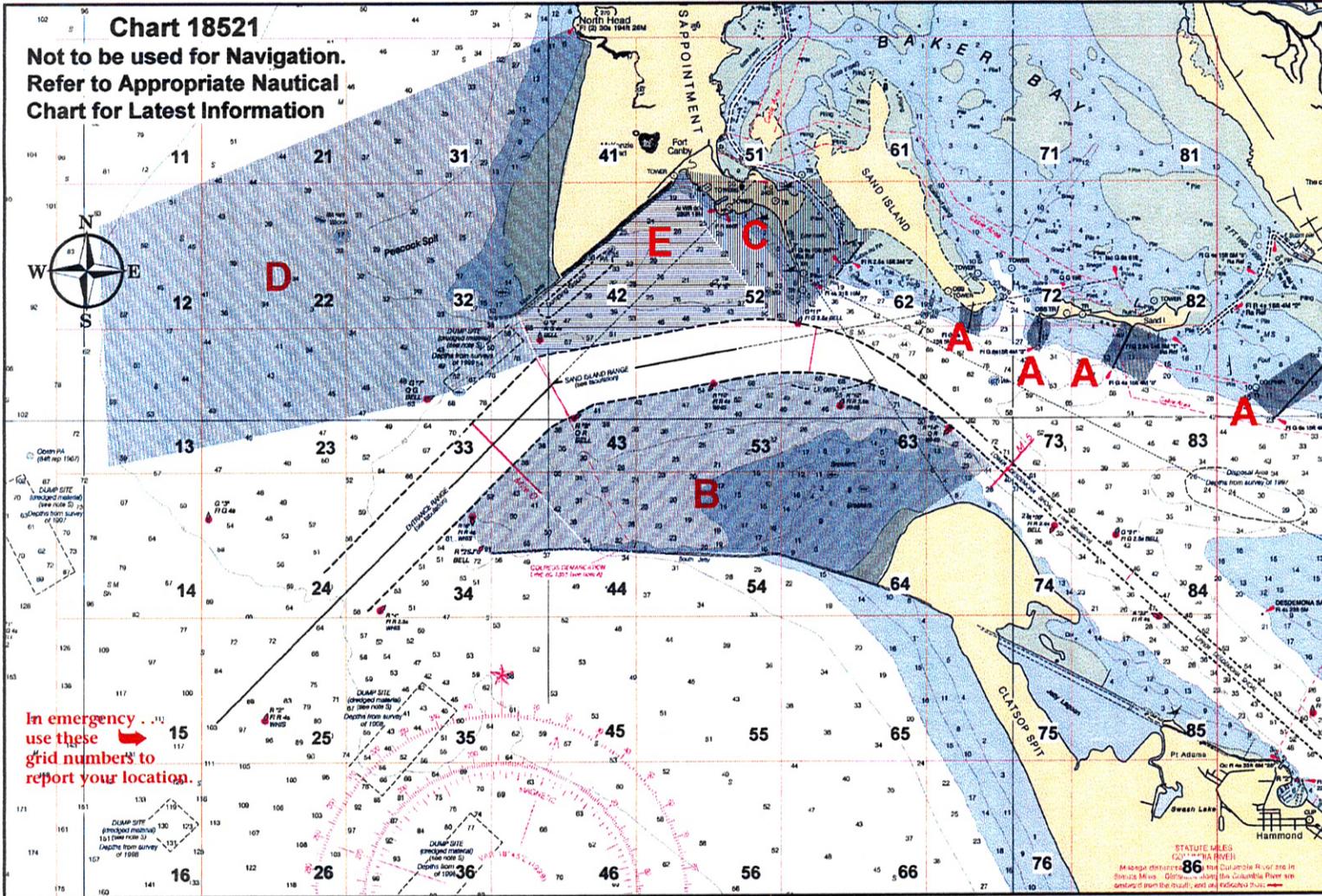


COLUMBIA RIVER **DANGER AREAS**



A. Chinook Spur and upper, lower, and middle Sand Island spurs are built on two rows of staggered pilings. Currents flowing through these pilings attain a velocity of five knots or more. A boat that becomes disabled or is maneuvered in such a way that it comes in contact with any of these spurs is almost sure to suffer damage. Even large boats have capsized in these areas. Give these spurs a wide berth and never get close to them on the upcurrent side.

B. Clatsop Spit is an unpredictable area of the river entrance. During flood currents and slacks, it may be relatively calm, with only a gentle swell breaking far in on the spit. Yet 5 or 10 minutes later, when the current has started to ebb, it can become extremely treacherous, with breakers extending far out toward the channel. Boaters should remain north of the red buoys in this area, particularly just before or during the ebb. Breakers extend out past buoy #8. On a flood tide, you can be carried into Clatsop Spit. Be prepared to anchor. The south jetty has a section broken away on the outer end. The broken section is under water, close to the surface. If you are relatively close and your engine fails, the flood or ebb current will take you across the submerged jetty. Boaters should use extra caution in the area from the visible tip of the jetty to buoy #25J, which marks the western end of the submerged portion of the south jetty. On the flood, a dangerous rip can occur over the sunken jetty. Do not cross the submerged jetty.

C. Jetty A, which is southeast of Cape Disappointment, presents a particularly strong danger when the current is ebbing. Water flowing out of the river is deflected by the jetty, and frequently the current reaches eight knots. Boats proceeding into Baker Bay west channel make very little speed against the swift current and are exposed to the rough water (or surf on rough days) for long periods of time. Small craft should avoid the shallow, sandy area when heavy seas are running because of the surf that breaks on the beach. Look for the entrance marked by daymarks one and two with green and red lights, respectively.

D. Peacock Spit. Waves in Peacock Spit break from three different directions. If you lose power on the bar during an ebb current, your vessel will be carried into Peacock Spit and is in danger of capsizing. Breakers may be heavy in any type of current. Sports craft leaving the river should never be on the north side of the green buoys. When rounding Peacock Spit, even on a calm summer day, give the breakers at least a half-mile clearance. On these same summer days, "sneakers"—unusually large swells coming in from the sea—can suddenly begin breaking 1/4 to 1/2 mile outside the usual break on the end of the north jetty.

E. Middle ground. This is a shallower area between the north jetty and the main ship channel that is subject to breaking seas when swells as small as four feet are present. Breakers are much wider and have more velocity than in other areas. Conditions can change in minutes with tide current changes.