

## **Tidewater Tugs Rescue Boaters in Two Separate Incidents on Columbia & Snake Rivers**

Quick actions of well-trained crews save four people from potential disaster

Vancouver, WA – September 16, 2014 – Tidewater vessel crews were first responders and paramount in the successful rescue of four boaters in two separate incidents on September 9, 2014.

Two Tribal fishermen were unhurt Sept. 9, after their fishing boat overturned on the Columbia River just east of Stevenson, WA. At approximately 1:15 a.m., Todd Takalo, piloting the Tidewater tug Maverick, spotted a flashing white light in the water. Upon inspection, Mr. Takalo, along with Deck Mechanic Ryan Jones, discovered that the light was coming from an overturned fishing boat with two men on top of the vessel. The Captain, Chris Patnode, who was not on duty at the time, was immediately notified of the situation and quickly joined Ryan Jones on deck to ready man overboard equipment. In 35 mph winds and 4 foot swells, Pilot Todd Takalo navigated the tug as gently as possible over to the vessel in distress. The crew on deck were able to retrieve the two men and pull them aboard the Maverick where they were taken in to the galley to dry off and warm up. The fishermen said they had been stranded in the water on top of their vessel for over 45 minutes. Their fishing boat was unable to be towed or salvaged. The Maverick's crew made contact with another Tribal fishing vessel in the area who picked the men up and took them to shore.

In a separate incident, around 7:00 p.m. on Sept. 9, two recreational boaters were pulled from the water after their boat caught fire and capsized. Captain Greg Majeski on the tug Captain Bob, was leaving the Ice Harbor Dam on the Snake River (just east of Pasco, WA) when he saw heavy black smoke in the distance. As a precaution, he navigated the tug around the corner to investigate the source of the smoke. He describes seeing a recreational boat fully engulfed in flames and two people in the water near the burning wreckage. He called for all hands on deck and immediately went to the scene to begin rescue operations. The two stranded boaters, a man and woman described by the crew as being in their 70s, had been struggling trying to make it to shore. The Captain Bob crew pulled the couple from the water, just as their burning boat slipped beneath the surface of the Snake River. They were given blankets and taken to the Ice Harbor Dam where an ambulance was waiting. Witnessing this event unfold were several employees of Union Pacific railway who were aboard the Northbound Special as it rounded the corner on the rail adjacent to the river. They stopped the train when they spotted the burning boat and witnessed the rescue operation by the Tidewater crew. "It was very dramatic to watch this event from the train as it was happening. We deeply appreciate the quick action and professionalism of Tidewater's crews in averting what could have been a tragic situation," said Roger Rouleau, UP's Manager of Operating Practices.

Tidewater maintains rigorous safety training programs for its employees. All marine personnel complete First Aid, First Responder, and other safety training classes. Training is tested regularly with ongoing and frequent drills, such as man overboard drills, fire drills, security drills, and emergency procedure drills.

"We are proud of the Maverick and Captain Bob crews and commend their actions in responding quickly and safely in these two situations. Their response speaks to the high level of skill and

dedication that our vessel crews exhibit in their work every day, in every situation," said Bob Curcio, President & CEO of Tidewater.

These types of events underscore the importance of having highly trained, skilled, and experienced professional mariners out on the river system. "In addition to providing valuable inland marine transportation service, our boats and crews act as river sentinels keeping watch and responding to on water emergencies throughout the Columbia & Snake River system," added Bruce Reed, Tidewater's COO. "Tidewater is dedicated to making the extra effort to go above and beyond to ensure the safety of personnel, the environment and the community in which we operate."