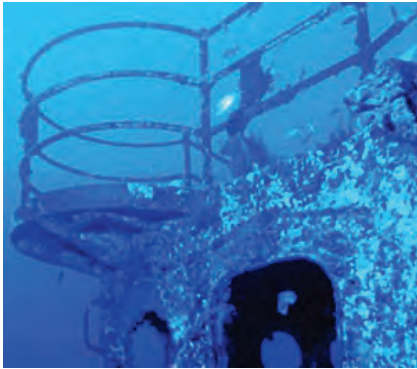




Understanding NOAA Chart Symbolology

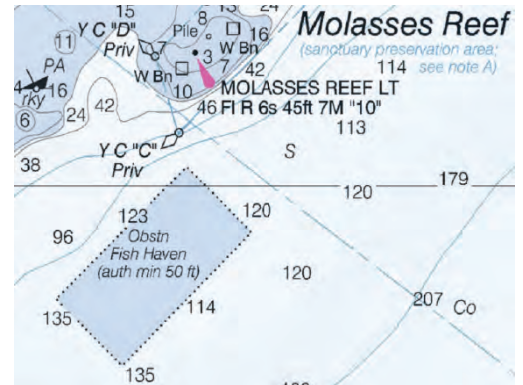


Fish Havens







Fish havens are artificial shelters made up of rocks, rubble, subway cars, ships, airplanes, specially designed concrete structures, and other objects placed on the sea floor to attract fish and enhance their habitat. They are often located near fishing ports or major coastal inlets. Consisting of rigid materials and projecting above the bottom, they can impede surface navigation and foul anchors. Thus, all fish havens are labeled with the abbreviation "Obstn" for obstruction on NOAA charts.

Only fish havens authorized by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are shown on NOAA charts. The Corps specifies an "authorized minimum depth" for each, which is the shallowest depth to which objects may project toward the surface. For example, the decommissioned U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Duane*, shown above, was intentionally sunk in 1987. It lies upright in 120 feet of water near Key Largo, Florida, but its superstructure rises to only 60 feet below the surface. The NOAA chart, shown at right, labels the fish haven with an "auth min 50 ft" (the minimum refers to the depth to which objects may be added, not necessarily the existing obstructions).



The three symbols used to represent fish havens on NOAA charts are shown in the table below.

Symbol listed in U.S. Chart No. 1	Symbol	Description
K 46.1	 <i>Obstn Fish Haven</i>	A circle is used to depict fish havens that are too small to show their actual size on the nautical chart.
K 46.2	 <i>Obstn Fish Haven (auth min 42 ft)</i>	Fish havens with an authorized minimum depth of 66 ft (20 meters) or less are charted with a dotted line and tinted blue.
K 46.2	 <i>Obstn Fish Haven (auth min 68 ft)</i>	Fish havens with an authorized minimum depth of more than 66 ft (20 meters) are charted with a dashed line with no tint.

 **Fishing prohibited or permitted?** There is an international symbol to delineate areas where fishing is prohibited (at left and N 21.1 in U.S. Chart No.1). However, NOAA does not show federal, state or local fishing restrictions on its nautical charts. The fish haven symbols, shown in the table above, do not indicate whether fishing is allowed or not. Many fish havens were created to support and encourage recreational fishing, while others have been created specifically to protect fish and fishing may be restricted in these areas. Anglers should check with appropriate authorities before dropping a line within a fish haven to learn what restrictions, if any, may apply.



* U.S. Chart No. 1 is actually not a chart, but a book that describes the symbols used on all nautical charts produced by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA). A free copy may be downloaded at <http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/mcd/chartno1.htm>