

# DISTRICT ELEVEN NORTHERN REGION

# NORTHWIND



F-18 Cockpit photo #2 wingman Blue Angel Diamond, Fleetweek San Francisco (File photo)



**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**  
**The civilian component of the U.S. Coast Guard**  
**(Authorized by Congress in 1939)**

## October, 2007

# New Mission for Mendocino Flotilla 87

## Bruce Rogerson, FC & FSO-PB FL 87

Auxiliarists of Flotilla 87 provide operational support along the rugged Mendocino coast for US Coast Guard Group Humboldt Bay including Station Noyo River from Westport in the north, to Gualala and the Sonoma County line in the south. For over 15 years the Coast Guard has maintained an aviation jet fuel supply at Point Arena, close to the historic lighthouse. This fuel supply is critical for both the Coast Guard helicopters from Group Humboldt Bay and Sector San Francisco, for both training and SAR missions along the southern Mendocino Coast and northern Sonoma coast and off-shore waters.

At the USCG Auxiliary Division 8 Change of Watch in December 2006, CAPT Mark Butt, Commander of Coast Guard Group Humboldt Bay, CA, asked for assistance from the Auxiliary with the weekly maintenance of the aviation fuel at Point Arena. After review with the Flotilla members, Flotilla Commander Bruce Rogerson contacted LT. Scott Parkhurst, Surface Operations Officer at Group Humboldt Bay, to offer the services of the Flotilla members in Point Arena and Gualala and arrange the training required to prepare the Auxiliarists for the task.

USCG Group Humboldt Bay personnel came to Point Arena in January to train Auxiliarists from Flotilla 87, Point Arena Detachment, on fuel maintenance. WG8 Shaun Fyfe spent two hours making sure the volunteers had every procedure correct. Auxiliarists Ken Reynoldson, Chris Jewell, Jan Jewell and Ray Hurst of the Pt. Arena Detachment attended to learn their new task. FC Bruce Rogerson and VFC Doug Pohlson were also trained to provide back up for the local Auxiliarists.



WG8 Shaun Fyfe pumps the hose fuel into the tank.

Once a week at least two Auxiliarists perform the required fuel recirc. as it is known. This involves pumping 75 gallons of fuel in the long hose used to reach the helicopters on the pad back into the storage tank; taking fuel samples and testing them for water and sediment contamination and re-circulating the entire contents of the fuel tank through filters to keep the fuel ready for use. The test results obtained are faxed back to the Air Station at Mackinleyville on completion of the recirc. In addition the Auxiliarists have been asked to be at the fuel site to take delivery of fresh fuel and to prepare the fuel supply for helicopters on SAR missions when they have to land at Point Arena for refueling.



Auxiliarists Doug Pohlson and Ken Reynoldson check the valve system during training on the fuel system.



Coast Guard HH-65 helicopter from Air Station Humboldt Bay refuels at Point Arena

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To quote Capt. Mark Butt commanding officer Coast Guard Group, Air Station Humboldt Bay in an article in the local papers "Until recently, the Coast Guard Air Stations in McKinleyville and San Francisco flew weekly missions to Point Arena to re-circulate and test the fuel. Once asked, the Auxiliary unequivocally volunteered to take on that responsibility. Their efforts will enable me to schedule nearly 75 hours of additional flight time (valued at approximately \$470,000) into furthering our Search and Rescue and Homeland Security Missions for the Lost Coast of Northern California. The fuel must be tested and re-circulated on a weekly schedule. Our helicopter crews can do this upon arrival at the helo pad, but this is a time consuming process. With the assistance of our wonderful Coast Guard Auxiliary, the fuel is re-circulated and ready for immediate use. My deep appreciation goes out to those outstanding Americans and the rest of the Coast Guard Auxiliary."

In the months since the program was initiated with the Auxiliary, the fuel readiness has benefited both the helicopters from Group Humboldt Bay and Sector San Francisco. In late January the fuel readiness played a role in enabling two Coast Guard helicopters to successfully evacuate an injured seaman from a large merchant ship off the Mendocino Coast and transfer him to hospital for urgent care. In the last month the fuel team were again called out to ready the system for refueling helicopters searching for the lone English rower over 90 miles off Fort Bragg. In addition to the fuel recirc., the Auxiliarists are also able to provide much need local weather information at the helo pad to the flight crews by VHF radio.



HH-65 Helicopter at the Point Arena Helo pad with the Lighthouse in the background. As pilot Lt. Stephen Baxter said after a recent search "Thank you very much for assisting us last night with the SAR case and the weather update at PT Arena. We cannot thank you enough as this will someday mean the difference of a live saved or body recovered." **Article Photos By Bruce Rogerson** ©

## Safety Patrol,

Labor Day Weekend,

September 1, 2007 Lake Sonoma, California

by Larry Kubo

**AUXFAC** "Margarita"  
**Coxswain:** Larry Kubo and  
**AUXFAC** "Francis Faye"  
**Coxswain:** Ray van Cleave  
**Crewmen:** Wil Sumner & Stewart Halbersma respectively  
**PATCOM:** Sonoma County Mobile, Tom & Shirly Maxson \*  
 Flotilla 55, Sonoma County

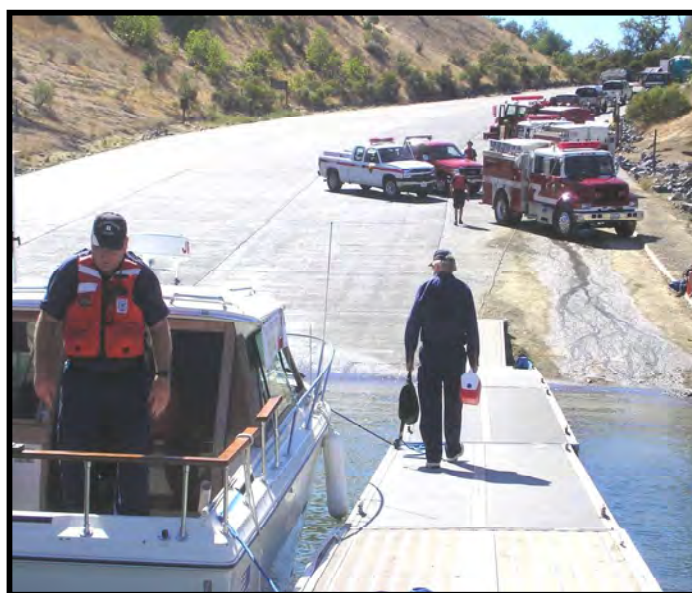


Photo by Larry Kubo

**Situation:** While on patrol of the Dry Creek arm of Lake Sonoma, crewman Stu Halbersma reported to PATCOM that a campfire was visible. It was determined that the fire jumped the fire ring, and ignited a grass fire at the campsite. A small contingent of California Department of Forestry firefighters were dispatched. The Army Corps of Engineers, who were the controlling authority, asked both facilities to help transport additional firefighters to the campsite. The photo depicts the public launch ramp, where *Francis Faye* docked, and CDF engines were parked. Both facilities *Francis Faye* and *Margarita* transported CDF firefighters to the campsite. After the fire was contained, and hotspots and embers were extinguished *Margarita* was directed to return the firefighters, after which time both facilities were released by PATCOM. ©