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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 6, 2024

SS United States Set to Depart Philadelphia and Begin Journey to Become the World's Largest Artificial Reef

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – Okaloosa County's Tourist Development Department, [Destin-Fort Walton Beach, Florida](#), has concluded the necessary requirements by local, state and federal agencies to move the SS *United States* (SSUS) from her current docking area at Pier 82 in south Philadelphia to a docking area in Mobile, Alabama where preparations to ready the ship to become the World's Largest Artificial Reef will commence.

Operations to move America's Flagship will begin Thursday, November 14, 2024 and will continue through the day on Friday, November 15, 2024. Below are details on the operation:

- **Nov. 14, 2024:** Tug boats will secure themselves to the SSUS during high tide (estimated 11:45 a.m.) and begin maneuvering the vessel to the north side of the slip and secure it at Pier 80. The SSUS will remain there until the next low tide, estimated to be the following morning.
- **Nov. 15, 2024:** Tug boats will begin maneuvering the SSUS into the Delaware River pre-dawn, in preparation for low tide (estimated 6:59 a.m.). Bridges (*Walt Whitman Bridge (I-76)*, *Commodore Barry Bridge (U.S. 322)*, *Delaware Memorial Bridge (I-295)*) will close and the SSUS will be towed down the river into Delaware Bay. Traffic and bridge closures will be coordinated through the Department of Transportation. Motorists should avoid these areas.
- To follow her journey via GPS tracking, visit www.destinfbw.com/explore/eco-tourism/ssus. Tracking will begin when the vessel begins moving operations.

*****This is a tentative schedule. Dates, times and other logistics are subject to change.*****

Once the SSUS is escorted into the Atlantic Ocean, some of the tug boats will pull away and the majority of the tow will then require two to three tugs until the vessel reaches Mobile, Alabama. The estimated time of travel is about two weeks.

Upon arrival in Mobile, the SSUS will begin its rebirth into an artificial reef as contractors remove hazardous material, including non-metal parts and fuel to ensure this deployment is clean and not harmful to the environment it aims to benefit. Modifications will also be made to ensure that when the vessel is deployed, it will land upright underwater. The process of preparing the vessel for deployment will take about 12 months.

The exact location in the Gulf of Mexico for the vessel's deployment has not been set but it is expected to be about 20 miles south of the Florida Panhandle region in the Destin-Fort Walton Beach area.

Okaloosa County will continue to partner with the SS United States Conservancy as it pivots to develop a land-based museum and visitor center in Destin-Fort Walton Beach that will celebrate and commemorate our nation's flagship. The County will provide the Conservancy with regular ship updates and will support the Conservancy's museum plans which will incorporate iconic features from the ship, including the iconic funnels, radar mast, and other signature components, as well as the Conservancy's extensive curatorial and archival collection. This will preserve the *SS United States'* storied history and the memories that she has created for so many people over the years. Information about the history of the SS United States can be found on the Conservancy's website at www.ssusc.org.

Learn more about Okaloosa County's artificial reef program at <https://www.destinfb.com/explore/eco-tourism/artificial-reefs/>.

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