

Coast Guard Awards Birdon America Inc. to Design, Build River Buoy, Inland Construction Tenders



Artist's rendering of the Inland Construction Tender (left) and River Buoy Tender. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

WASHINGTON – On Oct. 5, 2022, the Coast Guard Waterways Commerce Cutter (WCC) Program awarded Birdon America, Inc. of Denver, Colorado, an indefinite-delivery, indefinite-quantity firm fixed price contract with economic price adjustments for the detail design and construction of its river buoy and inland construction tenders.

The initial award is worth \$28.49 million. The contract includes options for the construction of a total of 16 river buoy tenders and 11 inland construction tenders.

If all contract line items are exercised, the total contract value is estimated at \$1.19 billion.

River buoy tenders service short-range aids to navigation (ATON) on the western rivers. They set, relocate and recover buoys to mark the navigable channel in the rivers as the water level changes and also establish and maintain fixed aids, lights and day beacons.

Inland construction tenders construct, repair and maintain fixed ATON within inland waterways along the Eastern Seaboard and Gulf of Mexico. They are the only Coast Guard platform with the capability to drive and remove piles, erect towers and effect major structural changes.

The Coast Guard has a statutory mission to develop, establish

and maintain maritime ATON. WCCs will perform a critical part of this mission on the inland waterways and western rivers. The WCCs will replace the legacy inland tender fleet, which has an average vessel age of over 57 years and includes ships still in service at 78 years old. This contract award ensures the Coast Guard will continue to meet its vital missions throughout the Marine Transportation System.

“This contract award is an important milestone for the new inland fleet that will improve our operational capability on the Western Rivers, and Inland Waterways” said Adm. Linda Fagan, commandant, U.S. Coast Guard.

The new WCCs will have greater endurance, speed and deck load capacity than their predecessors. The ships will also feature improved habitability and will accommodate mixed-gender crews.