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Some of the ships in the mothball fleet float in the Suisun Bay near Benicia. One of the ships, The General John Pope, will be heading out today for cleaning and recycling. It'll be the seventh vessel to leave Suisun Bay over the past few months.

Chris Riley
Times-Herald file

Mothball fleet continues to shrink

Seventh vessel heads out of Suisun Bay today for cleaning, recycling

Times-Herald staff report

BENICIA — The Suisun Bay mothball fleet is scheduled to lose another ship early this morning.

The General John Pope will be transported out of the Suisun Bay Reserve Fleet north of Benicia about 7:30 a.m. today.

This is the seventh vessel to be transported out of the mothball fleet for cleaning and recycling.

The World War II-era ship, a P2 "General" class type troop ship, was built in 1943, and was operated by the U.S. Navy during the war before it was transferred to the U.S. Army and given its current name.

The ship later served in the Korean and Vietnam wars as a civilian-manned military sea transporta-

tion service vessel until it was placed in the mothball fleet in 1970.

The vessel will have its loose paint and other exterior "marine growth" removed at a ship repair facility in San Francisco prior to departure for Texas where it will be recycled.

Future vessels to be removed from the fleet include the following — the Gettysburg, a liquid bulk tanker, formerly the Exxon Gettysburg, on May 21; and the Taluga, formerly the USS Taluga (AO-62), a Navy fleet oiler, on July 1.

The ships, moving steadily out since October, are among the more than 50 obsolete vessels in the fleet scheduled for removal.

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