

Meet a Connecticut Ship Pilot: **CHARLIE JONAS**

Navigating the waters in and around Connecticut's deep-water ports can be difficult, with hundreds of vessels ranging from personal watercraft to massive tankers coming into port. It's the team of Connecticut Ship Pilots that directly guide ships on the complex approaches into port and ensure every visit to our ports is smooth and efficient. Charlie Jonas is one of seven pilots licensed to operate as a ship pilot in Connecticut waters and ports, who have been working hard to keep Connecticut ports a competitive and thriving center of the state economy.

"This is the best job in the state," said Jonas. "I have been doing it for 30 years, and I look forward to it every day."

A graduate of the Fort Schuyler Maritime College, Jonas is an expert on the Connecticut coastline and is responsible for piloting large vessels in coordination with the ship's captain, crew, tug boat operators, terminal personnel and all the other moving parts that function in sync to bring a ship safely into port.

"The supertankers are by far my favorite, I've piloted some of the largest ships in the world for Connecticut, Long Island, New York, and the offshore platforms in the sound. The bigger they are, the greater the sense of accomplishment," remarked Jonas.

By Connecticut law, every foreign ship must have a licensed pilot on the bridge to bring the ship into port. With non-standard arrival schedules, the pilots maintain a flexible and adaptive lifestyle.

"We used to only receive 48 hours' notice before a ship's arrival, fortunately the standard is now 96 hours," said Jonas. "The team of pilots all work together to ensure Connecticut's ports remain competitive. While it would be nice if every ship came in at 10:00 a.m., that isn't always the case. We are always ready for an all-nighter if that's what it takes."

As experts on Connecticut ports, the pilots have a unique perspective on the state of Connecticut's maritime economy, and have experienced the recent growth first-hand.

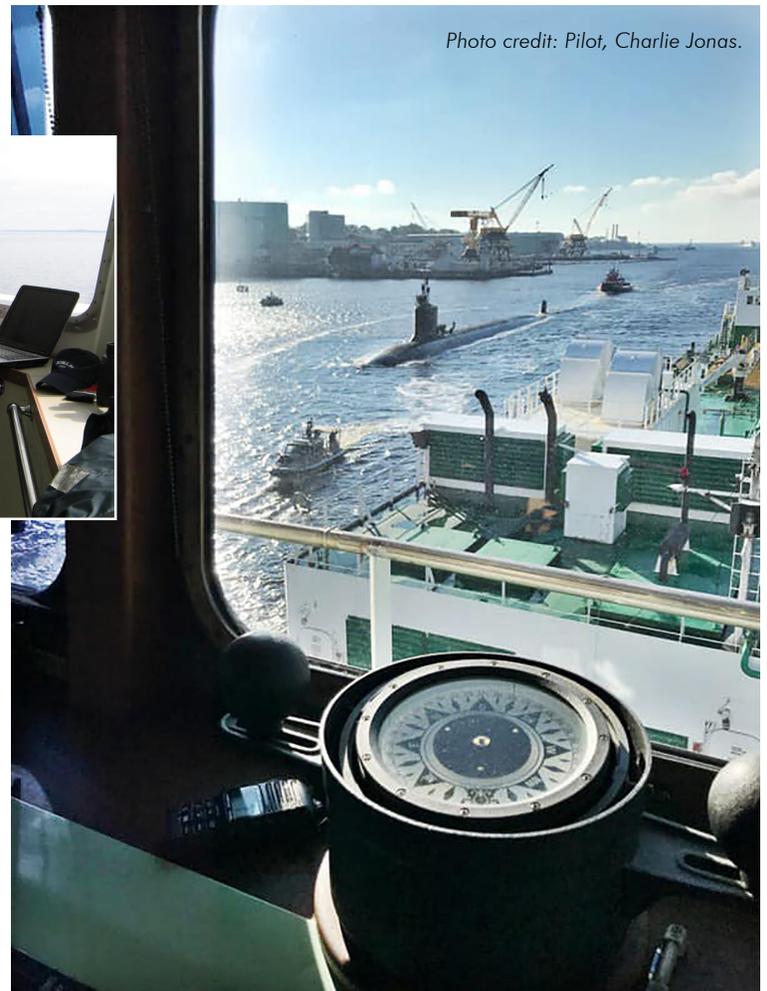


Photo credit: Pilot, Charlie Jonas.

"Connecticut's ports really are sleeping giants," said Jonas. "The pilots have been paying attention to the increased traffic; as of October 2018 we have already passed the number of arriving vessels when compared to all of 2017. Upcoming dredging projects in New Haven will deepen the harbor depths from 35 to 40 feet at low tide, which means we can bring more ships directly to berth in the ports, as opposed to anchoring and lightering (the process of transferring cargo between vessels of different sizes) the barges, which can be time consuming and expensive. It just means cheaper, faster and safer times at ports for visiting ships."



CPA Supports the Dredging of Connecticut's Ports and Waterways

While building and supporting Connecticut's maritime economy is at the core of CPA's mission, it is only one of the many duties and responsibilities outlined in the Connecticut Maritime Strategy. As we build the economic viability of our commercial ports, the CPA often has to get its hands dirty, literally, to keep our ports functioning and competitive. By ensuring that our large and small ports receive proper maintenance and dredging, it safeguards the economic and social capabilities of every port and harbor in Connecticut.

The CPA works with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, local governments and other partners on large dredging projects along our coastline, as well as smaller dredging projects located on the Connecticut River and other inland bodies, which lie outside the scope of the USACE's work. By working with partners and local stakeholders to invest in and support dredging projects throughout Connecticut, we ensure that there will be sustained and increased use of our ports, waterways and marinas well into the future.

Dredging projects have far-reaching effects beyond the removal of sediment from the mouths of our ports and harbors. In 2018, CPA completed a project that took dredged material from the Housatonic River to nourish approximately one mile (or 260,000 cubic yards) of the eroded beach at Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison. The dredged material helped to re-build the beach at an iconic state park and at the same time provided a potential new habitat for a fragile native bird species, the Piping Plover. Following the completion of the dredging project, CPA partnered with the Connecticut Audubon Society to monitor the population of Piping Plovers at the beach. [The full Connecticut Maritime Strategy can be found here.](#)

Did you know?

There are many beneficial uses for dredged material, including nourishment of beaches with clean sand, building berms around harbor entrances as defense against storms and sea level rise and for the development of wetland habitats.

CPA at the Naval & Maritime Consortium Launch

CPA attended the launch of the Naval & Maritime Consortium on Thursday, November 8 at the Branford House at UCONN Avery Point. The launch marks the kickoff of a program to support and grow Connecticut's maritime supply chain as investment and development into undersea warfare, offshore wind and maritime commerce ramp up in the state. For more information, visit their new webpage found [here](#).

IN THE NEWS

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September-October Issue

Maritime Logistics Professional Magazine

Connecticut Port Authority to Administer Dredging Project at State Pier

November 5, 2018

International Dredging Review

New London to Enact Security Plan at State Pier

November 10, 2018

The Day