



# Captain James M. McLay



## Deputy Sector Commander - Sector Columbia River



Captain McLay reported as Deputy Commander, Sector Columbia River in Portland, Oregon, in July 2023. In this role he assists in the oversight of more than 1,100 active duty, reserve, civilian and auxiliary personnel conducting operations over an area of responsibility encompassing 640 miles of coastal Oregon and southern Washington waters extending from the California border to Grays Harbor, WA, as well as the Willamette, Columbia, and Snake Rivers.

Captain McLay reported to Portland from Quantico, VA, where he completed a year-long senior service school program at the Marine Corps War College. Prior to his studies, he served at the Pentagon as the Coast

Guard Liaison Officer to the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans, and Strategy, where he facilitated policy dialog between armed sea services as a maritime homeland security, homeland defense, and threat response expert to the Navy staff.

Captain McLay was commissioned in 2002 following completion of Coast Guard Officer Candidate School in New London, CT. A response officer and boat forces professional, Captain McLay has deployed in support of numerous contingencies, including operations following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and Hurricanes Rita and Sandy. His operational tours include Deputy Sector Commander and Response Department Head at Sector Northern New England in South Portland, Maine; Executive Officer of Station New York; and Waterside Division Chief (Plankowner) of Maritime Safety and Security Team San Diego. Staff tours include Law Enforcement Duty and Staff Officer at the District Eleven Office of Law Enforcement in Alameda, CA, and External Affairs Officer (Plankowner) at the Deployable Operations Group in Arlington, VA. Following completion of the Naval War College's College of Naval Command and Staff resident program, he served as J9 Deputy Section Chief and Special Programs Branch Chief at the Department of Homeland Security's Joint Task Force East.

Captain McLay holds a bachelor's degree in political science from James Madison University as well as three master's degrees: in business administration and management from Boston University; national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College (distinguished graduate); and strategic studies from the Marine Corps War College. In 2022, he completed Harvard Kennedy School's Senior Executive Fellowship program. Captain McLay is married with four children.