

Navy ships slated to be sunk

by UPI

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Navy plans to sink 15 decommissioned ships and scrap an additional 24 in the next five years, military officials said. Among the vessels slated to be sunk are the Yellowstone-class destroyer Acadia, the Spruance-class destroyer Conolly and the acoustic research ship Hayes, which is active but will be decommissioned this year, The Navy Times reported Sunday. The military budget presented to Congress this month contains a \$5.4 million appropriation to sink the three ships. In all, the Navy is requesting \$110 million in fiscal 2009 to pay for ship deactivations and disposal. Two ships in the current decommissioning plan -- the Spruance-class destroyer Arthur W. Radford, which rests in Philadelphia, and the auxiliary aircraft landing training ship Forrestal, currently berthed in Newport, R.I.-- are slated to sink and become artificial reefs, the newspaper reported. "Over the past seven years, the Navy's average cost to dismantle conventionally powered Navy inactive ships in the U.S. is \$300 per ton," said Kathleen Roberts, a Naval Systems Command spokeswoman. She said it costs the Navy \$14 million per year to maintain its current inactive ship inventory.

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