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Cape Blanco Lighthouse Lens Assessment

Our Historic Second Order Fresnel Lens was inspected on June 28 2026



PRELIMINARY INSPECTION: Fresnel lens expert Chad Kaiser will report findings and recommendations for repair to the U.S.C.G.

OUR FRESNEL LENS assessment took place on June 28, 2026. This was a preliminary inspection to ascertain the condition of the lens before any repair can proceed. Chad Kaiser of the New Dungeness Lighthouse, a noted expert in our area on Fresnel lenses, made the trip to Cape Blanco for this purpose and will be reporting his findings to the U.S. Coast Guard and the Cape Blanco Heritage Society.

In the meantime, we are searching for jacks (as shown at right) that are designed to lift the lens up to access the rollers so the bearings can be cleaned and conditioned. These jacks are custom designed to fit a specific Fresnel lens. The ones shown in the photograph are jacks for lenses designed by the Chance Brothers of Birmingham, England. It is interesting to note that the Chance Brothers built the first order Fresnel lens in the Heceta Head Lighthouse that recently

underwent a \$35,000 repair of their bearings. Unlike French lenses made of silica glass with a greenish tint, the Chance Brothers used a sulfur-based glass yielding a yellowish hue and higher candlepower output, making Heceta Head the brightest light on the U.S. West Coast, as well as the only remaining active, in-service first-order English lens in the United States. This is a testament to just how special



IN SEARCH OF: CBHS is currently searching for jacks similar to the ones shown in this photo for lifting the Fresnel lens to access the bearings.

Oregon lighthouses are, with many still housing their original lenses: the Umpqua River Lighthouse, Yaquina Head Lighthouse, and Cape Meares Lighthouse join Heceta Head in this distinction. Cape Blanco's original first-order Fresnel lens installed in 1870 was removed in 1936 when the station was electrified (See ["155 Years of Fresnel Lens History at Cape Blanco"](#)).

We will have more news on the assessment once the report is complete (our inspector is reviewing the 2020 Preservation Plan and 2023 Assessment as well). There will be a plan of restoration to approve before suggested repairs can be made to the lens and the Cape Blanco Lighthouse can once again re-open to the public. We would like to thank the U.S. Lighthouse Society for a Preservation Grant that made our Fresnel lens assessment possible. We were one in five lighthouses awarded in 2026.

More photos on PAGE 6

