

Dry Hook

Summary

Dry Hook is a major port city and commercial terminal located in [Zushonia](#), on the northern coast of [The Continent of Osines](#). It functions as a specialized relay point where Zushonian canal and river barges exchange goods with ocean-going ships. The city is defined by its extensive water-management infrastructure, including historical reclamation projects that have allowed a dense urban population to occupy a once-volatile river delta. It is a primary exporter of grain, cured meats, and dried fruits for the international market.

Description

Historical Engineering and Reclamation

The existence of Dry Hook is the result of two centuries of dedicated civil engineering. The city was founded following the completion of the **tree-dam**, the first successful attempt to control the flow of the [River Wackle](#). This project used whole trees and sunken posts to trap sediment and sediment, forcing the river into a stable channel.

The second major project, the **Oyster Fence**, took twenty years to complete. By driving posts into the shallow seabed and filling wicker baskets with shells and rubbish, the Zushonians calmed the coastal waves. This allowed the salt marshes to silt up and eventually form the stable ground upon which the modern city stands.

Topography and Infrastructure

Dry Hook is built across three primary islands within the delta: Willow Bank, East Bank, and Bird Park. The city is protected by a massive **River Dyke** and a series of causeways. The dykes are built to a uniform height of six metres above sea level to safeguard against seasonal flooding.

The city's industrial heart consists of three major docks: West Dock, East Dock, and Central Dock, featuring specialized berths for different classes of vessels. These docks sit at an elevation of four metres above sea level, placing them below the main residential areas but well above the standard waterline. Terrestrial traffic enters the city via the **Dyke Road**, which connects the port to the fertile interior plains. The city operates as the interface between Zushonia's 1,960 hulls and the global Skyssian merchant fleet.

Berthing and Ship Traffic

On any given day, the harbour hosts approximately 60 to 90 vessels. The traffic is a mix of:

- **Zushonian Barges:** Flat-bottomed craft for interior riverine navigation. (more than half of the

total as they bring goods up-river to transfer to larger seagoing vessels)

- **Skyssian Merchants:** Large ocean-going vessels, including 200-ton caravels. A little over a quarter of all the vessels are Skyssian flagged merchants.
- **Berenician Cogs:** 50-ton coastal carriers of iron and wool. A minority of the ships, but still a regular trade with one or two arriving or departing on each tide.
- **Mangandalese Junks:** Distinctive 100-ton riverine vessels trading in silks and spices, a rare sight, but there's usually one in loading or unloading most days.

Urban Society and Housing

By the late eighth century AM, the island had become a densely packed urban environment where space is at a premium. Dry Hook supports an estimated population of **45,000 to 55,000 citizens**, making it one of the largest and most densely populated settlements in Zushonia. The city is a masterpiece of civil engineering, constructed upon reclaimed land and protected by a massive River Dyke and the "Oyster Fence" reef. The social geography is clearly defined by elevation and location:

- **Merchants Row:** The most successful and wealthy traders reside here in narrow, high-status terraced housing.
- **The Strand:** This area is home to the city's older, established Zushonian families known for their direct, plain-speaking manner.
- **The Docklands:** A bustling and crowded district where transient mariners, Skyssian BoT agents, and local labourers reside in dwellings mixed directly with or built within large-scale warehouses to maximise space.

Administrative Presence

The [Skyssian Board of Trade](#) maintains [a significant presence in Dry Hook](#) to monitor the flow of Zushonian agricultural exports. The organisation operates two primary facilities: a main office located to the south of the West Dock and a secondary outpost situated near the Sea Gate at the corner of the Old Market. These outposts serve as the principal intelligence hubs for Skyssian interests in the region.

Relationships

People

- [Yngvild the Fierce](#): A notable traveller who visited the port during her transit through the southern kingdoms.
- [Merchant Admiral](#): Oversees the League of Traders members who frequent the city's deep-water berths.

Places

- [Kingdom of Zushonia](#): The sovereign state that relies on Dry Hook for its maritime trade.
- [River Wackle](#): The primary waterway that provides the city with its industrial purpose.
- [Board of Trade](#): The Skyssian authority that monitors the city's customs and trade data.

- **Merchants Row**: The residential district for the city’s mercantile elite.
- **The Strand**: The historic residential heart of the delta islands.

Concepts

- **Honour**: The social currency that ensures the stability of contracts between river bargemen and deep-sea mariners.
- **Water Management**: The core technical expertise that allows the city to resist the natural cycles of the river.

Skyss - Story Background	Characters	Skyss - Places	Pantheons of the World	Other Background
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