

In anticipation of World War II, the U.S. Navy awarded a contract for the construction of two submarine chasers to the Seabrook Shipyard in 1940. The boats were 110 foot long shallow-draft craft made from wood. They were fitted with depth charges and were particularly suited to anti-submarine warfare. World War II began one year later when the U.S. declared war on Germany and Japan.

On January 24, 1942, the first subchaser, the PC 501, was completed at the Seabrook Shipyard. It was the first built on the Texas coast since the U.S. entered the war. During the course of the war, the Seabrook Shipyard also constructed six subchasers and eight crash boats used by the Navy as "rescue boats in connection with air training and other aerial operations."

