

# Columbia River channel deepening

**\$26.6 million in stimulus funding is received to complete the project**

## Background

Maritime trade has long defined our region's identity, culture and economy. International trade in the Pacific Northwest depends on direct access to world markets. The Columbia River deep-draft shipping channel plays a major role in ensuring this access. It is the largest wheat and barley export gateway in the nation, and the third largest grain export gateway in the world.



The federal navigation channel in the Lower Columbia River is 110 miles long and 40 feet deep. The channel supports over 40 million tons of cargo each year; valued at \$16 billion. Over 40,000 local jobs are dependent on this trade. To date, approximately 95% of the navigation channel has been successfully deepened to 43 feet.

The lower Columbia River navigation channel has been dredged to ensure the safe passage of cargo ships for more than 100 years. The existing channel is being deepened to handle the new generation of larger, deep-draft vessels when they are fully loaded. A deeper channel will allow an additional 6,000 tons of wheat worth \$1M to be loaded in each bulk vessel, and an additional 6,000 tons of cargo, like exported frozen potatoes, vegetables and paper products and imported footwear and apparel, could be handled by each container ship.

## Stimulus funding will complete the project by December 2010

The Columbia River channel deepening received \$26.6 million in stimulus package funding to complete the project. This final increment of funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) has enabled the Corps of Engineers to move forward with removal of one mile of rock near St. Helens, sand and cobbles near Longview, sand dredging elsewhere in the river, mitigation, and ecosystem restoration. All of the work necessary to provide a 43-foot navigation channel from the Mouth of the Columbia River to the Ports of Portland and Vancouver is scheduled to be finished by the end of 2010. For details regarding project planning and construction, visit <http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/issues/crcip/home.asp>.

## Funding history

Funding for this project has been provided by a mix of sources: federal appropriations; the governments of Oregon and Washington state; and local sponsoring ports including Portland and St. Helens in Oregon, and Kalama, Longview, Vancouver and Woodland in Washington state. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages this project, which encompasses construction of the deepened navigation channel as well as critical ecosystem restoration on the Columbia River.

To date, over \$113 million has been appropriated for the project: \$4.5 million for FY2001; \$2 million for FY2003; \$3.5 million for FY2004; \$9 million for FY2005; \$15 million for FY2006; \$30 million for FY2007, \$15 million for FY2008, and \$34.5M for FY2009.



Channel deepening will help maintain the Columbia River as one of the nation's leading international trade gateways

