



Contact: Kristin Meira
Government Relations Director, Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
(503) 234-8556 – direct
email: kristin.meira@pnwa.net

For Immediate Release

Thursday, November 8, 2007

PNWA applauds veto override of water projects bill - celebrates provisions affecting Inland Empire

The Northwest Congressional delegation unanimously supported the veto override of the 2007 Water Resources Development Act (H.R.1495). PNWA Executive Director Glenn Vanselow stated that “after literally years of effort by PNWA, our membership and the Northwest Congressional delegation, we are pleased that Congress has enacted the WRDA bill into law.” He added that “this bill includes important provisions that will enable Inland Empire ports to spur economic development and restore the environment.”

Deed and flowage easement restrictions lifted

The Ports of Clarkston, Whitman County, and Pasco in Washington state and the Port of Lewiston in Idaho have been limited in their use of lands that were formerly owned by the Corps of Engineers, or that were restricted by flowage easements. The restrictions on the use of these lands have been lifted in this WRDA bill.

Port of Lewiston Manager David Doeringsfeld stated that “passage of WRDA will remove specific Corps of Engineers land restrictions that will broaden the development potential of Port of Lewiston waterfront property.”

“The Port of Clarkston is delighted at the passage of the WRDA bill,” noted Port of Clarkston Manager Wanda Keefer. She added that “lifting of deed restrictions on ground owned by the Port means we will have better opportunity to make our waterfront active and vibrant. Appropriate riverfront development in our community now has a green light.”

Port of Pasco Executive Director Jim Toomey noted that “The port is grateful to the leadership of Congressman Hastings in the House, and the support of Senator Murray and Senator Cantwell in the Senate in bringing about the passage of WRDA”, adding “this addresses longstanding concerns here in Pasco. WRDA's passage eases federal restrictions on the Port's rivershore property, enabling it to be put to its highest and best usage, while enhancing public access.”

Port of Sunnyside aquatic ecosystem restoration project

The WRDA bill contained language that would allow the Port of Sunnyside's past work on an aquatic ecosystem restoration project in the Yakima River to be credited toward the non-federal share of the project. Rep. Doc Hastings (R, WA-4) has worked with the Port for many years to address this project and insert this language in the bill.

Port Manager Amber Hansen stated that “this project is the creation of a wetland habitat, benefiting the fish and waterfowl of the Yakima River. It is very important to the viability of the Port's Industrial Wastewater System, and to the economy of Sunnyside. We are extremely grateful and proud of the Senate and House for recognizing the significance of this bill.”

About PNWA: The Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that advocates for federal policies and funding in support of regional economic development. PNWA represents multiple industries in the public and private sectors in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and California. Members include public ports, navigation, transportation, international trade, tourism, agriculture, forest products, energy and local government interests. Since its founding in 1934, PNWA led the way for development of economic infrastructure for navigation, electric power and irrigated agriculture on the Columbia and Snake River System. In 1971, PNWA expanded, adding Puget Sound and coastal port members to provide a comprehensive regional perspective. Today, PNWA works with the U.S. Congress, federal agencies and regional decision leaders on transportation, trade, tourism, energy and environmental policy to enhance economic vitality in the Pacific Northwest.

-END-

www.pnwa.net