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Stakeholders monitor lock closure progress

The Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA) has been closely monitoring progress of the Columbia Snake River System's (CSRS) extended lock outage. The 14-week planned closure began on December 10, 2010 and includes gate replacements at The Dalles, John Day and Lower Monumental navigation locks. Routine maintenance of all eight CSRS locks, which are maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will also occur during the closure.

"We are pleased to report that there has been consistent good news from the Corps," stated Glenn Vanselow, PNWA Executive Director. "As we near the half way point of the closure, the projects are well on their way to completion." The Corps has announced that they are running very close to schedule, with most locks reopening by March 13th. The Dalles is scheduled to reopen on March 23rd, at which time the entire CSRS will be up and running. Commerce will again be flowing up and down the inland system from the Portland/Vancouver area all the way to Lewiston, ID.

The CSRS is a vital transportation link for the states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. The economies of these four states rely heavily on the commerce that flows up and down this system. The CSRS is the #1 U.S. wheat export gateway, #1 U.S. barley export gateway, #1 West Coast wood export gateway, #1 in West Coast mineral bulk exports, and #2 on the West Coast for auto imports. The deep draft channel supports 40 million tons of cargo each year and 40,000 local jobs. The inland system supports 10 million tons of cargo, valued at \$2 billion annually. Overall trade on the system, and throughout the Pacific Northwest, is expected to increase significantly in the future.

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About PNWA: The Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA) is a 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. You can learn more about PNWA at www.pnwa.net.