



Nor'wester Newsletter

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President Trump announces nominee to lead Corps of Engineers

President Trump has nominated R.D. James as the new Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA-CW). The ASA-CW is the civilian head of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, charged with establishing policy direction and providing supervision of the Department of the Army functions relating to all aspects of the Corps' Civil Works program. The Corps has been without a leader since the previous ASA-CW, Jo-Ellen Darcy, retired earlier this year. Mr. James has previous federal experience, having been appointed to the Mississippi River Commission by President Reagan in 1981, and has provided engineering and policy advice to Congress, several Administrations, and the Army for 35 years. Mr. James has a degree in civil engineering and lives in Missouri where he farms and manages cotton gins and grain elevators. PNWA will keep you updated as Mr. James' confirmation process moves forward.

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Upcoming Events

Corps announces public meetings on Lower Columbia maintenance plan

The Portland District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Ports of Portland, Vancouver, Woodland, Kalama and Longview have announced a series of public meetings as part of the scoping process for the Lower Columbia River Federal Navigation Channel Maintenance Plan. This is the long-term plan to manage placement of dredge material from the 110-mile federal navigation channel on the Lower Columbia River.

As part of the requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Corps will be holding a series of scoping meetings where the public can learn more about the NEPA process and leave comments for the Corps to consider. The meeting schedule is below and we encourage interested parties to attend these meeting in support of navigation and routine maintenance dredging on the Lower Columbia.

Meeting Date and Time	Meeting Location
Friday, October 6 4:00pm to 7:00pm	Charles Jordan Community Center 9009 N. Foss Ave Portland, OR
Monday, October 16 4:00pm to 7:00pm	Meriwether Place 1070 Columbia Blvd St. Helens, OR
Tuesday, October 17 4:00pm to 7:00pm	Maritime Museum Barbey Maritime Center 1792 Marine Drive Astoria, OR
Thursday, October 19 4:00pm to 7:00pm	Norse Hall 444 State Route 4, Puget Island Cathlamet, WA

For more information, visit the channel maintenance [website](#) or view the official [notice](#).

Rep. Smith reintroduces legislation to upgrade freight transportation network

Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA) has reintroduced the Freight Infrastructure Reinvestment Act ([H.R.3769](#)). The bill, which is co-sponsored by Representatives Keith Ellison (D-MN) and Albio Sires (D-NJ), would create a national freight grant program which would be funded by a one percent fee on the shipment of freight cargo. The fee would provide funding for infrastructure upgrades which would improve the efficiency, capacity, and safety of the transport system. These would include bridge reinforcement, marine terminal improvements, or expansion of rail and highway tunnels to accommodate increased cargo movement.

This is the same bill which Congressman Smith [introduced last year](#), and PNWA remains very supportive of its passage. [Click here](#) to read the press release accompanying the bill's introduction, including statements from the Northwest Seaport Alliance, PNWA, and CAGTC. We will continue to provide updates on the bill's status.

PNWA Member Spotlight: Ecological Land Services completes work at the Coweeman Mitigation Bank

The Coweeman Mitigation Bank is the first mitigation bank in Washington to offer compensatory mitigation credits for both wetland and fish habitat impacts. The Bank encompasses approximately 300 acres, including 174 acres of old growth forest adjoining the Coweeman River in Kelso,



Washington. The general goals of the Bank project are to restore wetland hydrology and floodplain connectivity, increase habitat connectivity and complexity for salmonids and other aquatic dependent species, create additional wetland, and re-establish wetland and riparian plant communities typically found in Lower Columbia River floodplain environment. Project construction was completed in summer 2016, and plant installation was just completed in the spring of 2017.

ELS prepared numerous environmental documents and permits for the project as it is located within both Cowlitz County and City of Kelso jurisdictions. The Bank design and operation also had to be approved by the Interagency Review Team consisting of nine local, state, and federal agencies. Environmental and permitting documents prepared include a Shoreline Substantial Development Permit, Special Use Permit, Conditional Use Permit, SEPA, Nationwide Permit, Hydraulic Project Approval, 401 Water Quality Certification, NPDES Permit, Critical Areas Report, In-water Work Plan, Water Quality Monitoring Plan, ESA documentation, and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan. ELS also assisted Habitat Bank with preparation of the Mitigation

Banking Instrument appendices. Field work for the project included delineating critical areas on the property, determining the ordinary high water mark of the Coweeman River, conducting an extensive tree survey to confirm the presence of old growth forest, mapping vegetation communities throughout the existing wetlands, and characterizing tributaries.

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