

Contact: Kristin Meira, Executive Director
Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
503-234-8556 direct
kristin.meira@pnwa.net



** For Immediate Release **

Navigation supporters celebrate as Snake River dredging is scheduled to begin

On Monday, January 5th Judge James Robart of the U.S. District Court's Western District of Washington, ruled in favor of the federal government and denied an injunction to halt dredging on the Snake River. After nine years, dredging in the Lower Granite Pool near Lewiston, ID and Clarkston, WA will begin as early as January 12, 2015.

The dredging was initially scheduled to begin in early December and conclude by February 28, 2015. Accelerated dredging will now occur for approximately six weeks during this same "in-water work window" – the time of year biologists deem best for the fish. The sediment is so clean, it will be used downstream on the Snake River near Knoxway Canyon to create resting and rearing habitat for juvenile salmon, primarily fall Chinook¹. Unlike most other navigation channels around the country, dredging is needed fairly infrequently on the Lower Snake River. Small parts of the navigation channel were dredged in 1999, and not again until 2006. The federal navigation channel has been maintenance-free for nine years. The quantities proposed for removal are a fraction of what is dredged in other river systems across the nation.

"This is clearly a win-win project for the region," stated Kristin Meira, Executive Director of the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association. "This will not only benefit our environment, but it will also ensure that grain and other commodities continue to move efficiently through the region. Barging is a large part of the Northwest economy, and this dredging action is vital to keeping Northwest goods competitive in the global marketplace."

The Columbia Snake River System is a significant national waterway, and plays a big role in ensuring that our country's farmers and manufacturers have the ability to export their goods to international markets. The Columbia Snake River System is the top wheat export gateway in the nation, and second for soy.² The inland system moves over 9 million tons of cargo annually that feed the Lower Columbia River export gateway. Snake River dredging continues to build upon improvements that have been made to the system in recent years, and ensures that our region is able to handle additional growth and cargo for years to come.

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PNWA is a non-profit trade association that advocates for federal policies and funding in support of regional economic development. We represent over 130 public and private sector member organizations in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and California. Members include public ports, navigation, transportation, trade, tourism, agriculture, forest products, energy and local government interests. Since our 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, we expanded, adding Oregon and Washington 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, energy and environmental policies and projects to enhance economic vitality in the Pacific Northwest.

¹ USACE Walla Walla District. <http://www.nww.usace.army.mil/Portals/28/docs/programsandprojects/psmp/Pubnotice-2013-14drdg.pdf>

² U.S. Department of Agriculture. http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/wa_gr152.txt