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**\*\*For Immediate Release\*\***

### **PNWA applauds court ruling on Snake River sediment management plan**

Today, Judge James Robart of the U.S. District Court's Western District of Washington unequivocally ruled in favor of the federal government and dismissed the merits portion of the Snake River Programmatic Sediment Management Plan (PSMP) lawsuit. This ruling is a clear win for those who value a balanced approach to maintaining this vital trade corridor in an environmentally responsible manner.

This decision follows Judge Robart's earlier January 2015 ruling to deny the plaintiffs' request for injunction. Judge Robart's earlier decision allowed the Corps to perform routine maintenance dredging in the Lower Granite pool near Lewiston, ID and Clarkston, WA for the first time in nine years. The dredging, which concluded in February 2015, allowed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to restore the navigation channel to its authorized depth, while using the material removed from the channel to create shallow water habitat for juvenile salmon downstream near Knoxway Canyon. Unlike most other navigation channels around the country, dredging is needed fairly infrequently on the Lower Snake River, and the quantities removed were a fraction of what is dredged in other river systems across the nation.

"This ruling is very positive news," stated Kristin Meira, Executive Director of the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association. "We are pleased that the Court recognized the Corps' thoughtful approach to maintaining navigation on our river system while addressing the needs of our migrating fish. Through the PSMP, the Corps has created a plan that gives them the flexibility to evaluate sediment in the channel, then determine the most efficient and environmentally friendly way to keep this vital trade corridor open."

The Columbia Snake River System allows farmers and other producers in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho to access international markets. The dismissal of the lawsuit means that cargo will continue to move as efficiently as possible. "Our partners greatly appreciate the work of the Corps to keep the channel maintained, and it is so nice to have a favorable ruling from the Court to finally end a process that started back in 2005," said Arvid Lyons, Executive Director of Lewis Clark Terminals in Lewiston, ID. Wanda Keefer, Manager at the Port of Clarkston, WA agreed, adding "Snake River navigation provides good-paying jobs for the Lewis-Clark Valley, and we could not be happier that our farmers, cruise boats and other customers will be able to continue to rely on this important federal navigation channel."

The Snake River dams provide significant benefits to the Northwest. In 2012, nearly 10% of all U.S. wheat exports moved through the locks on the Snake River, and the commerce that takes place on this inland barge system helps to feed the Lower Columbia River export gateway. Together, the Columbia and Snake Rivers move nearly 50% of the nation's wheat, making this river system the country's top wheat export gateway. Significant investments have been made in the river system in recent years, and it is poised to handle more cargo than ever before. For more information, visit [www.SnakeRiverDams.com](http://www.SnakeRiverDams.com).

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**About PNWA:** The Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA) is a non-profit trade association that advocates for federal policies and funding in support of regional economic and environmental sustainability. PNWA represents multiple industries in the public and private sectors in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Members include public ports, navigation, transportation, international trade, tourism, agriculture, forest products, energy and local government interests. Learn more about PNWA at [www.pnwa.net](http://www.pnwa.net).