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## Thank you new Summer Conference sponsor

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Thank you to our newest [PNWA 2021 Summer Conference](#) sponsor for their generous support:

### **Silver Sponsor**

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## Spinrad confirmed as NOAA administrator

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Richard (Rick) W. Spinrad, Ph.D., an internationally renowned scientist with four decades of ocean, atmosphere, and climate science and policy expertise, was confirmed by the U.S. Senate June 17 as the under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and the 11th National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration administrator.



Dr. Spinrad earned master's and doctorate degrees in oceanography from Oregon State University. He most recently served as a Professor of Oceanography at OSU, and a member of the Ocean Studies Board of the National Academies. He previously held positions in NOAA as Chief Scientist, Assistant Administrator for Research, and Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management.

See [NOAA's news release](#) for more details.

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## Coit named NOAA Fisheries assistant administrator

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Janet Coit was appointed to lead NOAA Fisheries, which is responsible for managing our nation's marine fisheries and conserving protected marine species, as the assistant administrator under the Biden-Harris Administration. Coit will also serve as acting assistant secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and deputy NOAA administrator, for which she will support and manage NOAA's coastal and marine programs.

Coit succeeds Paul Doremus, Ph.D., who has been acting NOAA Fisheries assistant administrator since January 2021.

Coit has worked on environmental issues, natural resource management, and stewardship for more than 30 years. She brings extensive managerial and leadership experience to NOAA Fisheries, having worked at the intersection of policy and science throughout her career.

Read the [NOAA Fisheries news release](#) for more.

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## Senate introduces Surface Transportation reauthorization

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The U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation Chair Maria Cantwell (D, WA) and Ranking Member Roger Wicker (R, MS) introduced the [Surface Transportation Investment Act](#) on June 10. This authorizing legislation includes \$78 billion over 5 years for rail (\$36 billion), multi-modal grant programs (\$27.8 billion) and safety programs (\$13 billion) to address key infrastructure priorities.

**Rail:** The bulk of the rail investment is in passenger rail improvements, but the bill includes \$7.5 billion over five years for rail safety and improvement projects, a new \$500 million per year grant program to eliminate grade crossings, and an increase in funding for the Consolidated Rail and Infrastructure Safety

Improvement grant program. Some changes were made to the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program to make it a more advantageous to potential borrowers. It now "authorizes \$50 million per year for credit risk premium assistance similar to other U.S. DOT loan programs, expands eligibility to transit-oriented development projects and landside port infrastructure, and codifies the RRIF express program targeted at smaller and rural project applicants."

**Freight:** This legislation authorizes an average of \$1.2 billion a year in the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight grant program, also known as INFRA, including resources for multistate planning and research. The office of Multimodal Freight Infrastructure and Policy is authorized under this bill to update the National Freight Strategic Plan and increase federal and state governments coordination for freight planning.



Multimodal Investment: The bill authorizes \$1.5 billion annually for the U. S. DOT's BUILD/RAISE grant program. \$2 billion annually is authorized for a new program to fund big dollar value projects of national significance. There are also resources and tools to assist rural and tribal communities with planning and competing for the financial assistance programs.

To read the bill text, click [here](#).

To read the summary fact sheet, click [here](#).

To read the section by section summary, click [here](#).

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## Murray pushes for Washington salmon investments

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U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D, WA) pushed Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg during a Senate Appropriations Committee Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing to support critical investments in repairing and replacing fish culverts in order to boost salmon populations. Specifically, Senator Murray advocated for including funding for culvert repair and replacement in a major infrastructure package and highlighted her support for the bipartisan [Bridge Investment Act](#), which would make culvert projects eligible for a new major bridge program.

View [Sen. Murray's remarks](#) on YouTube here.

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## BOEM hosts offshore wind and maritime knowledge exchange

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**Invitation to Join the  
2021 BOEM Offshore Wind and Maritime  
Industry Knowledge Exchange**

**June 24, July 22, and August 19  
9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. PDT**



Join us to learn more as subject matter experts discuss updates on offshore wind and maritime activities that occurred since BOEM's [2018 Offshore Wind and Maritime Industry Knowledge Exchange](#), share how past recommendations and approaches were incorporated in offshore wind and marine transportation co-existence, and continue discussing measures to minimize risk to safety and disruptions to maritime transportation operations while supporting the development of domestic renewable energy.

June 24 – Ports: Stressors, Conflicts, and Offshore Wind Needs  
[Register here](#)

July 22 – Agency and Industry Coordination: Search and Navigational Tools

For more information, [contact Arianna Baker](#).

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## House passes PUGET SOS Act

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The U.S. House of Representatives voted June 15 to pass the Promoting United Government Efforts to Save Our Sound (PUGET SOS) Act of 2021. The PUGET SOS Act, introduced by Representatives Derek Kilmer (D, WA-06) and Marilyn Strickland (D, WA-10), would enhance the federal government's role and investment in Puget Sound, the nation's largest

estuary by volume, which is vital to Washington state's identity and economy. The PUGET SOS Act aims to have the federal government be a stronger partner in Puget Sound recovery and restoration efforts in three main ways:

First, the bill establishes a Puget Sound Recovery National Program Office in the Environmental Protection Agency to coordinate protection and restoration efforts related to Puget Sound.

Second, it codifies the Puget Sound Federal Leadership Task Force, which was first created through a 2016 Memorandum of Understanding by executive action. The Task Force consists of representatives from various agencies that have a role in Puget Sound recovery.

Third, the bill authorizes \$50 million annually for five years to carry out the provisions above.

Read [Rep. Kilmer's press release](#) for more details.

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