



Nor'wester Newsletter

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House WRDA Manager's Amendment is released

Yesterday, the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee released the updated [Manager's Amendment](#) for their Water Resources



Development Act of 2016 (H.R.5303). The activity in the House follows [passage of the Senate WRDA](#) last week. We'd like to note some important changes to the bill, with respect to the priorities of the PNWA membership. These include:

- Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF). Regular *Nor'wester* readers will recall that the original House WRDA bill included language to take the HMTF off-budget in fiscal year 2027. In the updated Manager's Amendment, this language has been removed. The desire to take the HMTF off-budget and provide full use of HMTF funds directly to the Corps has been a priority of the PNWA membership, and we will be supporting this effort as we look ahead to future WRDA bills. The removal of this language has also caused controversy in the last 24 hours among House

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members who were strong supporters of this provision.

- Donor Ports. As previously noted, the House bill changes the definition of WRRDA 2014's Section 2106 donor ports by reducing the threshold for qualification from \$15M in annual HMT collections to \$5M. This would add approximately three additional ports to the current donor port group. The Manager's Amendment would also extend Section 2106 through FY2025. The Senate bill would, among other things, make Section 2106 permanent.

The updated House WRDA also retains the following provisions from the original bill released in May:

- Small Ports. The 10% set aside for small ports is made permanent in the House WRDA. We are pleased to report that the Senate bill also includes permanence for this important provision.
- Section 214 for rail partners. Both the House and Senate bills include language that would expand the Section 214 funding authority to rail carriers in the U.S.
- Federal breakwaters and jetties. The House bill would require that the Corps analyze their current inventory of breakwaters and jetties to include reviewing structural quality, costs to repair, and impacts to the dredging program due to deterioration of the structure.
- Electronic submission & tracking of permit applications. Language is included that would require the Corps to develop a system to allow electronic submission of permit applications, including addressing individual permits, letters of permission and joint applications with States for Federal and State permits. Support for this shift to electronic system was voiced by PNWA members at a recent Corps/PNWA regulatory partnering session.
- Cascade Locks flowage easement. The bill continues to support the Port of Cascade Locks' request to remove an outdated flowage easement on port property. This would allow the port to develop jobs within their Business Park,

build out the full potential of their properties, and provide maximum investment in the area.

- Federal dredge fleet. Language is included which would require the Corps to provide a report on the federal dredge fleet. Specifically, the Corps would be required to look at the costs and benefits of expanding, reducing or maintaining the current federal hopper dredges.

PNWA continues to review language in the bill and potential impacts to the PNWA membership. It is hoped that the bill will head to the House floor next week, however there are still a lot of potential road blocks to passage. In particular, omission of language dealing with the Flint water crisis and removal of the HMTF language are of concerns to many Members.

PNWA will continue to update our membership as the WRDA process moves forward. If you have questions, please contact [Heather Stebbings](#).

EPA releases report on port emissions

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released a [report](#) on greenhouse gas emissions at U.S. ports and suggested ways for ports to reduce emissions. The report looks at the impact of port related diesel emissions on both the immediate port area and the surrounding communities. While not specific to any port, the document does include general strategies for emissions reduction.

[AAPA has released a statement](#) on the report which highlights the critical role of our nation's ports in environmental stewardship, and the work done to reduce the environmental impact of port activities. Here in the Northwest, PNWA's members have long been [innovators in addressing port and shipping emissions](#). Additionally, PNWA has long supported the [Diesel Emission Reduction Act \(DERA\) grant program](#). We will continue to track further developments on this issue.

PNWA welcomes Port of Willapa Harbor!



[The Port of Willapa Harbor](#) was formed in 1928 to provide docking facilities and service for shipping logs and lumber in Raymond and to support commercial fishing and oystering in Tokeland and Bay Center. In 1976 the Corps of Engineers ended the dredging of the Willapa River channel, which resulted in the loss of commercial shipping on Willapa Bay. The Port continues to serve fishing, oystering and recreational vessels.

In addition to the marina facilities in Raymond, Tokeland and Bay Center, the Port has expanded to include the Willapa Harbor Airport, the Raymond Port Dock Industrial Area, the Stan Hatfield Industrial Park, the Dick Taylor Industrial Park and a commercial building and pier in South Bend. The Port of Willapa Harbor currently has over 30 light industrial and commercial tenants. The Port district encompasses 787 square miles with boundaries extending from the Grays Harbor county line on the north, the Lewis county line on the east, the Nemah River on the south and the Pacific Ocean on the west.

The Port has undertaken the redevelopment and expansion of the Tokeland Marina including new marina floats, commercial pier, restrooms, RV Park upgrades, seafood/local products market and landscaping and parking upgrades.

In 2009, the Port of Willapa Harbor acquired a hydraulic suction dredge and implemented a dredging program at the Tokeland and Bay Center Marinas including the dredging of the federal channels. The Port is working with federal elected officials to establish a legal framework, which would allow the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to contract with the local Ports to complete the dredging of the federal channels. Within PNWA, the Port of Willapa Harbor is being represented by Rebecca Chaffee who can be reached by email at portofwh@willapabay.org.

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