



Nor'wester Newsletter

Issue #596 | December 5, 2016

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WRDA conference report released

PNWA is pleased to report that the House and Senate have released a compromise [Water Resources Development Act \(WRDA\) conference report](#). There are a number of high priority items in the bill that will benefit our PNWA membership. These include:

- An improved approach to Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) spending, ensuring authorization levels increase by 3% annually despite a decrease in the previous year's HMTF collections.
- Permanence for the 10% HMTF set-aside for small ports.
- Extending the Section 2106 donor port provision through 2020, and furthering the program through 2025 if HMT targets are hit annually. It also establishes a medium donor port category within Section 2106 and directs rebates toward shippers moving discretionary cargo.
- Authorization of the [Columbia River Basin Restoration Act](#), creating a voluntary grant program that addresses toxins in the Columbia River Basin.
- Making the allocation structure for WRRDA 2014 priority funds permanent. This provision divides

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HMTF spending above FY2012 levels between high and moderate use projects, small ports, the Great Lakes and expanded uses at 2102 donor ports.

- Modernizing the cost-share deepening formula from 45 to 50 feet, to help prepare U.S. navigation channels for larger vessels.
- Increasing the authorization for Columbia River and Tillamook Bay ecosystem funding from \$50M to \$75M.
- Authorizing the Corps to maintain all federally authorized Harbors of Refuge. This could benefit many of our coastal ports in Oregon and Washington.
- Removal of an outdated flowage easement for the Port of Cascade Locks, to allow the Port to develop jobs within their Business Park and to meet the property's full potential.
- Allowing cultural and historic preservation, recreation and tourism to be considered in Corps disposition studies, benefiting the Willamette Falls Locks Working Group.
- Expanding Section 214 to allow rail carriers to provide funds to the Corps to help streamline the regulatory process.
- Allowing electronic submission of permit applications, to address individual permits, letters of permission and joint applications with States for federal and state permits.

We continue to go through WRDA and will provide additional detail as we read through the bill. Congress is planning to adjourn by Friday, December 9th, so there is a very limited window in which to get the bill passed. We are also hearing that several issues could still block WRDA from getting done this year. We encourage you to get in touch with your Members of Congress today, and urge them to support passage of WRDA this week. If you have any questions, please contact [Heather Stebbings](#).

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