



# Nor'wester Newsletter

Issue # 597 | December 12, 2016

[PNWA Website](#)

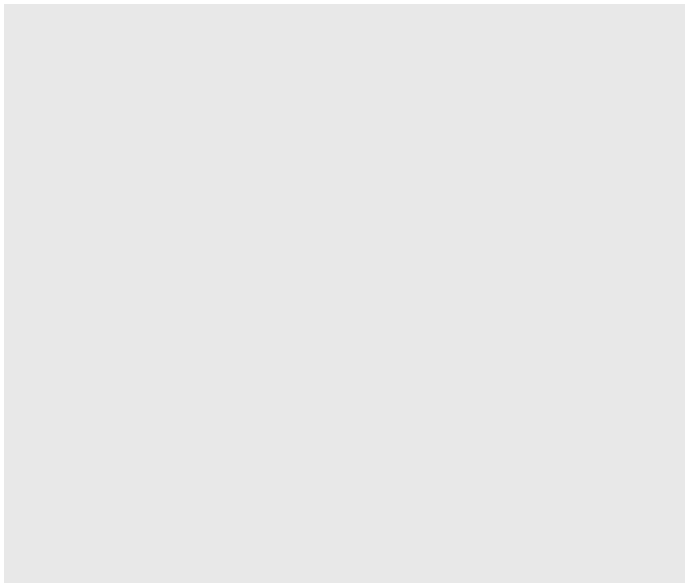
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## WRDA passes!



PNWA is pleased to announce that the Water Resources Development Act of 2016, which was incorporated into the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN, S.612), passed on Friday, December 9th. Despite inclusion of controversial language, the House voted to support the measure 360-61 and the Senate voted 78-21 in favor of the bill. This returns the legislation to its regular biennial schedule, providing more predictability for the navigation community and others who work closely with the Corps of Engineers.

[PNWA reported on the details of the legislation](#) when it was released early last week, and we celebrated many provisions important to our membership. These include

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ensuring authorized Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund spending continues on the trajectory to full use by FY2025, permanence for the small ports set-aside, and further refinement of provisions to address the needs of our donor ports. These changes will help the Corps and our ports keep navigation channels and berthing areas dredged and our jetties maintained, in turn increasing the reliability and safety of our ports and waterways. The bill also includes the Columbia River Basin Restoration Act, a grant program to help clean up toxins in the Columbia River Basin. This new program will help protect people and wildlife from exposure to hazardous contaminants and avoid costly environmental cleanups and economic loss.

PNWA would like to congratulate the Port of Cascade Locks for securing language in the bill removing an outdated flowage easement, and ultimately allowing the port to develop jobs within their business park and to meet the property's full potential. We would also like to congratulate the Willamette Falls Locks Working Group for their successful efforts to include language that will allow the Corps to consider all economic benefits of a project, including cultural and historic preservation, in their disposition studies.

PNWA is very grateful to our Northwest delegation for their support throughout the WRDA process. So many Congressional offices in our region fought for language to help further the economic and environmental health of the Northwest, and we could not be more appreciative for their efforts. For more information, please contact [Heather Stebbings](#).

## Continuing Resolution through April 28th

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On Friday, December 9th, Congress averted a shutdown and voted to fund the federal government through April 28, 2017. The continuing resolution, or "CR", passed the Senate 63-36 and the House 326-96 (H.R.2028). PNWA has contacted the Corps Districts in our region, and has not heard of any project impacts due to the new funding schedule. We are encouraging our Congressional delegation to support an omnibus as we near the new April 28th deadline, as a year-long CR could negatively affect our regional projects. We continue to track the process and will alert our members to relevant information as it is available.

# Columbia Snake River System extended maintenance closure begins

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Today at 6:00 am, the Portland and Walla Walla districts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers closed the river system for the start of the 2016-2017 extended lock maintenance closure. The system will remain closed until March 20, 2017 while major work is completed at six of the eight navigation locks on the Columbia and Snake Rivers to ensure continued safe and efficient operations for decades to come.

During the closure, the Corps will be conducting weekly conference calls to provide updates to stakeholders. These calls are open to the public and the call information and schedule can be found on the Corps' [extended closure website](#). PNWA has created a [factsheet](#) with more details of the closure and the work that is being completed at each project. We also will be in close contact with both districts to monitor the progress of the closure. For more information, contact [Heather Stebbings](#).

## Merchants Exchange hiring communications operator

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The Portland Merchants Exchange is soliciting applicants for a communications operator position in their communications center. The position is responsible for monitoring and responding to VHF radio shore-to-vessel and vessel-to-shore communications between vessels, ship agents, and pilots, along with other duties to assist the Exchange. Interested parties can view the job posting on the Merchant's Exchange [website](#).

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