



# Nor'wester Newsletter

Issue #618 | October 20, 2017

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## 2017 PNWA Annual Convention is a great success!

This week, PNWA hosted a very successful 2017 Annual Convention. Over 140 navigation stakeholders, industry experts and agency colleagues convened in Portland, Oregon to hear topics ranging from the federal funding outlook and the Farm Bill, to surface transportation, rail issues and a review of the global wheat market. We also received an outstanding update from leadership of our regional U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Division and three Districts. We would like to thank all of our great speakers who attended and shared their thoughts and expertise to make this such a productive event for attendees. Presentations will be posted on our [website](#) next week.

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*A PNWA tradition and highlight of our Annual Convention is our U.S. Army Corps of Engineers commanders panel. PNWA's new President, Rob Rich of Shaver Transportation, served as the panel moderator.*



*Representatives from the Port of Everett, Port of Vancouver USA, Tidewater Transportation & Terminals, and the Wapato Valley Mitigation and Conservation Bank present to attendees*



*PNWA was honored to recognize [eight outstanding individuals](#) with our 2018 Distinguished Service Awards*

Following our speaking program, the PNWA membership also elected our [Board of Directors](#) and approved our [Policies and Projects](#) document, which will guide our efforts in 2018. We bid a fond farewell to our outgoing President, Captain Paul Amos of the Columbia River Pilots, and welcomed Mr. Rob Rich of Shaver Transportation as our new PNWA President.

PNWA would like to thank our generous sponsors for their support of this convention. Our sponsors help to make our events possible, and we are so grateful for their continued support.

Gold Level

BergerABAM  
Port of Longview  
Port of Vancouver USA  
Schwabe Williamson and Wyatt  
Van Ness Feldman

Silver Level

Moffat & Nichol  
OBEC Consulting Engineers  
Port of Portland  
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Tidewater Transportation & Terminals  
Vancouver Energy  
Wapato Valley Mitigation and Conservation Bank  
Westwood Shipping Lines

Bronze Level

Columbia River Pilots  
Columbia River Steamship Operators' Association  
Ecological Land Services  
Gibbs & Olson  
Hart Crowser  
Millennium Bulk Terminals

Portland Merchants Exchange  
Port of Hood River  
Port of Lewiston  
Port of St. Helens  
Port of Umatilla

## Corps announces dates for 2018 Lock Maintenance Closure

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The Portland and Walla Walla Districts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have announced the 2018 short term maintenance closure on the Columbia and Snake Rivers will begin at 6:00am on March 3, 2018. Bonneville, The Dalles, McNary, Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental and Little Goose will all re-open on March 18th, while John Day and Lower Granite will open on March 25th. These short term closures occur every year and provide an opportunity for the Corps to conduct maintenance activities on the eight navigation locks on the Columbia Snake River System. PNWA will continue to work with the Corps and provide updates on the closure as they become available.

## PNWA submits comments on Corps regulatory process, meets with regional regulatory leadership from the Corps of Engineers

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Earlier this summer, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released a notice for public comment on the regulatory review mandated by the President's [Executive Order 13777](#). PNWA worked with our membership to draft [comments](#), which were submitted last week. Our comments highlight suggestions to increase transparency and consistency of reviews, reduce timelines, increase use of nationwide permits when applicable, and establish specific communication timelines. We also discuss the elevation agreement that PNWA worked on with regional agency leadership in 2002, and recommend that it be considered as a template for communication and dispute resolution between the agencies on a national scale.

Over the past few years, PNWA has been increasing our activity on regulatory issues and we have developed a committee within our membership to work on improving the regulatory process in our region. As part of these efforts, we hosted a regulatory workshop on October 19th with representatives from the Northwestern Division, and the Seattle and Portland Districts of the Corps. This workshop allowed our members and Corps regulatory staff to engage in a frank discussion regarding collective challenges within the permitting process, and the opportunities available to create real solutions going forward. This was the second regulatory partnering meeting between PNWA and the Corps in the last two years, and will be followed by more collaboration with the Corps as well as representatives from the other federal agencies involved in permitting. For more information, please contact [Heather Stebbings](#).

## State Department announces new Columbia River Treaty negotiator

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The State Department has announced Jill Smail as the new negotiator for the Columbia River Treaty. She is replacing Brian Doherty who was the negotiator until the middle of this year. Ms. Smail most recently served in the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs where she was the Senior Water Advisor since 2009, and has experience representing the U.S. Government on water issues in transboundary areas. PNWA would like to welcome Ms. Smail to her post and looks forward to working with her on treaty modernization efforts.