



Nor'wester newsletter

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[PNWA Welcomes Neil Maunu as New Executive Director](#)



We're excited to welcome Neil Maunu as the new incoming Executive Director of the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA). Neil brings over 20 years of leadership experience in business and the military. His extensive background in the maritime industry, coupled with his military and federal advocacy experience, makes him a perfect fit for PNWA.

Neil's previous roles include leading teams in operations, business development, and commercial negotiations at Kinder Morgan and Tidewater Transportation and Terminals. He most recently served as the Senior Vice President of Operations for Denmar US LLC, where he successfully developed a soda ash export terminal at the Port of Stockton, California.

A retired aviation Lieutenant Colonel with the Oregon National Guard, Neil served 13 years in the Oregon Guard and completed two year-long combat deployments in Iraq. His diverse skill set and passion for the Pacific Northwest make him an asset to our

organization.

Neil will succeed outgoing Executive Director Heather Stebbings, who has dedicated 15 years of service to PNWA, with the last two years as the Executive Director. Heather's contributions have been invaluable to the organization, its members, and its partners. We extend our heartfelt appreciation and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

Neil Maunu's first day as Executive Director will be August 7, 2023. Please join us in welcoming him to the PNWA family.

Neil can be reached by email at neil.maunu@pnwa.net.

Welcome New Member: Tetra Tech!



We are pleased to welcome [Tetra Tech](#) to the PNWA Family!

Tetra Tech is a leading, global provider of consulting and engineering services. Founded in 1966, Tetra Tech has offices and operational infrastructure throughout the United States, Canada, and abroad. With 27,000 employees in more than 550 offices globally, Tetra Tech offers access to worldwide expertise, combined with local delivery.

Tetra Tech has executed more than \$2 billion in contaminated sediment work over the past 5 years. Notable regional projects in the Northwest have included sediment remediation of the Thea Foss Waterway and the Lockheed West Shipyard. Tetra Tech also constructed the first Confined Aquatic Disposal pit in Puget Sound, for the U.S. Navy. Nationwide, Tetra Tech recently closed out a 13-year project that successfully remediated a 13.3-mile reach of the Lower Fox River in Wisconsin, the largest sediment remediation project in the nation to date.

Chris Moody is the official representative for Tetra Tech to PNWA. Chris can be contacted at 425-482-7622 or Chris.Moody@tetratech.com.

PNWA Board President Tours Oregon Coastal Members



Last month, PNWA President Tom Kammerzell, accompanied by Government Relations Manager Anthony Pena, embarked on a three-day journey to connect with association members along the Oregon Coast. Their visit aimed to deepen understanding of the pivotal role these members play in the economic growth and sustainability of the Pacific Northwest. The tour encompassed the Ports of Garibaldi, Newport, Toledo, Umpqua, Coos Bay, Bandon, and Gold Beach, reaffirming PNWA's commitment to fostering cooperation, innovation, and progress in the region.

Throughout the visit, Tom and Anthony held meetings with each port's staff and leadership and engaged in insightful discussions to comprehend their operations better. Understanding these specific needs will enable PNWA to better advocate for these projects and meet the unique challenges faced by each community.

We extend heartfelt gratitude to our Oregon coastal members for their warm reception and valuable insights. Together, we will continue working tirelessly to ensure the prosperity of the Pacific Northwest's waterways and communities.

USACE Portland District Command Change

On July 21st, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers held the Portland District's Change of Command ceremony, with Colonel Michael D. Helton officially retiring his duties with the agency, and Colonel Larry D. Caswell, Jr. becoming the 64th Commander of the Portland District.

Northwestern Division Commander Brigadier General Geoffrey R. Van Epps and Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management Liza Wells were present and assisted in the change of command as part of the ceremony.



Colonel Larry "Dale" Caswell, Jr., a Charleston, West Virginia native and a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, assumed the position of Commander and District Engineer of the Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers, on July 21, 2023. He holds a Master of Science in civil engineering from the University of Missouri-Rolla and a master's in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College. Prior to this assignment, he served in various command and staff positions, including Executive Director for Military Programs at Headquarters, USACE. He also has a commendable record of deployments in support of multiple operations and has received awards such as the Bronze Star and Combat Action Badge. Colonel Caswell is married to Erin Elizabeth Jacques, and together they have four children: Victoria, Rebecca, William, and Charles.

On behalf of PNWA, thank you to retired Colonel Michael Helton for your service and partnership with our organization and its membership. We look forward to continuing the fantastic work of the Portland District under Commander Larry Caswell.

Request for Comments: Proposed Regional Conditions for Nationwide Permits in Puget Sound

The Northwestern Division of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has issued a request for comments on proposed Regional General Conditions (RGCs) for the 2021 NWP Supplemental Regional General Condition(s).

NWPs are general permits issued on a nationwide basis to streamline the authorization of activities that have minimal individual and cumulative adverse environmental effects. Regional conditions specific to the needs and requirements of a particular region or state can be added by Division Engineers to ensure that authorized activities maintain minimal adverse effects on the environment.

The current focus of interest revolves around nearshore habitat and functions within Puget Sound. There is a request to modify the existing 2021 NWP Regional General Condition 3, which applies to Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs) 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, to include all tidal waters of Puget Sound (WRIAs 1, 2, 3, and 5-19). The proposed modification aims to further ensure that NWPs authorized within Puget Sound maintain no more than minimal individual and cumulative effects on the environment.

The Northwestern Division has conducted a thorough re-evaluation of permitting data from the past five years within Puget Sound in response to the request. Based on this evaluation, the Division Engineer is proposing to add up to three additional RGCs that would apply to the use of NWPs in all tidal waters of Puget Sound.

The proposed RGCs are as follows:

- Draft RGC A: New bank stabilization activities within the tidal waters of Puget Sound, including associated maintenance activities, cannot exceed 50 linear feet under any NWP, except NWP 54 (Living Shorelines). This condition does not apply to projects with existing infrastructure or restoration activities, which typically have minimal environmental effects.
- Draft RGC B: No NWP activity can cause more than minimal adverse effects to drift cells within tidal waters of Puget Sound, including impacts on sediment recruitment, transport, or deposition. Information on drift cells is available at the Washington State Department of Ecology's Coastal Atlas Map website.
- Draft RGC C: No NWP activity can impede the functioning of feeder bluffs or other necessary sediment supply sources in tidal waters of Puget Sound. Information on shoreline stability and coastal landforms, including feeder

The Northwestern Division is seeking public comments on the proposed RGCs. Specifically, feedback is requested on Draft RGC A, including comments on the proposed length restriction and any rationale supporting its expansion or contraction. Additionally, comments are sought on whether Draft RGC A should include a waiver provision, allowing project proponents to seek waivers to the 50-foot length limitation based on site-specific conditions and project design, provided adverse environmental effects remain minimal.

The SPN comment period was set to expire on July 27, 2023. The comment period is hereby extended 60 days until September 25, 2023. Comments can be submitted to NWP-SeattleTeam@usace.army.mil or via regular mail to 4735 E. Marginal Way South, Bldg 1202, Seattle, Washington, 98134. When submitting comments via email, please include "Comments on Supplemental NWP Regional Conditions" in the subject line.

To view this public notice, click [here](#).

USDA Announces \$500 Million Available for Biofuels

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack [announced](#) that USDA plans to invest up to \$500 million from President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act to increase the availability of domestic biofuels through the [Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program](#) (HBIIP).

The funding program aims to accelerate the growth of the biofuels industry, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and create economic opportunities in rural communities nationwide. By investing in biofuels derived from renewable sources such as corn, soybeans, and algae, the administration seeks to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.

Under this initiative, the USDA will provide grants, loan guarantees, and financial incentives to support research, development, and implementation of biofuel technologies. These investments will help biofuel producers scale up their operations, enhance production efficiency, and adopt new technologies to ensure sustainability.

The application windows for enrollment in the HBIIP will take place quarterly for five quarters, starting July 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, with the option for a sixth application window if funding has not been exhausted. The application window will close at 4:30 p.m. Eastern time on the last day of each quarter.

To view more information about this program, click here to view the [NOFO](#).

