



# Nor'wester Newsletter

Issue #863 | November 21, 2023

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## PNWA's 2024 Virtual Regional Meeting Schedule Announced

In preparation for the Mission to Washington March 3-7, 2024, PNWA will hold a series of virtual regional meetings to hear about emerging issues, new projects, review navigation funding and issues (including WRDA and Regulatory), and provide an overview of the Mission to Washington. We will keep you posted when registration opens and links to the meetings will be sent to registered participants. So please save the following dates:

### Lower Columbia River Virtual Regional Meeting

February 21, 2024 from 10:00am - 12:00pm

### Inland Columbia River System Virtual Regional Meeting

February 21, 2024 from 1:00pm - 3:00pm

### Oregon Coast Virtual Regional Meeting

February 22, 2024 from 10:00am - 12:00pm

### Puget Sound and Washington Coast Virtual Meeting

February 22, 2024 from 1:00pm - 3:00pm

If you have any questions, please contact [Dena Horton](#).

## Congressional News



Representatives Earl Blumenauer (D, OR-3) and Derek Kilmer (D, WA-6) announced they will not be seeking re-election in 2024. At PNWA's Annual Convention in October, Rep. Kilmer was named the 2023 Legislator of the Year. There will likely be many tributes to come, but for now, we would simply like to say, THANK YOU to the Congressmen and their staffs for their years of dedicated service to their Districts, PNWA members, and our nation.

## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Walla Walla District Stakeholders Meeting



On November 9, we attended the Walla Walla District Stakeholders Meeting to learn more information regarding the 2024 Extended Outage for 76 days from January 14 till the end of March. The meeting was well attended and very informative.

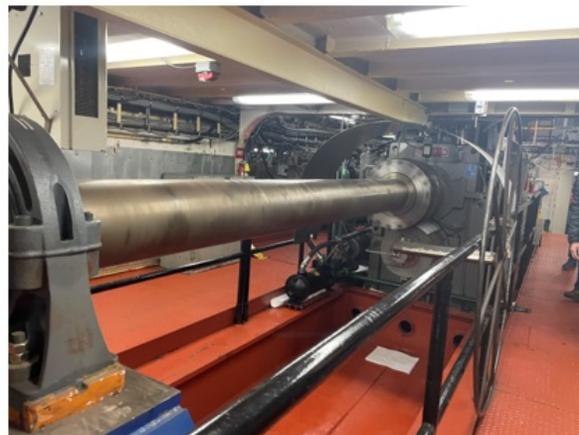
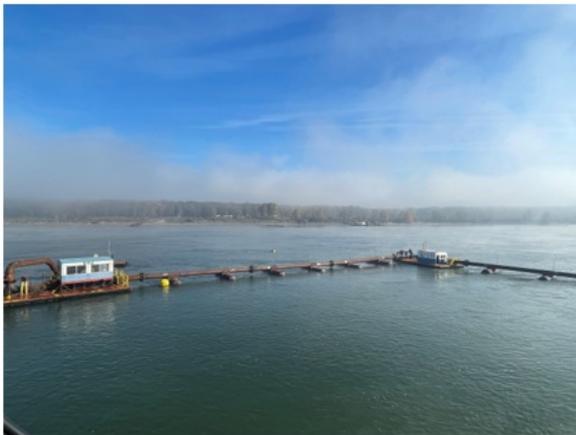
- Lower Monumental: \$12.5 M for power and control upgrades
- McNary: \$8M Gudgeon Anchors
- McNary: \$855k Lock Wall Repairs
- Lower Granting: \$3.2M Floating Guide Wall Timber Replacement
- Little Goose: \$1M Lock Wall Upgrades

Finally, the Walla Walla District is celebrating its 75th Anniversary. The district was established on Nov. 1, 1948, just a few years after the completion of the Mill Creek Project.

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## Tour Dredge Oregon with the Port of Portland

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On November 17, we toured the Dredge Oregon with Port of Portland staff. We had the opportunity to understand the day-to-day operations of the dredge and the impact they have on the lower Columbia River.

The vessel was built in 1943 and converted into a dredge in 1965. In 2014, the Port replaced three engines. In 2021, the stern replacement, spud system and hydraulic system upgrades dramatically increased the efficiency of the operations. The refurbished dredge burns significantly less fuel, which has reduced emissions by 85 percent.

The dredge serves the Port of Portland and contracts with the Army Corps of Engineers to maintain the river to a depth of 43 feet to accommodate today's ships. Dredge Oregon has a crew of 42 employees, working from late spring to late fall, operating 24 hours a day six days a week. It can dredge 2,000 to 3,000 cubic yards of material per hour.

PNWA supports our region by emphasizing the importance of channel maintenance. Furthermore, the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) is the main legislative vehicle for authorizing federal navigation projects and implementing policy changes for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. PNWA is working with the Port of Portland to advocate for clarifying language for reimbursement of the dredge replacement in WRDA 2024.

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## NOFO for EPS's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) Program is Open

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With the passage of the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is able to provide grant funding to encourage upgrades, retrofits, and turnover of the legacy diesel fleet. The EPA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the 2022-2023 DERA National Grant Program is now open through December 1, 2023. Application packages will need to be submitted electronically to EPA through the Grants.gov [website](#).

Projects that significantly reduce diesel emissions and exposure, like fleet vessels in operation at ports, other goods movement facilities, and in designated poor air quality areas should apply. According to a recent EPA newsletter, "Priority for funding will also be given to projects that engage and benefit local communities, protect grant-funded investments from severe weather events caused by climate change, and applicants that demonstrate their ability to promote and continue efforts to reduce emissions after the project has ended".

Timelines to be aware of when applying:

- Deadline for Submitting Questions = Friday, November 10, 2023, 11:59PM ET
- NOFO CLOSES/Application Deadline = Friday, December 1, 2023, 11:59PM ET
- Anticipated Notification of Selection = March 2024
- Anticipated Awards = June 2024 to August 2024

To view the grant opportunity and apply, click [here](#).

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

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## CBP SPACE Act Introduced in the House

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### U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Ports in the Pacific Northwest and throughout the country have experienced challenges with the requests by the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency to conduct inspection services and often make significant demands for facility upgrades at ports and small business expense. The bipartisan CBP SPACE Act introduced by Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D, WA-3) and Rep. Laurel Lee (R, FL-15) would require CBP to remain operational without levying operational expenses on ports of entry and small businesses.

The legislation provides a funding mechanism for CBP facilities at ports and limits CBP's scope of demands it can make of ports. According to the [press release](#), the legislation:

- "Expands permissible offsets when setting merchandise processing fees (MPFs) rates to include capital costs associated with CBP passenger inspection services.
- Establishes a sense of Congress that the Treasury and CBP should work to set

an appropriate level for rates so CBP is able to adequately fund facility upgrades, construction, and maintenance at ports.

- Prohibits CBP from requiring ports to provide or maintain administrative, training, or recreational facilities at the port of entry".

PNWA supports this legislation and appreciates the bipartisan approach taken by Representatives Gluesenkamp Perez and Lee to ensure that the Federal government pays for customs inspections operations and let ports focus on keeping freight moving.

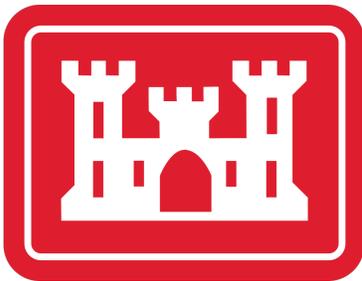
To read the text of the legislation, click [here](#).

To read the press release, click [here](#).

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## Corps Portland District Regulatory Open House

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Attention PNWA Environment Committee and other interested members....

REGULATORY OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, January 9, 2024

9:00am – 3:00pm

Conference Room 1A

Portland State Office Building at 800 NE Oregon Street,  
Portland, Oregon

RSVP to [PortlandRegulatory@usace.army.mil](mailto:PortlandRegulatory@usace.army.mil)

The following agencies plan to present updates of their regulatory programs:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)/National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)A
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL)
- Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)

According to the Corps' meeting [announcement](#), "The meeting will conclude with an inter-agency Q&A session. This event is an opportunity for consultants, agencies, project proponents, and other members of the public to learn about recent and upcoming changes in regulatory programs throughout Oregon. There will be brief welcoming remarks and introductions, announcements, and presentations. We anticipate limited time for informal conversations regarding specific projects. If you have any comments or questions, please contact Ms. Kate Mott, Policy and Compliance Section Chief, at 503-808-4386 or [Katharine.a.mott2@usace.army.mil](mailto:Katharine.a.mott2@usace.army.mil)".

The meeting room has a capped capacity of 70 people and limiting attendance to two people per organization is requested. RSVP to [PortlandRegulatory@usace.army.mil](mailto:PortlandRegulatory@usace.army.mil) by Friday, December 8, 2023 and provide the following information:

- Your name
- Organization
- Phone number
- Email address

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