



Pacific Northwest Waterways Association

Kristin Meira, Executive Director

Dena Horton, Government Relations Director

Pacific Northwest Waterways Association

- Non-profit trade association that advocates for federal policies & funding in support of regional economic development

- Over 135 members in WA, OR, and ID:

Public ports

Utilities

Pilots

Agriculture & forest products producers

Towboaters & steamship operators

Union labor



Northwest federal navigation projects



Deep draft navigation

- Puget Sound
- Grays Harbor
- Lower Columbia River
- Oregon coast



Inland navigation

- Columbia Snake River System



Small ports

- Puget Sound
- Lower Columbia River
- Oregon coast



Advocating for federal navigation infrastructure



- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:**
 - Portland, Walla Walla, Seattle Districts
 - Northwestern Division
 - Headquarters in DC
 - Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) – Pentagon



- **Congress:**
 - Northwest House & Senate delegations (local and DC)
 - House & Senate Energy & Water Appropriations Subcommittees
 - House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee (T&I); Senate Environment & Public Works Committee (EPW)



- **White House:**
 - Office of Management & Budget (OMB)
 - CEQ



Maintenance Project Examples



Port of Kalama, Washington

All recent projects have required formal consultation including:

- Marina maintenance and repairs
- Modification of existing maintenance dredge program



Port of Everett, Washington

- Marina maintenance dredging
- Severe schedule impact and almost lost state grant funding



Port of Portland, Oregon

- Pile maintenance program
- Temporary water quality, hydroacoustic noise, and disturbance/harassment during removal and replacement of pile and potential for spill
- Continued existence of the structure



Timeline

- **June 22, 2018 – Letter to NOAA-NMFS:**
 - PNWA and WPPA sent joint letter outlining concerns
- **August 23, 2018 – Letter to NOAA-NMFS:**
 - Washington Maritime Federation sent joint letter outlining concerns
- **October 12, 2018 – Regulatory Workshop held**
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA-NMFS, and PNWA
 - Discussion of port permitting approach
 - Presentations by the Corps and NOAA-NMFS
 - Conversation regarding baseline, maintenance, and programmatic reviews
- **November 21, 2018 – Response Letter from NOAA-NMFS:**
 - SRKW orcas and salmon
 - Staffing shortages and office merger leading to assumption of more work with fewer people
 - Agree to work on SLOPES that will cover most port maintenance activities
- **October 28, 2019 – New Guidance from NOAA-NMFS HQ**
 - Corps and NOAA-NMFS disagree on interpretation of how to implement consideration of baseline conditions
 - Disagreement affecting completion of programmatics
 - So what does this mean for current and future projects in the pipeline?



Implications Beyond West Coast Region

- ESA listed species in other regions
- Project impacts
- Mitigation costs



Questions for Discussion

- Any other regions seeing this change?
- If so, how are you dealing with it?
- Should a response be strategized? Possible options:
 - Compiling examples of maintenance activities now requiring formal consultation
 - Compiling examples of changed baseline
 - Compiling potential timeline and financial impacts
 - Outreach to NOAA-NMFS and Corps HQ staff
 - Outreach to Congressional staff
- What else can we do?

Contact: Dena Horton, dena.horton@pnwa.net or 503-234-8553

