



December 20, 2023



Aerial View of Husky Terminal in Tacoma

*Photo courtesy: NWSA*

## December Updates at WPPA

Our final Manifest Newsletter of the year comes to you at a busy time, as staff in the WPPA offices quickly pivot from a big and bustling WPPA Annual Meeting to the upcoming Legislative Session, our Port Day advocacy visit to Olympia, and the other pressing work of the Association.

Before turning to the action in Vancouver the first week of December, consider this advertisement for **PORT DAY 2024: We need to see our members in Olympia, and we have a great day coming together. Please join us on February 1 and 2 for our annual advocacy visit to the Legislature.**

Port Day is an annual opportunity for our members to engage directly in the Legislative Process and gain a firsthand perspective of the policymaking that happens on the Capitol Campus, and for your legislators to see how much it matters to you. Port members attend meetings with their legislative delegations, WPPA arranges a Friday morning breakfast with legislative leadership from both parties, and on Thursday we will jointly host a reception with our friends from the Washington Maritime Federation, where last year we were joined by *twenty-seven legislators*, eager to connect in a more casual setting with our members and partners. **We hope to see you all in Olympia on February 1 and 2!**

Looking back now to the 2023 Annual Meeting in Vancouver, our annual holiday season gathering was a frenetic affair, packed with people and bubbling with energy and conversation. With more than 250 attendees, the Hilton Vancouver was bursting at the seams, as people poured off the highway and braved torrential rain and flooded roadways to gather with their fellow port members and partners to learn, socialize, and look ahead at the coming year.

A busy first day included a New Commissioners Seminar with more than thirty newly elected port leaders, recently appointed commissioners, and even some staff eager to learn more about port district operations. The WPPA Executive Committee joined our General Counsel from CSD Attorneys to provide foundational background on port powers; the role of the commission; the transition from campaigning to governing; and legal issues that can arise at port districts. Attendees walked away with a certificate of completion for their required Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Act training, and hopefully with a sense of the educational resource that our Association can be.

When the Annual Meeting commenced on Wednesday, full committee rooms boasted compelling speakers, from the head of the Washington Economic Development Council to our partners from the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association and the Northwest Marine Trade Association. The kickoff lunch broached an always-popular, or at least *deeply relevant* topic, the Interstate Bridge Replacement program, and the Program Administrator Greg Johnson kept things light in spite of the massive subject. Afternoon sessions tackled tough issues ranging from project siting to disaster preparedness, and a rapt audience engaged with our speakers in the way that our members do: respectfully, with great interest, and with plenty of questions.

Thursday brought panels on workforce training and on the new Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub, along with a port tenant in Richland, WA, briefing members on their \$1 billion fertilizer plant – a future boon to Washington farmers. After our keynote highlighted the local tech giant ZoomInfo, our Port Reports yielded maximum attendance as is usually the case, and WPPA is grateful to the Ports of Benton, Grays Harbor, and Lopez for sharing their knowledgeable staff with our membership.

A major highlight is always the Friday Awards Breakfast, and the chance to highlight our deserving port leaders—from three Outstanding Service recipients to two Life Members and a Port of the Year.

Please visit the WPPA webpage for more information about our Award Winners this year:

[2023 Outstanding Service to the Industry honorees](#)

[2023 WPPA Life Member awards](#)

[2023 Port of the Year: Port of Bremerton](#)

And be sure to check out the resources that we're posting from the event, a good snapshot of the information provided for those who weren't able to make it, here on the WPPA website: [Past Presentations](#).

We ended with the business of the Association as always, the Board of Trustees adopting our 2024 Budget, Legislative Agenda, and the slate of Executive Committee officers who will lead the Association next year. Congratulations and welcome to:

Steve Omdal, Port of Skagit Commissioner, who will join as the WPPA Secretary

Jay Hester, Port of Sunnyside Executive Director, our incoming WPPA Treasurer; and

Jennifer Wray-Keene, Port of Woodland Executive Director, incoming Ex-Officio Executive Director

Our President offered his reflections on his past year at the helm of the Executive Committee, and his remarks are excerpted here:

*Good morning and thank you for attending this year's Annual Meeting. Once again we reflect on one of the strengths of this association. But also on another thing that brings us all together: the power of connection, and the things we learn from other members of our port community.*



*As my presidency draws to a close, I also find myself reflecting on how WPPA and my time as president aligns with my personal values and the reason I sought public service in the first place – the importance of shared opportunity and improvements to the quality of the lives we share. All of our members are united by a common goal: to bring economic opportunity to the neighbors and constituents we serve. My time at this year’s conference affirms my faith in the goodness of those who seek public service, and those who volunteer their time not just to their port but to this Association. And in this hotel surrounded not just by elected leaders but by their capable staff and our professional associate partners, the spirit of service and partnership is alive and well.*

*This was a big year for WPPA: new Executive Director, new staff members at the Association, Executive Director transitions at our port members, and a whole slate of engaged and committed new commissioners elected to office. Our Association will grow more next year, as Eric and his team advance their goals, with support from your WPPA Executive Committee.*

*I have the utmost confidence in those we are welcoming to the Executive Committee and those who continue to serve. JC Baldwin has been a President at this Association before, and I am happy to leave the board in her capable hands.*

*Thank you again, it has been my honor to serve as your President.*

*Ryan Calkins, WPPA Executive Committee President; Commissioner, Port of Seattle*

Just as we celebrate and welcome our new Executive Committee members, we end the year grateful for the time given to us by our outgoing President, Commissioner Calkins, and our outgoing Treasurer, Dan Stahl, who will leave the board after two years as our Treasurer. And of course, by Commissioner Kathy Pittis, from the Port of Anacortes, who will transition off the board after six years of active service to our Association.

With those words of gratitude, we will wish you all a Happy Holiday Season, a Happy New Year, and we hope to see you in Olympia for Port Day in February 2024!

## Port Spotlight: The Northwest Seaport Alliance Expands Husky Terminal in Tacoma

Early last month, the Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA) announced they would receive a \$54 million grant from the Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) to support their work in expanding Husky Terminal in NWSA’s South Harbor. This is exciting news for the region, as it greenlights NWSA’s efforts to help agricultural exporters



move more cargo to international markets, increase job opportunities, and move the port closer to NWSA’s commitment of zero maritime emissions by 2050 or earlier.

This work is a continuation of NWSA’s ongoing planning and development work to modernize the facility. Major capital improvements to date have included reconfiguring the wharf to consolidate cargo vessel deployment routes and enhancing the terminal’s capacity for handling larger ships with the addition of eight post-panamax cranes.

Cranes at Husky Terminal Unloading Large Container Vessels

**Photo courtesy: NWSA**

The new PIDP grant will allow NWSA to build on these investments to expand and advance the safety, efficiency, and reliability of cargo movement through Husky Terminal. A variety of improvements will be coordinated, to include (1) reconfiguring the terminal yard to optimize truck circulation, which will reduce the number of trucks idling on the terminal, (2) installing reefer racks and power supply units to triple the terminal's refrigerated container capacity, and (3) reconfiguring on-terminal structures to further eliminate pinch points and facilitate smoother operations.

By curbing truck idling on terminal and reducing the length of time vessels must stay at berth for loading and unloading, these improvements will reduce the port's emissions and directly benefit the communities living near the port while contributing to NWSA's overall decarbonization commitments. Further, these improvements will help the port meet increasing demand for refrigerated goods while supporting agricultural exports, creating more local, family wage jobs, and solidifying the port's position as a leading hub in the global market.



Aerial View of Truck Yard at Husky Terminal

*Photo courtesy: NWSA*

## Legislative Spotlight

### 2024 Legislative Preview

The WPPA Board of Trustees adopted the WPPA 2024 Legislative Agenda during WPPA's Annual Meeting in Vancouver, WA. Your WPPA advocacy team is already hard at work communicating our priorities in conversation with legislators and agency staff. We are attending committee work sessions and exchanging bill drafts with collaborators and counterparties alike. The 2024 Legislative Session formally kicks off on January 8 and runs 60 days. The Governor released his 2024 Supplemental Budgets last week, lining up about \$1 billion in new spending for priorities in housing, behavioral health and adding to the ranks of the Washington State Patrol. For a more detailed rundown of the Governor's proposal please see our [2024 Legislative Session and Supplemental Budget Preview](#).

As we shift our attention to the holidays, WPPA has a legislative to-do list for you too!

As your port finalizes your legislative agenda or any capital request, please share it with the WPPA team as well.

It's not too late to be reaching out to your district representatives and having a conversation about your port. Many communities and regions have "Olympia send-off" events which are a great way to show support and engage last minute.

Finally, as you are preparing communications, including your port priorities, remember that some legislators no longer receive paper records. Also, think about your audience which may be a very trusted legislative assistant or an important committee staffer, not just the legislator themselves.

Finally, while WPPA has completed its 2024 priority setting, the work has just begun. Our priority document can be [found here](#) and it is an ever-changing document. We will continue to update this tool over the coming weeks, incorporating topic white papers, draft bills, and links to bills which are pre-filed. Simply scan the QR code included in the above linked document to take you to the most up-to-date version with all the changes.

## Port Electrification Handbook

As more ports consider electrification, reducing emissions, and energy efficiency projects, there is a lot to be learned and shared amongst port members on this topic. Considerations around energy capacity and grid resiliency go hand in hand with “port decarbonization.” At the 2023 Annual Meeting, the Joint Environmental Committee had a great speaker discuss this topic with us. Shannon Idso from the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) presented on Resilient Ports Project. See the [link here](#) for her slide deck.

PNNL is a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science National Laboratory with core capabilities including chemical and material sciences, engineering, biological and earth sciences. Some of their key projects include creating The Port Electrification Handbook resource, Green Corridors Grid Impact Analysis, and RV Resilience – Hybrid Electric Vessels.

In the work PNNL does, the Resilient Ports Project supports decarbonization of the nation’s electrical infrastructure by leveraging networked microgrid technologies. Maritime ports are used as an operational use-case because of their size, complexity, and resource mix.

She spoke to our committee about their Resilient Microgrids Case Study with Seattle City Light which was loosely based on the Port of Seattle. This case study evaluated seven microgrid scenarios based on the port’s operations, capabilities, and needs. She provided an informative overview of microgrids and their benefits of resiliency, cost effectiveness, and ability to decrease emissions.

PNNL is finalizing their Port Electrification Handbook, to be used as a resource for ports as they move toward decarbonization and make their clean energy transition. PNNL is conducting a survey to inform this handbook, please take the survey by clicking the [link here](#) to find the QR Code on our committee agenda.

Thank you to all those who attended the Joint Environmental Committee and engaged with this topic! It was a fantastic opportunity to have Shannon there with us discussing the important work PNNL is undertaking.

## Knowing the Waters

In this month’s column, Frank Chmelik and Tim Schermetzler, WPPA Counsel, discuss how port districts should prepare for and handle speech-related activities on port grounds, such as protesting. The column provides guidance on developing and implementing policies for the use of “open public forums” on port property in accordance with citizens’ Constitutional rights to free speech. Read more in December’s [Knowing the Waters](#).

## Grant Updates

### EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grants – Commerce Survey Deadline Extended to December 22

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is providing grants through the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program to implement plans for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other harmful air pollution. CPRG funding is being provided in two phases. Phase I, dedicated to planning, is already in progress, and Phase II will provide \$4.6 billion in competitive implementation grants. Applicants for Phase II funding do not need to have been selected for a Phase I planning grant, provided that the GHG reduction measures identified in their application is included in the applicable State or metropolitan statistical area (MSA) Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP).

- King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish Counties will refer to the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue MSA or State PCAP.
- Clark and Skamania Counties will refer to the Portland MSA or State PCAP.
- All other counties will refer to the State PCAP.

EPA recommends that applicants coordinate with the lead organization developing the applicable PCAP to ensure priority GHG measures included in the plan can be implemented by the municipality applying.

The Washington Department of Commerce will review responses to this [survey](#), **due December 22, 2023**, to identify potential coalitions based on applicants' geography and other measures, as well as to identify lead applicants and other federal and state funding opportunities for projects. Ports may apply individually and/or as part of a coalition. The Smartsheet survey also includes links to [Q&As](#) and other resources. Find more information about the program [here on the EPA website](#).

#### Commerce Evergreen Manufacturing Growth Grants – Due December 21, 2023

Administered by Commerce, the Evergreen Manufacturing Growth Grants program is designed to increase the number of manufacturing and research and development jobs in Washington state. The program looks to support the development of regional industrial clusters by fostering an environment of innovation and entrepreneurship. Applicants can include individual businesses as well as innovation cluster organizations, which are defined under Commerce's [Innovation Cluster Accelerator program](#) or as an entity proposing a cluster-related program or project.

- There is \$2 million in funding available for 2023-2025, to be granted in awards ranging from \$200,000 - \$400,000.
- Applications (for [businesses](#) and [clusters](#)) are due December 21, 2023.
- More information can be found [here](#) on Commerce's website.

#### Washington Public Works Board offers broadband funding – Due January 4, 2024

The Washington State Public Works Board (PWB) is currently offering \$15.8 million in grants and low-interest loans for broadband construction projects. Projects in distressed counties are eligible for 30% grant and 70% loan funding until funds are exhausted. Eligible applicants include local governments; Tribes; nonprofit organizations; cooperative associations; multiparty entities comprised of public entity members; limited liability corporations organized to expand broadband access; and incorporated businesses or partnerships. The pre-application deadline is **January 4, 2024**. A 30-day objection period will follow, and final applications are due **March 22, 2024**. Learn more and apply [here](#).

PWB encourages potential applicants to take advantage of the virtual application workshop scheduled in February 2024. No registration is required, and attendance is not required to submit a funding application. Workshops will be recorded and posted later at [www.pwb.wa.gov](http://www.pwb.wa.gov).

- Feb. 15 workshop, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. ([Zoom meeting](#))

#### DNR Breaks Records with Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program – Due January 8, 2024

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is offering up to \$7 million in funding to successful applicants via the 2024 Community Forest Assistance Grant Program, representing an 1100% increase from the highest recorded annual funding amount (2021) and more than double the total amount awarded since the program was first administered in 2008.

- At least 50% of funding will be directed to projects that impact communities of high environmental health disparity.
- Recipients will be enrolled in the [Washington Tree Equity Collaborative](#), a statewide partnership working to help build a rigorous, inclusive urban forestry network throughout Washington.
- A newly launched prioritization mapping tool will be used to help target investments and can be viewed [here](#).
- Learn more about the DNR Urban and Community Forestry program [here](#).
- **No match or cost share is required.**



## Floodplains by Design, an Ecology Grant Program – Due January 12, 2024

Through a public-private partnership with the [Bonneville Environmental Foundation](#) and [American Rivers](#), the Department of Ecology is offering grant funding for projects that work to improve floodplain resiliency, protecting local communities from flood risk, preserving farmland, and restoring habitat along major river corridors.

- **Pre-applications are due January 12, 2024**, after which selected applicants will present to an evaluation team the week of February 12-16, 2024. Full applications will be due May 1, 2024.
- Read more about the program [here](#) and access more grant info [here](#) on Ecology's website.
- Watch the program video [here](#).

## Coastal Protection Fund Grant – Opens January 2, due February 6, 2024

Applications for the [Terry Husseman Account \(THA\) Coastal Protection Fund](#) will open on January 2. The program supports locally sponsored projects that restore or enhance the coastal environment, such as those addressing water quality issues or for protecting or enhancing fish and wildlife habitat.

- Grant awards range from \$10,000 - \$50,000.
- There is **no match or cost-share requirement**.
- Applications will open January 2 and close **February 6, 2024**.

## Ecology Clean Diesel Grant Funding – Opens December 6, 2023, due February 27, 2024

Coming soon, Ecology will offer \$2.24M for projects in Washington to reduce emissions by scrapping and replacing diesel transit buses with new fuel cell buses, and diesel yard trucks with new electric yard trucks.

- Applications will open December 6, 2023, and close **February 27, 2024**.

## RAISE Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for 2024 Announced – Due February 28, 2024

The U.S. Department of Transportation will be providing up to \$1.5 billion in grant funding in FY 2024 for local and regional transportation projects through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program.

- Projects designated "RCN Program Extra" under FY 2023's Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program and submitted under the FY 2024 NOFO will have a greater opportunity for advancement in the evaluation process.
- Half of the funding will go to rural areas, and half to urban areas.
- \$15 million is set aside for projects located in Areas of Persistent Poverty or Historically Disadvantaged Communities, which are also eligible for up to 100% federal cost share.
- Applicants will be evaluated based on how projects can address climate change, ensure racial equity, and increase access to opportunities across their communities.
- Read more in DOT's [press release](#) and view the 2024 NOFO [here](#).
- **Applications are due February 28, 2024**, and selections will be announced no later than June 27, 2024.

## Ecology Affordable Housing Cleanup Grant – Opens January 17, due March 6, 2024

Applications for Ecology's [Affordable Housing Cleanup Grants](#) (AHCG) will open soon. Three types of remedial action grants will be offered in the 2025-2027 biennium:

- Oversight remedial action grants and loans – to help local governments investigate and clean up contaminated properties with Ecology or EPA supervision.
- Area-wide groundwater investigation grants – to help local governments investigate potential groundwater contamination that may be widespread.
- Safe drinking water action grants – to help local governments provide safe drinking water to people living in areas affected by environmental contamination.

Guidance for applicants will be published in January. Applications will open January 17 and close **March 6, 2024**.

## Ecology Drought Planning and Preparedness Grants – Opens January 16, due March 14, 2024

Ecology is offering \$1.8 million in grant funding in Summer 2024 for the development of local drought preparedness plans to increase local drought resiliency and water supply security.

- Applications will open January 16 and close March 14, 2024.
- An online [applicant workshop](#) is planned for January 9.
- Find more information on the program [webpage](#).

## EPA's 2023 Brownfields Federal Programs Guide

Explore 22 federal programs and 5 federal tax incentives that support brownfields cleanup and revitalization in EPA's [2023 Brownfields Federal Program Guide](#).

## Highlighted Events

### Ports and Maritime Day, held February 1-2 in Olympia

This is your chance to engage directly in the Legislative Process. You'll gain a firsthand perspective on Olympia policymaking, and your legislators will see how much you care! Port members attend meetings with their legislative delegations, WPPA arranges a Friday morning breakfast with legislative leadership from both parties, and on Thursday we will jointly host a reception with our friends from the Washington Maritime Federation. *We hope to see you all in Olympia on February 1 and 2!*

### Save the Dates for 2024 Events

Further event details for 2024 are coming soon. Registration typically opens about 8 weeks in advance. In the meantime, mark your calendars for these upcoming meetings and events!

- 2024 State Legislative Session, opens January 8 in Olympia, closes March 12
- 2024 Spring Meeting, held May 15-17 at Skamania Lodge, Stevenson
- Finance and Administration Seminar, held June 26-28 at AC Hotel by Marriott, Vancouver, WA
- 2024 Directors Seminar, held July 11-12 at McMenamins Kalama Harbor Lodge, Kalama



## As Arthur Sees It

*Notes from the Executive Director and his dog*

Sitting in a rainy Olympia after a busy WPPA Conference Week, Arthur and I feel a palpable sense of inspiration and energy for the year to come. Much of that is derived from our membership at WPPA, and I've talked before in this column about our gratitude to the people who volunteer time to make this Association work. That was on full display in Vancouver, with our individual awards for Outstanding Service and Life Membership, and with our friends from the Port of Bremerton coming down in force to celebrate their deserved Port of the Year Award.

The inspiration was found in the conference content from the preceding days as well, starting with three stellar Port Reports that really blew me away. Can you believe how much good work Rick is doing on Lopez Island? And Diahann at the Port of Benton floored me with the scale and sophistication of their operations, especially in the emerging energy technology space. Then our three leaders from the Port of Grays Harbor took it home with a quick spin through the second-oldest port in the state—clearly in good hands with Kayla, Alissa, and Molly. That was inspiring, energizing, and emblematic of the work being done around our port community.

I took inspiration also from one of our panels in particular—Thursday morning's discussion of "Training the Next Generation of Port Workers." As I looked around the room, this was without a doubt the panel that had the most pens scratching out notes, as the panelists spoke to a problem we all confront: the availability of workers, the aging of our current workforce, and the need for alignment between education and opportunity.

To know that the Port of Vancouver is working with its local school district to implement Maritime Core Plus gave me hope that there will be alignment. Knowing how many ports and maritime industry representatives have spoken with Ann Avary in her Career Connect WA work suggests we have a pathway toward offering the necessary training to keep our maritime industry moving. And Marie Bruin's leadership at the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges tells me we have the chance to work with post-secondary partners on programs that apply to ports outside just maritime jobs. The urgency of this issue demands continued investigation, and I look forward to more conversations and action through and with members to keep this issue at the forefront.

Finally, speaking of urgency, there was another issue that was mentioned throughout our conference that bears some focus as the year ends: energy. We don't have enough of it. It is an economic development issue. And it's an area where our ports can continue to lead.

It starts with our commitment to hydropower resources, and of course that raises the dams question. We have trusted leaders in our port community who can speak with authority on the need for the continued viability of hydropower in this state, and of course how that connects to the viability of the Snake River system for waterborne commerce. WPPA will continue to lift those voices up and to lead on this issue with you. Recent news out of D.C. can be concerning, but with our partners at PNWA and Northwest River Partners, among others, we will keep this issue directly in front of our policymakers.

But energy raises more than just questions about hydropower: you all heard Diahann speak about nuclear energy in Central Washington, and she and her port have shown awesome leadership in that space. There is continued discussion in Olympia of how advanced nuclear energy can fit into our state's overall need for more reliable power. Then of course, the discussion of hydrogen, seemingly ever-present whenever energy or economic development are raised. Our state's receipt of federal designation as the Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub (PNWH2) will have ramifications for ports and our partners and our projects if the rumors are true! We had one speaker cover this at the conference in Vancouver, and we are still learning the implications. But it will only grow in importance and will surely remain a focus of ours going forward.

These are rambling and random reflections that try to capture how inspired I do feel as this year closes. Thank you all for your engagement, partnership, and friendship this past year. More to come in 2024!

