



2020 Federal Government Affairs Agenda

Harbor Maintenance Tax (HMT) Reform

Continue efforts to reform the HMT to ensure US tax policy does not disadvantage US ports and to provide greater equity for HMT donor ports through expanded use of Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund revenues. Support appropriations for the “donor port” HMT rebate program authorized under Section 2106 of the 2014 Water Resources Reform and Development Act to compensate for the current structure and impacts of the HMT.

Seattle Harbor Deepening Project

Support appropriations for design and construction to deepen the federal channels serving T-18, T-30 and T-5 in Seattle Harbor.

Tacoma Harbor Deepening Project

Support the feasibility study on deepening channels in Tacoma Harbor to accommodate ultra-large container ships at key NWSA cargo facilities.

National freight policy

Support implementation and increased federal funding for a strengthened national multimodal freight strategy and related grant programs, including continued authorization and funding for the TIGER/BUILD discretionary grant program. Support establishing a sustainable funding source for freight infrastructure and ensure user fee proposals 1) do not hurt the competitiveness of the Northwest trade corridor relative to others in North America; 2) are mode neutral; and 3) funds should be spent on improvements that benefit users who pay the fees and not diverted to other uses.

Safe and efficient cargo screening

Support adequate Customs and Border Protection (CBP) staffing levels to ensure efficient movement of cargo through the Puget Sound gateway. The NWSA seeks increased federal funding for CBP staffing at maritime ports of entry and reforms to expedite the hiring of new CBP officers. Pursue efforts to ensure the federal government resumes responsibility for funding CBP services, equipment and facility development.

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Trade Policy Advancement

Advocate for new trade agreements and productive engagement that ensure a fair and level playing field for mutually beneficial trade and that protect workers and the environment. The NWSA believes tariffs and quotas should be used as a measure of last resort and, when necessary, be narrowly targeted to minimize unintended impacts on American producers and consumers.

Puget Sound Restoration

Advocate for increased federal resources for Puget Sound and Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW) restoration, including funding to support habitat restoration, to manage predation of Chinook and other species critical to SRKW recovery, to help cleanup legacy sources of contaminants that affect SRKW, and to manage stormwater runoff. Support appropriations for the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project, the National Estuary Program, the Puget Sound Geographic Program and the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund. Support reforms to federal regulatory processes to speed the approval and creation of NWSA and home port habitat sites. Support federal agency involvement in the SRKW recovery effort, including the Coast Guard and NOAA. Support federal approval and funding to study and deploy a hydrophone network to measure ambient noise, evaluate the efficacy of ship-based noise reduction efforts, and reduce acoustic disturbance of SRKW.