



WASHINGTON PUBLIC PORTS ASSOCIATION

THE MANIFEST

January 21, 2026



Aerial view of the Port of Poulsbo. Spotlight photos courtesy of the Port of Poulsbo.

January Updates from WPPA

What a week, what a month, what a year! This edition of the Manifest Newsletter comes to you from a WPPA office that is a hub of frenetic activity, in a building that's packed full of busy lobbyists and their clients, friends, and visitors. In Suite 304, the first week of session meant we had nearly the whole staff in the office from morning to night, and we had port members stopping by as they made their way up to the Capitol Campus for meetings with legislators or to the Lacey campus of the South Puget Sound Community College for this month's meeting of the Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB).

Congratulations to all our ports who succeeded in securing funding at the January CERB meeting, and to those of you who provided testimony at hearings and otherwise engaged in the Legislative process. We will continue to emphasize the importance of having you in the State Capitol, not just because we love to have our members in town, but because there is no substitute for direct conversations with your elected legislators as they deliberate on policy.

This month as part of our return to Legislative Session, we host our Ports Building tenants for what we now affectionately refer to as "Tenant Appreciation Day," which begins with Eric serving coffee and donuts in the main lobby all morning, and culminates in a reception in the evening when we serve simple food and drinks to the

lobbyists who occupy the offices in our building. They are a busy bunch but in the past few years have made time to stop in and say hello—it provides us a great chance to say “thank you” for their patience through all of our HVAC madness and parking lot scofflaws, and to connect with them on issues they are working in the capitol which have some impact on our advocacy. And it’s also just a great reason to close our laptops for a few minutes and spend time with good people in an otherwise busy week.

We also have great advocacy day events to look forward to, with Tri-Cities Day coming to the Capitol the week of January 19th, and the Association of Washington Business’s Hill Climb the following week. Our partners at the Washington Economic Development Association also host their regular Economic Development Advocacy Day the week of January 26th, and further out there will be Potato Day, Beef Day, and more of the affinity advocacy events that make the Capitol Campus such a colorful place during session. Many of our WPPA policy priorities rely on partnerships with other trade associations, industry groups, and friends, so joining in these advocacy days is a great way for us to remain connected with partners who will help our advocacy goals.

Which of course leads to the most important plug in this introductory section: PORT DAY! We are hosting our annual advocacy event at the end of the week of February 2nd, kicking things off with our Ports and Maritime Reception, once again hosted jointly with our friends at the Washington Maritime Federation. They’ll come down on Thursday, February 5th for their Maritime Day event, in which many of us WPPA staff will participate. Then we will all gather downtown, at Uptown Grill, for the same great party, this time in a new location. Uptown Grill has event space that affords a great venue for socializing, albeit with less parking! Stay tuned for information from Mandy about the big innovation this year: an Uber coupon for anyone who doesn’t want to drive to the event! That’s right, we’ll buy you an Uber trip there and back, so you have no reason not to come and hang. Seafood, legislators, maritime folks, and port commissioners and staff are the makings of a great party.

Following the reception on the 5th, we will gather in the Columbia Room on the first floor of the Capitol Building for our Port Day event, starting with speakers from the Senate Ways and Means Committee, and featuring their House counterparts from the Finance Committee at the lunch program. We will also welcome Senator Paul Harris (R-17th LD), who won our 2025 Compass Award but was unable to join us at our Spring Meeting to receive the award. We talked with his office about when we could properly confer this honor and suggested that he come to Port Day. He’ll be there Friday morning so we can show our appreciation and hear his thoughts on the 2026 Session.

As always, we encourage you all to set meetings with your legislators, but to ask us for help where you need support. You can come by our offices anytime over the course of the week, and we expect that starting Thursday, the WPPA suite at the Ports Building will be full of port members that whole week. There is more information included in the Events section below and on our WPPA website. See you at Port Day 2026!

-WPPA Team

Port Spotlight: Port of Poulsbo – A Celebratory Town with a Port to Match



The Port of Poulsbo Marina, seen here on a sunny day, has been a hub for the community for the past 75 years.

Positioned in the center of the Kitsap Peninsula on the shores of Liberty Bay sits one of the most visited towns in Washington. Poulsbo is a unique, exciting, and fun town with a successful port to match—one that has been essential to the town’s Nordic maritime history and identity for 75 years running. Founded by Norwegian immigrants in the 1880s, “Little Norway” has maintained strong ties to its Scandinavian roots, and Nordic culture still permeates the fabric of daily life in Poulsbo.

“Our Viking culture is fully embraced here,” said James Weaver, Port Manager of the Port of Poulsbo. After serving for several years as Director of Marinas for the Port of Bremerton, Weaver took over as Port Manager at the Port of Poulsbo in September of 2025. “Every logo in our small coastal town has a Viking longship, and there are murals throughout town that celebrate our Norwegian heritage. There is nowhere in Puget Sound quite like Poulsbo.”

The port was officially formed in 1951 with a history of connecting Poulsbo with the rest of the Puget Sound region via the Mosquito Fleet ferries. With the Kitsap Peninsula densely forested and impassable in some parts by land, the Mosquito Fleet was the only way into or out of Poulsbo at the time. Founding the port also established a working waterfront as the location of the Pacific Coast Codfish Company, one of the largest fish processors on the West Coast. Those strong ties to the fishing fleet still drive port activity.

The town’s Maritime Museum features a recreation of the pilot house of one of the Mosquito Fleet ships, the Hyak, which used to serve daily on the Poulsbo-Seattle run. The Virginia V, another Mosquito Fleet ferry that served the town, still visits regularly and will be in Poulsbo for the Liberty Bay Festival during the last weekend in May.

“We hold our maritime history dearly here,” Weaver said. “It’s how these communities were founded and it continues on as our cherished connection to the world.”

The port is a major part of that history, and its fingerprints are seen all over town. From the massive marina on Poulsbo’s iconic waterfront to the port’s presence at nearly every one of the many festivals that the city hosts throughout the year, the port is inseparable from the culture of Poulsbo.

The marina was built in 1951, the same year the port was formed, while the Pacific Coast Codfish Company was the largest employer in town. As the company declined throughout the 50s, many of its assets were transferred directly to the port. The port then set about improving their marine facilities, including the marina, breakwater and adjacent facilities.

With the help of a WA Recreation and Conservation Office grant, in 1973 the port and the city partnered to improve the waterfront, build a seawall, and build guest docks, now Docks E and F at the Poulsbo Marina. The current-day marina features seven main docks, 253 monthly slips, 130 guest moorages, 15 private boathouses, and 400 feet of linear guest moorage along the newly built breakwater.

“[Those docks] made Poulsbo a destination,” said Jay Lawrence, Port of Poulsbo Commissioner. “We’re visited by boaters, yacht clubs, charters, and more every day.”

In more recent years, the port embarked on one of their most ambitious projects to date: construction of a new breakwater for the marina. The project was a \$9 million investment for the port, which significantly expanded port facilities. Completed in 2023, the breakwater construction allowed the port to expand their capacity and refresh their facilities, increasing slip space and allowing larger boats to dock at the marina—even small cruise vessels.



The MV American Constitution docked at the Port of Poulsbo marina.

“We’re working with American Cruise Lines to be a port of call in their Puget Sound cruises,” Weaver said. “We’re looking to have cruises to Poulsbo in 2027 and 2028. The [MV] American Constitution visited this year and we’re in negotiations for a continued presence in the future.”



Valkyrie in all its glory.

In addition to the opportunity for cruise ships, the refreshed breakwater also supports one of the cultural cornerstones of the town—Valkyrie, a 56-foot Viking longboat. Valkyrie is an active charter vessel, allowing visitors to row and sail through Liberty Bay like the Vikings of old.

The marina and the festivals are not the only draws to Poulsbo, however. Adjacent to the marina is the SEA Discovery Center, operated by Western Washington University. A hands-on aquarium and marine education resource, the facility features a live touch tank and a new Giant Pacific Octopus named Klahanie. Poulsbo is also home to the famous Poulsbo bread, baked at a bakery called Sluys, located in town.

“It’s a big, family-run bakery,” Port of Poulsbo Commissioner Jamie Green said. “And it’s a big reason a lot of people come here. “It’s a phenomenal place, with lines down the block most mornings to get in for breakfast.”

Poulsbo’s status as a destination on the Kitsap Peninsula only grew with time, and as the port gets ready to celebrate their 75th anniversary this year, they have a long list of events and more to support. The port usually hosts 40 events per year in partnership with the city, with some holding special significance, given the port’s anniversary. The month of May will be particularly important, with Poulsbo hosting both VikingFest and the Liberty Bay Festival.

Those two festivals are very emblematic of Poulsbo’s connection to their Nordic heritage and the maritime history of the region. In addition to the Valkyrie, VikingFest features a band of Vikings in full regalia, while the Liberty Bay Festival will feature historic vessels like the Virginia V. It’s this celebratory spirit and dedication to acknowledging the town’s cultural and historic identities that make the Port of Poulsbo such a unique port.

“[The port] is so ingrained into the Scandinavian culture of Poulsbo,” Weaver said. “It’s our defining element, and providing access to the waterfront is so important to celebrating that history and that culture. We hold those values close and celebrate them however we can.”

Legislative Spotlight: Washington's 2026 Legislative Session Begins

Washington's 2026 Legislative Session began on Monday, January 12th, 2026, marking the second year of the two-year legislative biennium. Each biennium ends with a "short session," lasting 60 days. In short sessions, lawmakers typically make modest changes to the state's in-progress biennial budgets: Operating, Capital, and Transportation.

Briefly below, we have provided you with an overview of Governor Ferguson's supplemental budget proposal. The fiscal committees in each Chamber have held initial hearings on the Ferguson proposals, which gave stakeholders the opportunity to tell lawmakers which elements of the budget they support and which additions or removals should be made. WPPA provided testimony on the transportation proposals to highlight the Governor's inclusion of funding for Lower Columbia River dredging, and to urge inclusion of this supply chain investment going forward.

The budget discussions throughout session will be shaped by ongoing fiscal strain following a combination of tax increases and spending reductions adopted in the 2025 session that temporarily closed a multi-billion-dollar shortfall. The latest [revenue forecast](#) shows continued revenue weakness and downward revisions, leaving projected state receipts lower than earlier estimates and contributing to an estimated \$2.3 billion deficit heading into the session. The next updated revenue forecast will be released prior to February 20th.

For reference, we are also including a link to WPPA's 2026 Legislative Priorities, which were adopted during our Annual Meeting. Those can be found [here](#). Our team is ready to tackle the 2026 session and will once again be joined by contract lobbyist Marian Dacca to assist with advocacy. Marian has previously worked with WPPA's team and is also the contract lobbyist for the Port of Edmonds.

In case you're wondering who is working on which issues, here is a breakdown of our advocacy team's issue areas of focus in the Legislature:

- **Aviation:** James
- **Broadband:** Eric/Marian
- **Economic Development:** By Issue/Eric
- **Energy:** Carly
- **Environment:** Carly
- **Governance:** James
- **Labor & Workforce:** James
- **Marinas & Recreation:** James
- **Natural Resources & Water:** Carly
- **Procurement & Prevailing Wage:** James
- **Tax & Revenue:** Eric/Marian
- **Transportation:** By Issue

We strongly encourage all ports to actively engage this session, starting with [Ports and Maritime Day](#) on February 5th-6th. This event provides a critical opportunity to connect with legislators, share your port's priorities, and ensure your voice is heard in Olympia. Your participation, not just in Port Day but in the legislative process, is essential to advancing our collective agenda and shaping Washington's future.

For additional details or to share your port's legislative agenda, please connect with WPPA's advocacy team.

Governor Ferguson 2026 Supplemental Budget Proposal

Each year, prior to the start of session, the Governor releases his budget proposal for the Legislature's consideration. This proposal includes a spending plan, highlights top priorities, and lays out the Governor's policy agenda for the upcoming session. The Ferguson administration has proposed a budget that focuses on three top priorities: housing, transportation, and affordability. [See the Governor's Budget Highlights document here.](#)

Top Budget Areas of Potential Port Interest in Governor Ferguson's Budget Proposal

Lower Columbia River Channel Maintenance Plan: The proposal includes \$15 million in funding for the state's initial contribution to the dredging project to maintain the channel on the lower Columbia River in partnership with the State of Oregon and the Ports of Longview, Kalama, Vancouver, and Woodland. This is a priority for those ports and an issue that we included in our 2026 Legislative Agenda as part of our WA Trade Strategy.

Model Toxics Control Act Funding: The Governor maintains the funding sweeps at the same levels that passed last session. No additional transfers to the general fund are proposed in the supplemental budget, although transfers to the general fund will occur in FY2026.

Derelict Vessel Removal Funding: The proposal would transfer \$5 million from the Derelict Vessel Removal account, which is used to support the removal of vessels that pose risk to property and the environment. The demand for funds from this account has historically been greater than the amount appropriated. WPPA has signed on to a concern letter to budget leaders sent by the Northwest Marine Trades Association.

Climate Commitment Act Revenue: Much focus and debate has been on the Governor's proposal to utilize \$569 million from the Climate Commitment Account, cap-and-invest auction revenue, to pay for the [Working Family Tax Credit](#) that provides credit to low and moderate-income families. This has historically been funded out of the general fund.

Capital Budget Clean Energy Investments: There are a few new investments in clean energy in the capital budget proposal including \$12.5 million for the Washington Green Bank Program and \$30 million additional for the Clean Energy Fund tribal energy development grants.

Tariff resilience and support: The Department of Commerce requested funds to assist small businesses who are impacted by current tariff upheaval, and the Governor's budget included \$400,000 for that purpose. WPPA will work with our WA Trade Strategy coalition to see how we can support this request.

Budget, Tax, and Revenue Swaps: WPPA will monitor developments in the budget, tax, and revenue arenas for the duration of session. Given the budget challenges, we will be focused on protecting funding that supports economic development, trade, and port related programs. Last year, many of the final budget decisions were negotiated during the last two weeks of the legislative session.

Governor Ferguson's 2026 Supplemental Bill Documents

- [Supplemental Operating Budget Bill](#)
- [Supplemental Transportation Budget Bill](#)
- [Supplemental Capital Budget Bill](#)

The budget proposal presented by the Governor to the Legislature provides an initial framework for the 2026 session, but it should be viewed as a starting point rather than a directive. Lawmakers will ultimately craft their own operating, capital, and transportation supplemental budgets, informed by revenue forecasts, caucus priorities, and policy tradeoffs.

We will keep our members informed and updated throughout the session with our weekly legislative reports which will be sent via email and posted to the [WPPA website](#) each Saturday.

Important Links:

- [2026 Legislative Session Updates: WPPA](#)
- [WA Legislature: Bill Information Page](#)
- [TVW: Committee Hearings, Floor Debate Videos](#)

Knowing the Waters

In this month's issue of [Knowing the Waters](#), Tim Schermetzler of CSD Attorneys at Law shares a helpful checklist of items ports should review annually, including schedules and procedures for regular meetings, internal policies and trainings, data security, appointments and agreements, and alignment with any updated regulations on employment or procurement practices.

Grants and Resources for Ports

Engage with WSDOT in 2026 Freight Systems Plan Development – online open house open through January 30, 2026

Please consider engaging in the [WSDOT 2026 Freight System Plan \(FSP\) Online Open House](#) to help inform their 2026 FSP. Those of you who attended their session at our 2026 Trade and Transportation Committee meeting will have some familiarity with this tool, which includes a survey and an interactive map. This online open house is a chance to **ensure port facilities and the freight routes of our partners, tenants, and customers are accounted for** in this important transportation planning document.

Eric and the WPPA Trade and Transportation Committee convened a meeting in mid-January 2026 to discuss this exercise and develop coordinated messages to share with WSDOT.

Deadline Extended: Informal Public Comment Period on rules for Air Quality in Overburdened Communities – comments due February 15, 2026

The Dept. of Ecology is seeking public comments on [preliminary draft language](#) for a new rule Chapter 173-448 WAC. The rule will implement parts of [RCW 70A.65.020](#) to reduce criteria for air pollution in overburdened communities highly impacted by air pollution. There are a few ports captured in the 16 communities identified as overburdened communities by Ecology; please review the map on the [webpage here](#). This informal comment period lasts until **February 15, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.** Submit comments online: [Public Comment Form](#).

WPPA plans to submit comments and is working with an internal port workgroup on this effort. Please reach out if you have any questions.

Consider Applying for Project Funding through the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board – webinar on January 27, 2025 (applications due March 6)

The [Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board](#) (FMSIB) is an important partner to WPPA and our member ports. We have two board seats, where **port leaders help labor, city, county, and other industry leaders make decisions about directing limited state funds to critical freight projects**. FMSIB Executive Director Brandy DeLange came to our 2025 Annual Meeting to provide an overview of the upcoming Application Window for their new Six-Year Investment Program, which opened on December 15. In her presentation, Brandy shared that the FMSIB Board has incorporated feedback from ports in their new scoring criteria.

See below for more information from FMSIB about their program **and consider attending their informational webinar on January 27th!** We are encouraging our members to take advantage of the webinar and consider applying for a grant, in part, so we can continue to assess how our port projects fit into their investment program. **Please call Eric f. directly if you have questions about your potential fit for this grant program.**

The Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board (FMSIB) has opened the 2026 application window for the Six-Year Strategic Investment Program, a freight mobility investment program established to guide funding decisions, spanning all modes, for the highest priority freight projects across Washington State. Updated every biennium, FMSIB is accepting applications for projects proposed for FY 27-29, FY 29-31, and FY 31-33.

- Applications are due at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 6, 2026.
- The [application](#) is available on the [FMSIB website](#), as well as an [FAQ page](#).
- An informational webinar will be held on January 27, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. [Register here](#).
- Questions can be directed to Fred Wenhardt (fred.wenhardt@fmsib.wa.gov).

EPA Brownfield MAC Grants – applications due January 28, 2026

EPA's Brownfield [Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup \(MAC\) Grants](#) solicitations for Fiscal Year 2026 Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, and Cleanup Grants are open now. **An array of changes to criteria have been shared with more details available on the [program website](#).** Recorded webinars discussing the changes are also available.

MARAD BUILD grants – applications due February 24, 2026

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act authorized and appropriated \$1.5 billion to be awarded in [FY 2026](#) by the US Department of Transportation (DOT) via the Maritime Administration (MARAD) [Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development \(BUILD\) Grant Program](#).

Eligible project categories include planning or constructing surface transportation infrastructure projects that will improve safety; environmental sustainability; quality of life; mobility and community connectivity; economic competitiveness and opportunity including tourism; state of good repair; partnership and collaboration; and innovation. Award size may reach up to \$25 million.

- Applications are due no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern on February 24, 2026.
- Submit applications using the new platform, ValidEval.com:
 - [Capital Projects application](#)
 - [Planning Projects application](#)

Ecology Independent Remedial Action Grants (IRAG) – applications due June 16, 2026

The solicitation for [Independent Remedial Action Grants](#) is open now. This program is administered by the Department of Ecology to provide **post-cleanup grants to local governments that independently clean up contamination** under the [Voluntary Cleanup Program](#). A [Focus Sheet](#) and [Guidance Document](#) on the IRAG program are available on the Ecology website.

For the 2025-27 biennium only: because the recent EAGL system update caused a delay in opening the application solicitation, Ecology will consider up to an additional six months of costs incurred past the five years of the grant application, if it was submitted in EAGL within 30 days of the application solicitation opening date.

Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) – coming soon!

\$450,000,000 has been made available in FY 2026 for the MARAD PIDP grant program. Stay tuned for a NOFO expected to be released by the end of December.

Funding Opportunity Spotlight: CERB's New Rural Ports Program

We emailed Janea Stark, Executive Director, Washington State Community Economic Revitalization Board ([CERB](#)), a series of questions on the new [Rural Ports Program](#), funded in 2025 by the Legislature to **help rural ports repair, improve, and develop essential infrastructure** that supports local economies. Read more in our [October Manifest](#) for her answers, and reach out to [Janea Stark](#) if you have a potential project you'd like to discuss.

Commerce Clean Energy Tax Credit Assistance Program – office hours

Commerce provides **technical assistance in accessing federal tax credits for clean energy projects**, including solar, battery storage, wind energy, geothermal systems, electric vehicles (EVs), and EV charging infrastructure through the [Clean Energy Tax Credit Assistance Program \(CETCAP\)](#). Updates and technical assistance are provided in office hours held on the second Wednesday and third Friday of each month. Register here for [second Wednesday](#) (next: February 11th, noon) or [third Friday](#) (next: February 20th, 9:30 a.m.) office hours.

Clean Buildings Performance Standards: Program Tier 1 Incentives Estimator

A [Tier 1 incentives estimator](#) is now available to assist building owners in planning their Clean Buildings Performance Standard compliance path. Learn more about the program [here](#).

The Community Builders Collective: A Statewide Network for Project Leaders

Launching this fall, the Community Builders Collective (CBC) is a free, statewide peer network from CERB for the people behind community and economic development infrastructure projects in rural, tribal, and historically under-resourced communities.

CBC members get:

- **A statewide network of peers** facing similar challenges and opportunities
- **Practical resources and tools** to support project development
- **Live training and learning opportunities** focused on real-time needs
- **24/7 access to the community** (plus CERB staff when needed)

If you're navigating complex infrastructure projects with limited time and staff—the CBC is here to help you get it done, together. For more information sign up [here](#).

Washington State Treasurer's LOCAL Program

The LOCAL program, offered through the Office of the Washington State Treasurer, **provides Washington municipalities with a cost-effective way to finance equipment and/or real estate projects**. Participants can take advantage of the current program rating of Moody's Aa1, low fees and expenses, technical assistance, and access to the tax-exempt bond market.

Check out the [LOCAL Program guide](#) and visit the [Program FAQs](#) for more information.

Climate Resources at Washington Climate Action

The [Washington Climate Action](#) website is a first-stop shop for funding or other resources related to climate and natural resources, including grant writing support and contracting information.

Commerce Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) – applications accepted on rolling basis

The [Brownfields RLF](#) provides **low interest loans to entities undertaking cleanup of contaminated properties** to support redevelopment, promote public health and safety, improve environmental quality, and create jobs at and around brownfield sites. Average loan amounts are approximately \$500,000 and up to 50% of the loan may be forgiven for public entities. Loan terms are typically 5 years or less, and the interest rate is negotiated based on project need. A 1% loan fee is required.

Commerce Small Business Credit Initiative – accepted on a rolling basis

Through the Washington State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI), the Washington State Department of Commerce is collaborating with Heritage Bank to offer the Owner-Occupied Commercial Real Estate Loan Program. The program **allows Heritage to make loans to businesses that own the buildings in which they operate, and who wish to purchase new buildings or expand current operations.** This means port tenants who are contemplating expansion but need capital could have access to low-interest loans to support their downpayment.

Heritage Bank administers the program. You can find more information [on their website](#). The bank has also worked with Commerce to [publish an informative one-pager](#).

DOE Energy Ready Charging Smart Program – free technical assistance

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) [Energy Ready Charging Smart Program](#) offers free technical assistance to help local governments adopt procedures and practices that facilitate the growth of electric vehicles (EVs).

DOE E2C Program Expert Match – free technical assistance

The DOE's [Energy to Communities \(E2C\): Expert Match](#) program offers free, short-term technical assistance to address near-term energy challenges in local communities.

179D Energy Tax Credit – expiring soon

Act now to take advantage of the [179D deduction](#) before it expires. Recent federal legislation discontinues several energy tax credits including the 179D deduction, but there is still time to take advantage of the program before it ends. **To qualify, construction must begin by June 30, 2026, meet energy efficiency standards, and building owners must obtain proper documentation and certification**, including an energy study and allocation forms.

EPA Thriving Community Grant Makers – accepted on a rolling basis

The Environmental Protection Agency opened their Thriving Community Grantmakers Program in January 2025 and is accepting applications on a rolling basis. The Grantmakers partner with community-based organizations from across a region to select partnerships and distribute funding. Funding is awarded in four categories: assessment projects, planning projects, development projects, and non-competitive fixed amounts. [Read more about how to apply here](#). A [recorded webinar](#) on the program is available through the Center for Creative Land Recycling.

The Federal Funds Grant Writing Assistance Program

The [Federal Funds Grant Writing Assistance Program](#) is designed for tribes, community-based organizations, local government agencies, and other entities to help prepare and submit federal grant applications. This resource is available now and can include services such as grant application planning, writing, and review and guidance for managing federal awards.

Federal Clean Energy Tax Assistance Program – free and available now

Administered through Commerce, the [Federal Clean Energy Tax Credit Assistance Program](#) offers tax incentives to eligible entities (including ports) through the Inflation Reduction Act. Free resources, including personalized support from clean energy tax attorneys, are available [here](#).

Highlighted Events

Port Day on the Hill: February 5 – 6, 2026



Port Day is in two weeks! Join us bright and early on **Friday, February 6, for Port Day on the Hill**. We'll kick things off at 7:30 a.m. in the Columbia Room at the Legislative Building for a full day of meetings and conversations with our legislators. Coffee, breakfast, and lunch will be provided. We also hope you'll join us the evening before at the **Ports and Maritime Reception** at Uptown Grill in Olympia, from 5:00–8:00 p.m. on **Thursday, February 5**. Stay up to date with the latest details by [clicking here to visit our website](#). **No registration is required** for this event.

WPPA 2026 Conference Calendar

- **Spring Meeting: May 19-21, Skamania Lodge, Stevenson**
(please note: this year's event is Tuesday -Thursday)
- **Finance & Administration Seminar: June 24-26, Hotel Indigo, Everett**
- **Directors Seminar: July 8-10, Courtyard by Marriott, Pullman**
- **Commissioners Seminar: July 20-22, Hilton Garden Inn, Wenatchee**
- **Environmental Seminar: Location and Date TBD**
- **Small Ports: Oct. 22-23, Campbell's Resort, Chelan**
- **Winter Meeting: Dec 9-11, Hilton Vancouver**
(formerly known as the Annual Meeting)



The grind never stops for Arthur at WPPA HQ.

As Arthur Sees It

Notes from the Executive Director and his dog

Before the cynicism of the 2026 Legislative Session settles in, I thought I would start the year by striking a tone of optimism and positivity. Not because of any high-minded New Year's Resolutions, not because the first week of session was particularly good (it wasn't!), but maybe just because it's sunny out, the Seahawks won, and there are things to look forward to in a year with much promise.

First, I want to briefly reflect on how nice it is to have activity in the Ports Building and the WPPA Suite. Outside of session it's a pretty sleepy place, with staff in and out between conferences and road trips to see members, and with our tenants who are mostly lobbyists not needing the office space. Starting in November the parking lot starts filling up more regularly, and by December it's close to session pace. But nothing compares to January when you can't poke your head out of the door without seeing the lobbyist for Energy Northwest, or without our 2nd Floor tenants coming up to check in and share news from their

clients. This week we will host our Tenant Appreciation Day reception, which started tongue-in-cheek ("hey, we may not have heat on the second floor yet, but at least there is wine and cheese available in Suite 304") but is now a tradition I genuinely look forward to!

We are lucky also to have this place as a haven for visiting port staff. I still remember the first session I worked as the Port of Seattle's lobbyist, when Eric Johnson made it clear that the office space was mine to use when I needed it. The offer initially struck me as strange—I had an office in Seattle and a little apartment here, so how much time would I really be spending at the big oak conference table? But it's hard to overstate how convenient it was to duck in for an hour or a day, snacking on chocolate-covered almonds and running bill numbers by the staff. Missy Goodell was a key part of that hospitality then, a friendly face when sometimes it felt like the Legislature was conspiring against you! And I would often share the space with Sean Eagan, and later with Adam Lemieux, which was one way I developed relationships with my fellow port staffers.

Now, that tradition continues, with Adam and Sean still ever-present figures, now joined by John Flanagan from the Port of Seattle and Cassie Losey from the Port of Benton. Those are the consistent figures; then there's the fun of the random visits, like Ethan Perry and Abbi Russell coming by last week just to say hi after they'd finished at CERB (and I heard a rumor Commissioner Pittis will be in town in January too!). And on top of the pop-ins, there are also moments when the conference room feels like a war-room. Port executive directors and commissioners who are preparing testimony sit at the table and go over talking points, scribbling in new one-liners with red pens. Tough subjects are hammered out, like our recent tax-increment financing (TIF) negotiation meeting with the cities and the fire districts, and our Friday visit from the counties lobbyist to talk clean energy excise taxes.

And of course, the familiarity of our Monday Lobby Lunches! Again, back ten years ago, Olympia was an unfamiliar place to me. I came to my first WPPA lunch and was struck by the experience and swagger of the seasoned lobbyists around the table, the ease with which they jumped from bill to bill, developing strategy on the fly, over a sandwich, then dashing back to the hill to execute. Our lunches have grown since then, and with the addition of Zoom we even have visitors from across the mountains, able to get a glimpse of the process and track their issues as we go down our weekly list. We had 20 people here last week, hearing from our port lobbyists about issues we weren't tracking, or flagging issues for them that had not been on their lists. We welcomed new folks, lamented the absence of long-time lobbying partners, ate sandwiches, talked strategy, then dashed back to the Capitol to make it happen.

This tired office building on the corner of 15th and Capitol Way is unassuming and can slip into the backdrop of the other state office buildings that surround it. Most of the year it hibernates, with more visits from the janitor than the building tenants. But these few months it springs to life, it provides a haven for ports from around the state—a place of comfort in the forbidding world of state politics. And for me, this month, a cause for some optimism and positivity.

Washington Public Ports Association
360.943.0760 | www.washingtonports.org