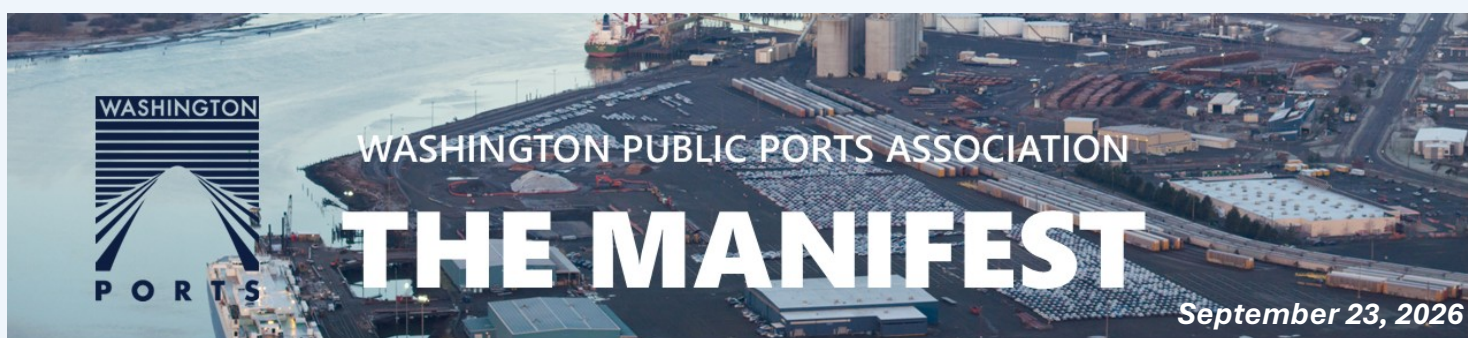




Aerial view of the Port of Friday Harbor's Marina. *Feature photos courtesy of the Port of Friday Harbor*

September Updates from WPPA

It's tempting this time of year to begin one's newsletter with "the leaves are beginning to turn" or "there's a chill in the air," but the sun is shining at WPPA World HQ and we are leaning hard into a few more weeks of Indian Summer. This month's Manifest, though, does herald the turning of the season, as we look ahead at our two signature fall events and even remind you all that we've *already started planning* the Winter Meeting.

Before turning to upcoming events or our fun reflection on the event of the summer – the WPPA Staff Retreat! – a few important items to note:

- [First, Small Ports Registration is open!](#) Please visit our website and get signed up, and be sure you are all booked at Campbell's. This year, in addition to our standard SAO visits and some updates from WPPA staff (plus trivia!), we'll be joined by an HR consultant talking about personnel management at small organizations; by two esteemed former port directors talking about capital project delivery at small ports; and by Janea from CERB with an update on her latest endeavors. We hope to see many of you next month in Chelan!
- [Second, don't forget to take our Ports Survey – linked here for anyone who has not yet had the chance.](#) We are hoping to compile all responses by the end of the month, and to get maximum participation. Your responses will inform our next edition of the Port Governance and Management Guide, which is currently being reviewed and updated by Maul Foster & Alongi and a number of port staff and consultants.
- [Third, Executive Committee nominations!](#) This week, Eric sent a note to WPPA Commissioners and Directors issuing our annual call for Executive Committee nominations. With Cmr. JC Baldwin departing the Executive Committee in 2027, and Jim Rothlin stepping off after his four years of service, we are looking for a commissioner and a director to join the committee. Anyone choosing to put their name forward will meet with our Nominating Committee in late October/early November 2026, so please reach out if you have interest.

Lots going on, as you can see! In addition to those above items, worth noting that since we last wrote we have handed out [our *third* Compass Award, to House Transportation Chair and 27th District Representative, the Honorable Jake Fey](#)! Chair Fey came to a meeting of the Northwest Seaport Alliance on September 1st, and joined Eric at the dais to get some hard-earned praise not just from WPPA but from the Port of Tacoma and Seattle commissioners assembled as well. The Chair lives just up the hill from the Port of Tacoma terminals, and has been in public service long enough that it seemed like he knew everyone on both commissions and most of the people in the audience. In all, it was a great celebration for a well-deserved award.

The week before we handed out Chair Fey's award, the WPPA team channeled the remaining positive energy of Summer 2026 as we descended on the Kitsap County Fair and Stampede, which played host to our 2026 WPPA Staff Retreat. This was the *fourth annual* staff retreat, dating back to when we all (except Tasha!) had just started and were looking for an excuse to socialize and get to know each other – and of course, see more ports. We hit the Port of Bellingham in Summer 2023, and combined it with a visit to their super cool Portal Container Village. It continued the following year in Port Angeles, where we went to a minor league ballgame with the port team, and last year we visited the Port of Whitman County and picked up our mini golf tradition once more.

This year, the Port of Bremerton's administrative offices at the Bremerton National Airport hosted the hard work and discussion portion of our staff retreat, and we were treated to an awesome tour of the airport and the adjacent Olympia View Industrial Park. The port staff manage a *ton* of activity at these two facilities, and we were glad to get even just a glimpse – and slightly more than that at Safe Boats, where we got to tour the manufacturing floor! Given that Safe Boats is a Washington boat-building brand that has helped make a leader in maritime manufacturing, and WPPA's current work to support that industry, this was well-timed and fascinating.

And yes, then we went to the Stampede! Our staff got the notion somewhere along the way that it would be fun to go to a rodeo, so this year our retreat location search had two criteria: cool port district, and cool rodeo. The Kitsap Stampede delivered, and we were joined by Port of Bremerton staff as we enjoyed massive corn dogs and baskets of curly fries. It was a great way to celebrate not just our great staff, but the relationships we build with our partner ports and the communities that host them.

Following our retreat, and up to today's publication, the long road of the WPPA staff continued to roll – with Eric out at the AWB Policy Summit in Spokane, Martin joining the Joint Transportation Committee in Bremerton and in Everett, and Mandy and James in Grays Harbor County for the latest installment of our Port Academy Series. Carly swung by to visit our friends at PNWA offices in Vancouver on her way to a family wedding in Oregon, and Martin hosted the Aviation Committee with Jim Kuntz and the Chelan-Douglas Regional Port Authority. And to round it all out, last week Eric visited the new Port of Coupeville Director and saw our Executive Committee President on Whidbey.

We will never tire of getting out and seeing you all. It is a true enhancement to not just the way we execute our mission, but to our overall quality of life and happiness. Thank you!

Spotlight: Port of Friday Harbor: Finding creative solutions for a unique environment

Located in the farthest-northwest corner of the state of Washington, the San Juan archipelago is an iconic part of the Pacific Northwest region. Renowned for its unique landscapes and way of life, ports in this region face equally unique challenges to their operations: limited space, and a dedication to protect that unique landscape where they live and thrive.

The Port of Friday Harbor, based on San Juan Island, has been hard at work addressing this exact challenge, focusing on their environmental impact and taking big steps to make sure that they remain sustainable in the years to come.

The port was founded in 1950, and shortly thereafter began construction on a flagship project: the Friday Harbor Marina. Completed in 1972, the marina is central to life both in the town and on the island as a whole. From there they purchased the Friday Harbor Airport and a beautiful sand beach near town, where they established a boat launch in 1985. Friday Harbor became a major tourist destination, thanks in no small part to the infrastructure built by the port over the years. By ensuring that the island had a robust transportation infrastructure, the port helped to ensure that the island was able to grow in turn.

Like many ports in Washington, the Port of Friday Harbor has spent recent years focusing on sustainability. In the San Juans, with its fragile and protected ecosystems, environmental preservation is a high priority for residents, who want to see their unique flora and fauna flourish. This value of environmental stewardship motivates the port as they take actions to reduce their ecological footprint.



The port's all-electric pumpout vessel aptly-named "Poosaidon."

Image courtesy of the Port.

Dirty jobs, clean exhaust

Electrification is at the heart of the Port's vision for a more sustainable future. That vision gained momentum in August 2024 when the Port secured \$7 million through the Washington State Department of Transportation's Port Electrification Grant Program. The funding is supporting a portfolio of projects that modernize port infrastructure, while Photon Marine contributes electric vessels, workforce training, and public outreach efforts that help bring the transition to life.

Together, the Port and Photon Marine are working to electrify much of the Port's operational marine fleet. As part of that effort, Photon Marine is providing training to help Port staff safely operate and maintain the new electric vessels, charging equipment, and related infrastructure. This two-pronged investment in technology and training will serve to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions and noise pollution, benefitting residents and important marine life like the San Juans' resident orca pods.

"This is an exciting and rewarding time for the Port," said Todd Nicholson, Executive Director of the Port of Friday Harbor. "This grant

allows us to pursue a bold environmental program that not only addresses climate change but also preserves the pristine environment of the Salish Sea for future generations."

In fall of 2026, the Port christened Poosaidon, a fully electric pumpout vessel that reflects the Port's commitment to innovation and sustainability. Purpose-built for pumpout operations, the vessel replaces an aging gasoline-powered boat while delivering quieter operation, lower maintenance requirements, and zero emissions. Poosaidon is the first of several electric assets being added to the Port's fleet, with an additional

electric work boat, two electric rental vessels, and a 75-ton all-electric Travelift also scheduled to enter service. Together, these investments represent a significant step toward electrifying Port operations and reducing the environmental footprint of working waterfront activities. Recognizing the important role that the public will play in this transition, the port and Photon Marine are involving community through a series of “Demo Days.” The public will get hands-on experience with the new technologies, building familiarity and encouraging adoption by the public.

Once these projects are fully completed, the port is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 140,000 metric tons over the next 10 years.

Complementing electrification of its own fleet, the port intends to ensure that guests and tenants electrified boats can use their moorage space. The marina will feature fast charging for smaller boats, and the port is also partnering with American Cruise Lines to provide shore power to the cruise ships that sail through Friday Harbor.

“American Cruise Lines has committed to helping us make overnight vessel calls possible,” said Kyle Gropp, deputy director for the Port of Friday Harbor. “For Friday Harbor, the impact could be substantial. Each ship carries up to 180 guests, effectively bringing the equivalent of a full hotel’s worth of visitors to town during the summer season.”

A Solar Canopy on a Forested Island

On an island like San Juan, land is hard to come by. Open land far from tree coverage suitable for solar energy production is even rarer, so the port looked to spaces that were already in-use. In one such space, the upper parking lot at Friday Harbor’s marina, the port is developing a “solar canopy” above the parking stalls, where solar panels capture energy to return to the grid.

“Living out on an island, we get our power from the mainland as the islands grow, demand increases,” Gropp said. “The solar canopy will help support everyone when demand is high, without a need for increased mainland power.”

The port is preparing to resume construction of the solar array, which began in the spring and was put on hold for the summer. Composed of 288 solar panels, the array is built atop a raised canopy structure measuring 207 feet long and 47 feet wide, providing both renewable energy generation and covered parking below.



The solar array offers charging and cooling by shading vehicles underneath it. Image courtesy of the Port.



The Port’s solar canopy under construction, as viewed from above. Image courtesy of the Port.

the potential to provide Friday Harbor’s grid with an additional [200 kilowatts](#) of renewable energy. Beneath the solar array will be several car chargers, and the port hopes to add the island’s first D.C. fast charger.

The project is a creative use of space that fits in line with the values of the island’s residents. Friends of the San Juans, an environmental advocacy group, voiced their support for the project and described it as “renewable energy done right.”

“We appreciate the support from Friends of the San Juans,” Gropp said. “Projects like this succeed because our community shares a commitment to protecting natural spaces while advancing smart, well-placed renewable energy.”

Operating on a unique island landscape requires a port with unique and creative solutions. The Port of Friday Harbor embraces these challenges, taking major steps to ensure preservation of this unique landscape and the sustainability of their operations now and into the future.

Legislative Spotlight: Legislative Topic Updates

Last month you received a quick and fun intro to your government relations team. This month, each of us will provide a brief update on an issue that is in our portfolios.

As a reminder, through October, members of the WPPA Legislative Committee will work closely with WPPA staff to identify, evaluate, and refine legislative priorities and issues for consideration during the 2027 session. Our Legislative Committee added Eron Berg with the Port of Port Townsend as a co-chair to lead this effort. This collaborative process is designed to ensure that our advocacy agenda reflects the needs, opportunities, and challenges facing ports across Washington. Final recommendations will be presented to the WPPA Board of Trustees for consideration later this year at our Winter Meeting in Vancouver where the WPPA 2027 Legislative Priorities will officially be adopted.

Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA):

As demand for MTCA cleanup funding grows and revenues decline, protecting resources for major port cleanup projects remains a top WPPA priority. Since 2009, more than \$370 million in MTCA funding has been transferred to backfill the State General Fund, while many complex cleanup projects continue to face delays and rising costs. Many projects have been stalled, not seeing significant progress for years. In response, WPPA convened a port workgroup to develop solutions for consideration in the upcoming legislative session.

Our recommendations include ending the statutorily required \$50 million transfer to the Motor Vehicle Fund, ensuring MTCA dollars support their voter-approved purpose, and creating a more predictable path for cleanup projects from investigation through completion. We are also exploring practical ways to speed up decisions and resolve lower-risk sites more efficiently. Some of the more technical changes include retaining licensed site remediation professionals and establishing a low-threat underground storage tank case closure policy. WPPA looks forward to working with ports, legislators, stakeholders, and the Department of Ecology to advance these improvements.

Public Records Act (PRA):

This interim, WPPA created a Public Records Act (PRA) workgroup to take a fresh look at the challenges ports face in administering Washington’s public records law. The workgroup brings together port members who have been directly involved in developing a proposal to establish a Legislative Task Force on Public Records Act Modernization. WPPA has also begun engaging with stakeholders to seek feedback on the proposal, build legislative support, and provide advance notice to outside groups that may have an interest in the effort. The proposed task force would bring together public agencies, records professionals, requestors, journalists, and other stakeholders to develop consensus recommendations for modernizing the PRA while preserving meaningful public access to government records.

PRA modernization is a priority for WPPA because ports continue to face challenges associated with the volume and complexity of public records requests, evolving technology, and records management responsibilities, particularly for smaller ports with limited staff and resources. In past legislative sessions, WPPA has brought forward proposals addressing discrete challenges under the PRA, with limited success. This effort takes a broader, collaborative approach, seeking consensus recommendations that could

improve the administration of the law, including records management, training and technical assistance, agency resources, dispute resolution, and the handling of public records requests. WPPA is hopeful that continued outreach can help identify areas of consensus, build support for the proposal, and position the task force for consideration in the 2027 Legislative Session.

Supply Chain Competitiveness:

A longstanding cornerstone of WPPA's legislative platform, the Supply Chain Competitiveness Infrastructure Program (SCCIP) seeks to provide capital funding, focused on ports and port adjacent projects, that supports the efficient movement of goods throughout the supply chain. During the 2026 session, Senate Bill 5649, sponsored by Senator Liias, successfully passed off the Senate floor. The bill received a hearing in the House Transportation Committee but, unfortunately, did not advance out of the committee.

Throughout the interim, WPPA has worked with its membership to better understand the growing need for infrastructure funding that does not neatly fit into existing state programs or funding sources. We have connected with interested legislators to show where the SCCIP would have tangible impacts in their communities, be it through direct port investment or improvements to the surrounding supply chain. But, as with any newly proposed program, there are budgetary considerations. Some Transportation Budget writers have concerns with standing up a brand-new program in today's budget climate without a dedicated revenue source. The conversation surrounding funding sources continues and will be an integral component of the policy debate through the remainder of interim and into the next session.

We do believe this will be a priority item for Senator Liias during the 2027 session. With continued support in the Senate, and a growing number of proponents in the House, WPPA is optimistic about the proposal leading into the upcoming session.

Commissioner Vacancies and Appointment Process:

In 2023, the Legislature passed SSB 5437 adding new requirements to the way special purpose districts fill vacancies on their governing boards. For port districts, this has meant that recent commissioner departures have been filled through a process that sees the remaining board members name a possible successor before giving the public two weeks to identify additional candidates for the post. Our members have openly wondered whether this actually serves the aims of transparency and public process that brought about SSB 5437 in the first place. The primary concern being that, by identifying one possible successor, it gives the public the impression that the decision has already been made. Given consensus member feedback, WPPA reached out to the bill author, Senator Drew MacEwen, who has expressed openness to clarifying this one key element: that the board not name a candidate before opening it up to that two weeks of public input. With one modest amendment, a board could simply give the public the ability to identify candidates without having to name one themselves. They could still name one, or name two or three even, but they would not be required to under state law. This legislative aim will be more easily achieved if we gain support from other local government trade associations, so we will be actively working with them to ensure a coalition of supporters for this proposal.

Knowing the Waters

In this month's edition of Knowing the Waters, Tim Schermetzler of CSD Attorneys at Law discusses the ins and outs of port litigation. He provides helpful tips on how ports can best prepare for litigation, an overview of the typical litigation process, and alternative dispute resolution options.

While ports (and their attorneys) would rather avoid the risk of litigation entirely, it is an inevitable reality of the work. And although understanding the litigation process can be confusing for anyone who doesn't regularly play in the legal arena, understanding it is crucial for port staff and commissions.

Read the newest version of Knowing the Waters [here](#).

Grants and Resources for Ports

Please Take Our Survey: 2026 Ports Survey – respond by September 30, 2026

As we mentioned in past Manifests, WPPA is working with Jim Darling of Leeward Strategies and Maul Foster & Alongi to update our [Port Governance and Management Guide](#). This work will include research and consultation with reviewers from our membership, and an important piece is taking place this month with our [2026 Ports Survey](#). Please take fifteen minutes before the end of September to provide your responses and help us get a more complete picture of how ports are operating and administering their responsibilities in their communities. We thank you in advance!

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program – Applications Accepted on a Rolling Basis, Current Round Closing September 30

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program provides **technical and financial assistance for projects that protect and restore fish and wildlife habitats in priority coastal ecosystems**. Washington port districts may be eligible as special district governments, making the program potentially relevant for shoreline, estuary, wetland, fish habitat, and related coastal restoration projects.

Awards may range from \$1 to \$500,000, and no matching funds are required. Interested applicants must contact their local Coastal Program office before developing or submitting an application because projects are developed collaboratively with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff. **Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with the current federal opportunity listing closing September 30, 2026.**

Washington Department of Ecology Diesel Reduction and Volkswagen Enforcement Action Grants – Applications Due December 10, 2026

The Washington Department of Ecology is accepting applications for approximately \$18.5 million in funding through its [Diesel Reduction and Volkswagen Enforcement Action Grant Program](#). The program supports projects that reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions by replacing or repowering older diesel-powered equipment with zero-emission alternatives.

For ports, eligible projects may include the replacement of cargo-handling equipment, yard trucks/terminal tractors, forklifts, and other diesel-powered equipment, as well as the installation of associated charging infrastructure. Ports with fleet modernization, terminal electrification, or emissions-reduction goals may find this program particularly valuable.

- Eligible projects: Replacement or repowering of eligible diesel equipment with zero-emission alternatives and installation of supporting charging infrastructure
- **Applications are due: December 10, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time**

Additional information, eligibility requirements, **application materials** and [funding guidelines](#) are available through the [Washington Department of Ecology](#).

Washington Recreation and Conservation Grant Opportunities: Applications due November 3

Boating Facilities Program (RCO)

[Washington Recreation and Conservation Office](#) offers the [Boating Facilities Program](#) funds, which supports eligible entities to **acquire, develop, and renovate facilities for motorized boats and other watercraft**. This can apply to boat ramps, guest moorage, support facilities, and more. The information manual for the 2026 round of grants will be published in August, and the application webinar is on August 4. These grants

come around every second year on the even years (2022, 2024, 2026, 2028...), so don't wait until 2028 if you have a boat facilities project to start now.

- **Applications are due on November 3, 2026.**
- A [comprehensive recreation or conservation plan is required for application](#) and must be submitted by September 1, 2026.
- The grant program has a 25% match requirement.

Firearms and Archer Range Recreation Program (RCO)

Washington RCO is offering grants for the **acquisition, development, and renovation of firearm ranges and archery training facilities** on the same timeline as the Boating Facilities Program. The [Firearms and Archer Range Recreation Program](#) has a 50% match requirement and a grant limit of \$150,000, with a total available funding of \$600,000.

USDA Grants and Loans - *Applications Accepted on Rolling Basis*

USDA Community Facilities Program

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers an ongoing [Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program](#) for public bodies (including ports), community-based non-profit corporations, or Federally Recognized Tribes to **develop essential community facilities in rural areas** (cities, villages, townships and towns including Federally Recognized Tribal Lands with no more than 20,000 residents according to the latest [U.S. Census Data](#)). Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis from October 1-September 30.

The program **prioritizes small communities with a population of 5,500 or less** and low-income communities having a median household income below 80% of the state non-metropolitan median household income.

USDA Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program

USDA offers an ongoing [Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program](#) to provide **funding for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal, and storm water drainage** to households and businesses in eligible rural areas (rural areas and towns with populations of 10,000 or less, Tribal lands in rural areas, and Colonias).

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis from October 1-September 30.

USDA Strategic Economic and Community Development (SECD) funding to support implementation of strategic community investment plans

The [SECD program](#) is a **funding program to support multi-jurisdictional and multi-sectoral strategic community investment plans**. Created by local stakeholders, these plans help build rural prosperity by amplifying a community's unique strengths. For more information, reach out to rd.secd@usda.gov.

To be eligible for SECD, a project must:

- Be eligible for the covered program (listed below).
- Be carried out in a rural area.
- Support a multi-jurisdictional and multi-sectoral strategic community investment plan.

Covered Rural Development Programs

Priority may be given to applications submitted through the following programs:

- [Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program](#) (application open)
- [Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program](#) (application open)
- [Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program](#) (application open)
- [Water and Waste Disposal Loan Guarantees](#) (application open)
- [Rural Business Development Grants](#) (applications currently closed)
- [Community Connect Grants](#) (applications currently closed)

EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessments – Applications Accepted on Rolling Basis

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has once again offered funding to support communities, through the [Targeted Brownfields Assessments \(TBA\) in Region 10](#) (Alaska, Oregon, Idaho, and Washington), with **free environmental assessments, cleanup planning, and visioning services for brownfield properties** with redevelopment potential. Applications are currently open and accepted on a rolling basis.

Visit the [website](#) or view the [factsheet](#) for more information about the program, and reach out to the EPA Region 10 TBA Coordinator, Molly Vaughan (vaughan.molly@epa.gov) with questions or with a completed [application form](#).

Washington Zero-Emission Incentive Program – Funding Available Now

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) [Washington Zero-Emission Incentive Program \(WAZIP\)](#) is offering up to \$112 million in vouchers to help businesses purchase zero-emission medium and heavy-duty (MHD) commercial vehicles and equipment. **Technical assistance is available [here](#)** on the WAZIP webpage.

MRSC Trainings for Local Government: Virtual and In-Person

Upcoming Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington (**MRSC**) **webinars are open for registration**, covering a variety of topics. Check out [their website](#) for a list of all currently planned trainings; additional information will be added as it becomes available.

Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) Diesel Program – Grants Available

If your organization's diesel emissions reduction project prioritizes old, large engines, engines with daily usage, and/or engines that operate within areas or close to businesses or communities with high diesel pollution, [send your project information to PSCAA](#) for a chance to receive a 25-60% reimbursement for diesel equipment replacement.

Clean Buildings Performance Standards: Resources and Grants Available

The [Tier 1 Early Adopter Incentive Program](#) will provide up to \$16 million in incentives for approved applicants. Tier 1 applies to non-residential, hotel, motel, and dormitory buildings greater than 50,000 square feet. Demonstrated early compliance with the Clean Buildings Performance Standard can earn building owners a one-time base incentive payment of \$2/square foot, up to \$75 million. This incentive is to cover up to half the cost of energy-saving measures identified in an energy audit. A [Tier 1 incentives estimator](#) is now available to assist building owners in planning their Clean Buildings Performance Standard compliance path.

The [Tier 2 Early Adopter Incentive Program](#) will provide a base incentive of \$0.30/square foot to owners of buildings between 20,000-50,001 square feet who benchmark their building's energy use, identify an energy use intensity target, and develop and implement an energy management plan and operations and

maintenance program. Additional incentives are available for multifamily building owners who are willing to sign an [anti-displacement agreement](#).

Commerce Clean Energy Tax Credit Assistance Program

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 \(CETCAP\)](#).

Federal clean energy tax credits are expiring soon – act soon if you have a project for which you are seeking federal clean energy tax credits. Expiration dates vary by project/technology type.

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.

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



Campbell's Resort on Lake Chelan, courtesy of the Resort

Small Ports: Oct. 22-23, Campbell's Resort, Chelan

[Registration is open](#) for the WPPA Small Ports Seminar, returning to the always-popular Campbell's Resort in beautiful Lake Chelan. This year's [agenda](#) features timely topics including Website Best Practices & ADA Compliance, Port Preparedness & Emergency Response, and the latest updates from the Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB). In addition to informative sessions, attendees will have plenty of opportunities to connect with peers, exchange ideas, and share experiences with colleagues from ports across the state. [Sponsorship opportunities](#) are also still available. If you're interested in learning more, Mandy would be happy to provide additional information. We look forward to seeing you in Lake Chelan!

Save The Dates for WPPA's Winter 2026 and Spring 2027 Event Calendar

- **Winter Meeting: December 9-11**, Hilton Vancouver, Vancouver, WA
(formerly known as the Annual Meeting)
- **2027 Port Day on the Hill: February 3** (Reception on February 2), Capitol Building, Olympia
- **2027 Spring Meeting: May 19-21**, Historic Davenport Hotel, Spokane
- **2027 Finance & Administration Seminar: June 23-25**, Courtyard by Marriott Richland, Richland

As Beanie Sees It

Notes from the Executive Director and his neighbor's dog



Beanie hard at work, giving Arthur some much needed R&R.

This week, I am dogsitting for the *only* dog in the world better than Arthur: my neighbors' dog Beanie, a pit bull mix who can come to the office without requiring a warning poster on my door about the possibility of being bit upon entering. She mostly lounges on my couch, saunters into Mandy's office for the treats, and if Kevin is in Carly's office she even leaves him alone!

Beanie was rescued from Mexico, so I am going to use her presence in my office as a clumsy way of talking about an important issue: current status of our trade-based economy, including our relationship with key partners like Canada and Mexico! Given all that has happened to our trade economy over the past few years—and not just under Trump 2.0, but going back to the Biden Administration and what appears to be a fundamental shift in our trade paradigm—I was

modestly encouraged to learn in late summer that there were developing discussions about a [renewed trade deal between the US and Mexico](#).

From April 2025 to March 2026, Washington exports to Mexico totaled \$3.7b. And when you include Canada, 20 percent of our exports head to those two countries. So, any disruptions in those relationships are felt acutely here—in this first six months of 2026 alone, WA companies exported more than \$4 billion in goods to our friendly neighbors to the north. And as much as we complain about Blue Jays fans at the Mariners ballpark (or the horrifying tragedy that was Game 7 of last year's ALCS...not to mention this year's entire season...) we need our partners to keep this economy moving.

The current brinksmanship with Canada is being felt in Washington—you might have seen the report on [King 5 News a week back about impacts to specific WA businesses like Issaquah Lumber](#), who relies on imports from Canada to support its core business lines. Or consider our port friends in Whatcom County, where a [May 2025 article in the Bellingham Herald](#) pointed to disturbing trends even then: with cross-border travel down by 30 percent between January and February 2025. This is not unique to Washington, the same report that was detailed in that article points to other "sub-markets" along the US-Canadian border where suffering of this sort began then and continues now.

WA ports continue our role as advocates for the trade economy, with representatives from the Ports of Everett, Seattle, and Tacoma joining the Washington Council on International Trade for their annual DC fly-in last week to speak with our WA Congressional Delegation about the urgent importance of restarting our trade deals with Canada and Mexico. Meanwhile, I traveled to Spokane—an area thick with exporters—to attend the Association of Washington Business's Policy Summit, where business leaders from around the state gather to discuss matters of pressing importance to our economy. The mood was not dissimilar to recent WPPA events or other partner organizations' convenings: tinged with worry about the state of our economy, looking at lots of hurdles and obstacles.

Trade wasn't as big a focus of the discussion as the same event last year – but “geopolitics” got plenty of mentions, and the cost of doing *anything* in Washington came up frequently. I did sit with hallway friends who agreed we need to talk *solutions*, not just challenges, and I was intrigued when the Lieutenant Governor led a discussion with three members of the Governor's recently convened Economic Development Council. I've written about that council here, and lord knows there is plenty of cynicism about what it can or *cannot* accomplish. But after the initial meeting of the group, I talked with a few committee members (including our two port representatives), and there may still be progress the group can make.

The panel's reps on the stage – Beau Perschbacher, the Governor's Economic Development policy advisor; Michael Senske, from Pearson Packaging; and Bill McSherry, senior public affairs guy from Boeing – were asked to articulate the myriad challenges their industry face. Senske talked about his company's decision to leave the state, pointing to the recently-passed Income Tax as a central reason, or a back-breaking straw. Bill talked about the *cost* of doing business, and wondered at the *quality* of the public service we were getting in return for our substantial tax bills. And Beau talked about, in spite of all of this, WA was the *fastest growing state* in the US in the first quarter of 2026.

All agreed that we could be doing better. And when asked about *one thing* they would address if they had a magic wand: Senske, taxes and the predictability of his company's tax bill; McSherry? That cost and quality argument again (he chose to have two things!); and Beau stated, something familiar to all of us, that energy is the No. 1 limiting factor on economic development in Washington.

With classic rhetorical flourish, Lt. Gov. Heck wouldn't let them leave the stage without naming the reasons they *still* have hope for Washington's economy. And those are elements I took away from the conference, along with those hints of doubt and murmurings of recession: Quality Workforce; Quality of Life; Quality of our Infrastructure (desperate for investment though it may be!); our Innovative Spirit; our Collaborative Spirit; and our Community Spirit.

Call me biased, but those are all things that I think our WA ports embody – and I told the other conference attendees as much as we filed out of the windowless ballroom.