



## Columbia River Channel Deepening Project, Fall 2005



"The fact is ships are getting bigger. Channel Deepening is critical for Columbia River ports to continue attracting today's ships."

**Hanjin Regional Manager Jeff McEwen**



"The Columbia River is the economic engine of our entire region - supporting families, jobs and communities.

A deeper channel will make that engine even stronger. It's a great investment in our future."

**Washington Senator Patty Murray**



"...the Project will not appreciably reduce the likelihood of both the survival and recovery of Endangered Species Act-listed salmonids."

**Excerpt from the National Marine Fisheries Biological Assessment for the project**

### Overview

In the late 1980's, the Columbia River's maritime industry realized larger ships calling on Columbia River ports were becoming too deep to fully load. This placed Columbia River shippers at a competitive disadvantage, so Columbia River ports began working with the Army Corps of Engineers in 1989 on a project to deepen the 600-foot-wide navigation channel from 40 to 43 feet.

Project supporters have spent the past 16 years raising community and business support for the project while the Corps studied the project's economic benefits and environmental impacts to the river system.

### 16 Years and Two Key Facts

After 16 years of research, two key facts remain indisputable:

- Channel Deepening is critical to the region's maritime industry, which is in turn critical to the region's economy.
- Channel Deepening can be accomplished in a manner that leaves the river in better health than its current state

### Current Status

- Dredging to deepen the channel began on June 25, 2005.
- The Corps deepened more than 25 percent of the channel to 43 feet in 2005 and will begin deepening work again in the summer of 2006.

### Project Highlights

**Minimal River Impact:** Only about 3.5 percent of the river will be dredged, as much of the navigation channel is naturally deeper than 43 feet.

**Environmental Benefits:** The project includes restoration of 760 acres of tidal marsh, wetlands, native riparian vegetation, shallows, and fish access to spawning streams.

**Agency Approvals:** NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service both determined the project did not jeopardize endangered species. All other necessary federal and state approvals have been granted.

**Costs:** Estimated project cost is \$150.5 million, with Oregon and Washington State providing \$27.7 million each and the federal government providing the remainder.

**Project Support:** Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana's congressional delegations support the project along with hundreds of businesses and community groups. Six Columbia River ports sponsor the project including Portland and St. Helens in Oregon, and Kalama, Longview, Vancouver and Woodland in Washington.

**Economic Benefits:** Local companies like Fred Meyer, Nike, Columbia Sportswear and more than 1,000 regional growers, producers and manufacturers all rely on Columbia River ports to remain competitive in the global marketplace. The Corps estimates \$1.66 in benefits is returned for every dollar invested in Channel Deepening.

Perhaps the most important benefit of a deeper channel is that it ensures our region's shippers can continue to depend on the Columbia River for competitive freight transportation in today's highly competitive global marketplace. Only about 3.5 percent of the river will be dredged, as much of the navigation channel is naturally deeper than 43 feet.