

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

March 22, 2017

The Honorable Doug Lamont
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil
Works)
U.S. Department of the Army
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Mr. Lamont and Director Mulvaney:

Small ports and harbors are crucial economic drivers in communities throughout Washington state. We urge you to allocate operation and maintenance funding to six small port and harbor projects in the State of Washington through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (Army Corps) Fiscal Year 2017 funding to ensure the federally authorized waterways leading to these ports and harbors are properly maintained.

Home to commercial trading and fishing operations, marinas, and recreational facilities, small ports and harbors are critical to the economic health of local communities. This is illustrated in the "Fisheries of the United States" yearbook of fishery statistics which is published annually by NOAA Fisheries. According to the 2015 yearbook, the Ports of Ilwaco and Chinook, which require regular maintenance dredging, combined for a total of 15 million pounds of commercial fish landings. Similarly, the Port of Bellingham, which is currently in need of maintenance dredging, saw \$25 million in commercial fish landings.

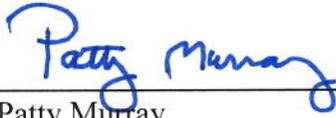
Each fiscal year we work in Congress to provide the Army Corps funding to support the operation and maintenance of small ports and harbors in Washington state and throughout the nation. In order to ensure our ports and harbors can continue to operate and serve their communities, we support providing Fiscal Year 2017 funding to the ports of Bellingham, Ilwaco, Chinook, Skagit, Anacortes, and Willapa Harbor and the Quillayute River as outlined below.

- Bellingham Bay (Port of Bellingham): The Squalicum Waterway in Bellingham Bay was last dredged in 2004 and is in need of maintenance dredging due to heavy sedimentation. Commercial vessels have grounded, cargo vessels are operating under tidal restrictions, and deep water vessels are limited due to draft constraints. The United States Coast Guard (USCG) utilizes this waterway to access the West Gate Entrance to Squalicum Harbor and the fueling station for all of their Bellingham based vessels. We support providing \$150,000 in Fiscal Year 2017 to complete environmental work to support future dredging of the Squalicum Waterway in Fiscal Year 2018.

- Columbia River at Baker Bay (Port of Ilwaco): This navigation channel requires regular, yearly dredging to keep the channel open and maintained at authorized depths. The USCG depends upon this navigation channel for access to the USCG Station Cape Disappointment and National Motor Lifeboat School. There is an urgent and compelling need to conduct emergency dredging now to address an abnormally high shoaling rate in a portion of the channel that deteriorated to unsafe conditions over the winter. As the Army Corps prepares to utilize \$1,180,000 from the Fiscal Year 2017 budget request to conduct this emergency dredging in April, additional dredging is needed this year to complete routine maintenance for this channel. We support providing a total of \$2,459,000 in Fiscal Year 2017 for maintenance dredging.
- Columbia River between Chinook and Sand Island (Port of Chinook): Work is needed in critical areas of this navigation channel as well as more regular dredging to reach authorized depths and ensure safe navigation for mariners transiting the Port of Chinook. The USCG also frequents this navigation channel and maintains channel markers. We support providing \$1,200,000 in Fiscal Year 2017 for maintenance dredging.
- Quillayute River: This navigation channel was last dredged in 2015, however, not all of the material was captured. An operating channel is critical to the USCG Station Quillayute River which is the closest station available to respond to ocean emergencies. In October 2016, the Army Corps utilized \$1,619,000 from the Fiscal Year 2017 budget request to make emergency repairs to a 300-foot damaged section of the Rialto Revetment following a severe winter storm. While these emergency repairs were necessary to prevent a breach which would have caused damage to the Quileute Tribe's reservation riverward shoreline, USGC Station Quillayute River, the marina, and the navigation channel, additional work is needed this year to support maintenance dredging of this channel. We support providing a total of \$4,199,000 in Fiscal Year 2017 for maintenance dredging, condition surveys, sediment characterization, the Rialto Revetment, and an observation camera.
- Swinomish Channel (Ports of Skagit and Anacortes): This navigation channel is in need of regular dredging to allow for an inside passage. However, the channel has been silting in faster recently, requiring more frequent dredging. As the Army Corps works on a long-term solution, we support providing a total of \$751,000 in Fiscal Year 2017 to conduct sediment characterization to support future dredging actions and for surveys to assess the structural condition of the breakwater at the south entrance.
- Willapa River and Harbor (Port of Willapa Harbor): Portions of this navigation channel were last dredged in 2009 and are in need of maintenance dredging. We support providing \$90,000 in Fiscal Year 2017 for surveys to determine the condition of the site in preparation for future dredging of this navigation channel.

Thank you for your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress



Suzan DeBene
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress