



WASHINGTON MARITIME FEDERATION

A Coordinated Voice for Maritime Progress

STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY 2020

PERMITTING ALIGNMENT AND PREDICTABILITY

The Washington Maritime Federation supports regulatory reform to streamline and speed permitting for economic development projects while preserving careful and systematic environmental review. Better alignment of the review process will create a more predictable regulatory environment and discourage political bias in the permitting system. Better adherence of comprehensive environmental review to a reasonable and predictable timeline would encourage investment in critical infrastructure and make Washington's maritime industry more competitive.

The Washington Maritime Federation (the Federation) provides the unified voice for the maritime industry; comprising diverse and interdependent sub-sectors, including cargo and logistics, ship and boat building, recreational boating, fishing and seafood processing, maritime labor and numerous suppliers and supporters of the industry. The Federation's policy and investment priorities support the vitality, growth and resilience of Washington's maritime industry. Regional, state and federal priorities are based on a full consensus decision-making process by Federation members advised by associate members and a broad group of business, labor and government stakeholders.

WHY

A disjointed permitting process across Washington State agencies and between local, state and federal agencies currently

impairs the maintenance, repair, remediation and new construction of terminals, docks, and other shoreside facilities. This puts Washington in an extremely disadvantaged position for maritime sustainability and investment despite attractive features such as our innovative maritime industry, proximity to Asia, and natural deep-water harbors.

Critical to the development and resiliency of our infrastructure is a reasonable expectation of consistency and timeliness in the regulatory and permitting process. Examples of such alignment exist in Canada and U.S. regions competing directly with Washington.

EFFECTS OF AN IMPROVED PERMITTING ALIGNMENT:

- Job creation
- Strong and fair environmental review
- Reliable investment climate
- Lower cost for infrastructure investment
- Upgrading of infrastructure
- More efficient movement of goods
- Strengthened public confidence
- Enhancement of trade opportunities



HOW

The Washington Maritime Federation supports engagement across state, local and federal agencies to develop a permitting regime that is efficient, predictable, and cost-effective.

The Federation encourages the Legislature, the Federal government and local governments to implement reforms that preserve thorough environmental review and foster critical maritime economic development through:

■ **Concurrent review** - Allowing state agencies to concurrently review permit applications would foster collaboration and information sharing between a lead agency, secondary agencies, and a permit applicant. This cooperative approach will eliminate duplicate, redundant, expensive and out of sequence processes and drive more efficient permit timing. Permit terms and conditions that are achievable (financially and temporally) will lead to more efficient project development.

■ **Scope** - The scoping of potential environmental analysis should be limited to the direct impacts of the proposed project within the State, including reasonable and foreseeable activity levels. The scope of review for projects should not result in hypothetical analysis or results that are not supported by available science.

■ **Duration** - Environmental project review should be completed within a reasonable time and avoid politically-motivated haste or delay. While project review can vary extensively based on the complexity of projects, it is reasonable to expect timeliness and consistency in the permitting process. Indefinite timelines and excessive review periods are already frustrating vital economic development in Washington. British Columbia, (a strong maritime competitor for infrastructure investment), has enacted a 'shot clock' process that sets specific time limits for environmental review. The Federation would like to see the state enact something similar, while retaining necessary environmental protections. This system would encourage investment and level the playing field with our most immediate port competitors.

Port of Seattle's Terminal-5, in the North Harbor of the Northwest Seaport, awaits redevelopment to increase port competitiveness and living-wage job creation. The terminal is needed to accommodate larger ships and increase efficiency as it competes with other west coast ports. Permitting for the facility should be efficient and timely.

PHOTO: PORT OF SEATTLE

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