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Anacortes earns WPPA Port of the Year

TACOMA - The Port of Anacortes was named the Washington Public Ports Association's Port of the Year for 2008. WPPA President Bill Clark, commissioner for the Port of Pasco, made the announcement during the Association's annual meeting in Tacoma on November 21, 2008.

Among the accomplishments which garnered the Port of Anacortes the award, is the Port's work with the Washington State Department of Ecology to clean up contamination at Port-owned properties. In conjunction with Governor Gregoire's Puget Sound Initiative, the Port created a comprehensive framework called Focus Fidalgo to coordinate five different clean-up efforts on Port property. The Port is pursuing an integrated program to remove toxins from nearshore, upland and marine environments, restore critical aquatic habitat, create new public facilities and shoreline access areas, and generate new family wage jobs.

The first of the clean-up projects was located at the Port's Cap Sante Boat Haven west basin area. Completed in July of this year, the \$5.3 million remediation project removed 13,000 tons of contaminated soil from historical fuel leaks. The Port's substantial improvements at the Boat Haven have led to new revenue streams being generated in Anacortes, as well as the facility's receipt of the Clean Marina Washington award.

The Port has partnered with tenant Dakota Creek Industries to launch Project Pier 1, a long-anticipated redevelopment of their historic marine terminal facility and the adjacent shipyard property. Project Pier 1 and associated clean-up will contribute not only to Anacortes' quality of life, but allow Dakota Creek to expand its operations and greatly increase its workforce bringing jobs and revenue to the Anacortes community.

“The Port of Anacortes has shown remarkable leadership and commitment to the community in its partnership efforts under Focus Fidalgo,” said Clark. “Their efforts will result in increased economic development as well as enhanced recreational facilities for the citizens of Anacortes.”

“We are pleased to receive this award from the WPPA which highlights some of our many achievements for 2008,” said Port Commission President Bill Short. “We appreciate the Executive Committee’s acknowledgement of our accomplishments among a field of strong and well deserving ports. I would especially like to acknowledge the quality and spirit of our staff. Their positive, ‘can do’ attitudes, farsightedness in planning, and knowledge of all aspects of port operations has been a great asset.”

Begun in 1987, the Port of the Year Award recognizes a WPPA member that has shown leadership and innovation in economic development efforts. The Association’s Executive Committee chooses the winning port from a pool of nominees.

The Washington Public Ports Association (WPPA) represents the state’s 75 port districts and provides a network through which ports share information and address issues on trade, transportation, economic development, and the environment. Washington’s port districts offer a wide range of services, including marine terminals, barge facilities, industrial development, marinas, airports, railroads, and tourism promotion.