



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 20, 2019

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Matt Morrison

Executive Director

[Matt.Morrison@pnwer.org](mailto:Matt.Morrison@pnwer.org)

Cell: (206) 399-4023

Office: (206) 443-7723

**Bi-national Intermodal Shipping Infrastructure Key to Maritime Industry Highlighted at Regional Economic Forum**

SEATTLE - Legislators, policymakers, and key business leaders from across the Pacific Northwest and Western Canada took part in a maritime tour highlighting Seattle's working waterfront around Elliot Bay. The working waterfront tour explored the multisector dynamics of the maritime industry and the tremendous impact of maritime on the region's economy, as part of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region's (PNWER) Economic Leadership Forum held at the Grand Hyatt in Seattle from Nov. 17-19.

The PNWER Economic Leadership Forum brought together over 175 attendees, representing state and provincial leadership from five US states and five Canadian provinces and territories. The working waterfront tour, a major highlight of the Forum, featured over a dozen speakers who spoke to legislators on such topics as the changing global trade patterns, intermodal transportation linkages, the impact of tariffs on trade, and how the region is leading the charge in maritime innovation.

Seattle's maritime sector has ties and linkages to the entire Pacific Northwest region and beyond. Several speakers on the tour highlighted the many interconnected industries of Seattle's vibrant waterfront, emphasizing the important economic benefit that the waterfront provides to the regional economy, including fishing, manufacturing, tourism and shipping. For example, a recent report from the Seattle Metro Chamber found that business with Alaska accounts for 113,000 jobs in the Puget Sound region and generates \$6.2 billion in wages. The Seattle waterfront serves as a gateway to the world for the rest of the region, allowing commodities from the inland Pacific Northwest to access key markets in Asia and beyond.

"Washington Representative Gael Tarleton who helped organize the tour did a fantastic job of showing us the dynamics of global trade during this working tour of Elliott Bay with presentations by an impressive lineup of waterfront leaders.", said PNWER President Senator Mike Cuffe of Montana.

The maritime tour showcased key locations along Seattle's waterfront including the important tourism and transportation terminals for the cruise ships, Victoria Clipper, and Washington State ferries, and USCG Sector Headquarters. The tour also demonstrated the industrial and commercial areas of the Port of Seattle, SSA Marine, Vigor Industrial, fishing terminals.

Speakers during the waterfront tour included PNWER Vice President WA Rep. Gael Tarleton; Dave Gudgel, CEO of Clipper Vacations; Kurt Beckett, Deputy CEO of the Northwest Seaport Alliance; Michael McLaughlin, Director of Cruise Business for the Port of Seattle; Captain

Michael Moore, Vice President of the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association; Linda Styrk, Executive Director of the Puget Sound Pilots Association; Rear Admiral Jack Vogt of the US Coast Guard, Jill Mackie, Senior VP of Vigor Industrial; Joe Ritzman, Vice President-Business Development of SSA Marine, Commander Nate Menefee of the US Coast Guard, Amy Scarton, Director of Washington State Ferries, and others.

Over the course of the three-day Economic Leadership Forum, legislators and business leaders looked at best practices and processes for improving trade, workforce, and economic growth across the region.

###

### **ABOUT PNWER**

The Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) is a public/private non-profit organization created by statute in 1991. Member jurisdictions include Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana and Washington, and the Canadian provinces and territories of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories and Yukon. PNWER's mission is to increase the economic well-being and quality of life for all citizens of the region; identify and promote "models of success; and serve as a conduit to exchange information.