



Contact: Michelle Hennings (509) 659-0610

Wheat Growers encouraged by House passage of water resources bill

Efforts to protect lower Snake River Dams critical to wheat industry

The Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG) is encouraged by the U.S. House of Representatives' bipartisan passage of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2022 (H.R. 7776), which continues robust investments in U.S. waterways infrastructure that allow wheat growers to safely and efficiently move our products to consumers around the globe, particularly during times of global instability and food insecurity.

WAWG has been actively engaged with key allies in our nation's capital to ensure no extreme measures are put in place through WRDA reauthorization that could lead to breaching of the lower Snake River dams in Eastern Washington. The Columbia-Snake River System is vital for our growers, with over 60 percent of Washington wheat and 10 percent of all U.S. wheat flowing down the river to West Coast ports for export.

The House bill would establish a Columbia River Basin Task Force to develop a restoration plan for the Columbia River Basin, based on the results of an assessment that would be conducted by the U.S. Secretary of the Army. Importantly, the bill includes a critical provision to protect the integrity of the lower Snake River dams by preventing the modification, deauthorization, or removal any of the dams as part of the Columbia River Basin Task Force process.

"We commend the actions of Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Congressman Dan Newhouse in securing language that would ensure any federal restoration efforts related to the Columbia River Basin take into account the vital role the river system plays, both for wheat growers and our state's economy at large, by providing navigation, irrigation, hydroelectric power, and recreation benefits, among others, to people across Washington" said WAWG Executive Director Michelle Hennings. "We look forward to working with our congressional allies across the Pacific Northwest as WRDA progresses, to defend the congressionally authorized purposes of the four lower Snake River dams now and in the future."

WRDA legislation provides authority for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to implement water resources development projects. Congress has developed and passed a WRDA bill on a bipartisan and biennial basis since 2014. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved WRDA 2022 on May 18, and the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved its version of the bill on May 4.

###

About WAWG: Education and outreach are the heart of Washington Association of Wheat Growers activity, all of which is aimed at helping Washington wheat families. Since 1954, WAWG has been dedicated to the enrichment of the Washington wheat industry as a nonprofit trade association, which depends on volunteers, membership dues and donations to carry out activities as representatives on the state and national levels. WAWG monitors state, transportation, research and natural resources policy and partners with the National Association of Wheat Growers to monitor national farm policy. Visit wawg.org for more information.