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Lower Snake River System Educational Tour Brings U.S. Congressional Staffers to Lewiston

(Ritzville, Wash., August 15, 2024) The Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG), in partnership with the Washington State Potato Commission, The McGregor Company and Northwest RiverPartners, is hosting a tour for more than a dozen U.S. congressional staffers from Washington, D.C., as well as the region's district offices, on Tuesday, August 20th.

The objective of the tour is to have the federal staffers see for themselves the dams on the lower Snake River, understand how they fit into the landscape, and how vital they are to the region's economy. Additional guests from around the region and country that rely on barge transportation of their commodities, as well as a representative from the Upper Mississippi Waterways Association, will also be joining the tour.

"Seeing the dams on the lower Snake River, walking through a powerhouse, and visiting a state-of-the-art fish passage facility is far different than reading about it in a report. Staffers will be able to ask questions and hear directly from the people who make their living because of the opportunities the dams provide," said WAWG Executive Director Michelle Hennings. "Besides the clean energy the dams produce, many farmers rely on barge transportation to ship goods to market. Not only is the Columbia-Snake River System critical for Washington state, but farmers across the country rely on its transportation benefits as well."

In fact, 10% of the wheat that is exported from the U.S. passes through the four locks and dams along the lower Snake River.

The tour includes a boat ride through Lower Granite Dam lock and a tour of the facility, a tour of the Port of Lewiston, and a panel of Marine Highway 84 users sharing their perspective on the importance of the dams for the region as well as the rest of the country.

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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.