



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON STATE PORT OF THE YEAR

Washington Public Ports Association (WPPA) President Jack Thompson announced Port of Benton as Port of the Year at the annual meeting in Bellevue, Washington. Each year, WPPA honors a member port for leadership and innovation in economic development efforts. The Association's Executive Committee chooses the winning port from a pool of nominees.

The Port of Benton was honored for their economic development work in the region and for projects like Crow Butte Park near Paterson. Other factors included a biomass gasification project in Whitstran, which turns agricultural waste into heat and/or energy. The Port has a patent pending on the proprietary pelletizing process. The Tri-Cities Research District & Innovation Zone is another project the Port of Benton was instrumental in completing in 2007. The new zone will act as a springboard for future development in the north Richland area. One of the Port's premier properties is Prosser Vintner's Village purchased in 2001. It is currently home to Yellow Rose Nursery and nine wineries. An additional three wineries will be added to this site within the next year.

Port of Benton Commission President Robert D. Larson said, "I am very proud of the Port of Benton staff for their hard work in obtaining this award. Thank you to our partners at Benton County and the cities of Prosser, Benton City and Richland, and to the community for supporting our projects through the years."

The Port of Benton was founded in 1958 and is governed by three elected commissioners – Robert D. Larson, Jane F. Hagarty and Harold B. Lindberg.

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 the promotion of tourism.

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