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## **Port of Benton Celebrates 65 Years of Service on Nov. 4**

Port District Companies Employ Thousands of Tri-Citians, Generate Millions in Economic Impact

**RICHLAND, Wash.** – On Nov. 4, Port of Benton marks its 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of delivering economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for the Tri-Cities community.

The Port was established on Nov. 4, 1958, following the transfer of ownership of Richland from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to the citizens. Previously, Richland was the property of the federal government as part of a World War II secret mission called the Manhattan Project.

The original designated Port of Benton district was 290 acres called Camp Hanford – the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers transferred the land to the Port in 1959 (now known as the Technology and Business Campus in Richland).

Today, the port's district encompasses 11 property sites totaling 2,756 acres covering two-thirds of Benton County including north Richland, Benton City and Prosser. Companies in port facilities and properties employ over 3,000 people and generate more than \$600 million in revenue each year, which represents 5% of Benton County's economy.

Since its formation, Port of Benton has fostered economic development, providing development sites and facilities that support the growth of start-up businesses to global corporations, and bring high-quality jobs to the port's district and the surrounding region.

Throughout its 65-year history, the port has acquired land, buildings, general aviation airports in Prosser and Richland, a Columbia River barge complex and a rail network. It has also developed and continually improved properties to attract value-added agriculture, industrial, aviation, advanced manufacturing, clean energy and other industries to the port district.

### **Select History Highlights**

- In 1965 the U.S. Coast Guard declared Port of Benton a “nuclear port,” a designation held by only five ports nationwide, authorizing the port to handle radioactive materials
- Port of Benton became the first U.S. port to acquire surplus government property in 1996 when the U.S. Department of Energy transferred 71.5 acres from Hanford's 3000 Area to the port under the 1994 Defense Authorization Act to diversify the local economy
- The Port received 760 acres of former Hanford Site land in 1998 and an additional 764 acres from the Tri-City Development Council in 2015 as part of 1,641 acres to attract private-sector investment and is collaborating with community partners to establish the Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park and an inland port
- The port led the effort to work with the U.S. Navy beginning in 2007 to save the decommissioned USS Triton submarine sail and conning tower as a public landmark to honor servicemembers and share the story of Triton's historic 1960 submerged circumnavigation around the world during the Cold War



Read more about Port of Benton's history at [portofbenton.com/history](https://portofbenton.com/history).

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