



**CONTACTS: Mike Luken, Port of West Sacramento Manager
916-371-8000
Gene Endicott, Endicott Communications
916-719-7214**

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PORT OF WEST SACRAMENTO CHANNEL-DEEPENING FUNDING IN PRESIDENT'S 2010 BUDGET

West Sacramento, Calif., May 26, 2009 – The Port of West Sacramento has learned that President Obama has included \$10 million in his proposed 2010 Civil Works budget for re-launching its ship-channel deepening project.

Inclusion in the President's budget proposal is a key step in securing the federal funding needed to move the \$80 million channel-deepening project forward.

By deepening the 43-mile ship channel connecting the Port and San Francisco Bay from 30 feet to 35 feet along its entire length, more than 75 percent of fully loaded ocean-going freight ships will be able to directly serve the Sacramento region, compared to less than 40 percent currently.

The project is a partnership between federal, state and local governments. U.S. Representatives Mike Thompson, Ellen Tauscher and Dan Lungren, who represent the Port in Congress, along with U.S. Senators Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, championed the deepening project to bring it back online. The project also has received strong support from members of the Sacramento region state legislative delegation, including State Senators Lois Wolk, Darrell Steinberg and Dave Cox, and Assemblymembers Mariko Yamada, Dave Jones, Roger Niello and Ted Gaines.

"This project is a great partnership between the Port, the federal government and the state, which is investing \$10 million through the Trade Corridor Improvement Fund created with voter approval of Proposition 1B in 2006," said Senator Wolk, who represents the Port and West Sacramento.

“We’re anxious to get the channel-deepening project underway and pleased to know we have the President’s support at this critical juncture,” said Mike McGowan, chairman of the Sacramento-Yolo Port Commission. “We need to get the project launched soon to help the Port remain viable as a key Northern California goods movement facility.”

“This project is an excellent example of the federal government’s priority on restoring the nation’s infrastructure. It will help to generate tremendous private investment in Northern California and create the family wage jobs that are greatly needed to restore our nation’s economy,” said Christopher Cabaldon, Mayor of the City of West Sacramento and member of the Sacramento-Yolo Port Commission.

In addition to federal and state funding, the Port is investing up to \$10 million in the project. Additional federal funding for the next phases of the deepening project will be requested through future budget processes.

The channel-deepening project, which was initially started in 1989 but later stopped due to since-resolved utility issues, is scheduled to begin in 2010 with completion targeted for 2013. The federal Civil Works funding would support the first phase of construction.

The channel-deepening project is led by the US Army Corps of Engineers with the Port of West Sacramento serving as local sponsor. The deepening project is a top regional transportation priority of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce, West Sacramento Chamber of Commerce, Stevedoring Services of America (SSA), California rice industry, the Port’s beneficial cargo owners and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). All of these organizations played a pivotal role in moving the channel-deepening project into its first phase of construction.

The project will reduce regional freeway congestion and air emissions; enhance cargo exports, such as rice; facilitate the import of cement, steel, large equipment, biofuels, bulk fertilizer that supports Northern California and Central California agriculture, and bulk construction materials for private and public projects; and create habitat areas in the Sacramento River Delta.

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