

## **Press Release**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **Regional Economic Development Strategies Support Vibrant Northwest Washington Marine Industry**

(Mount Vernon, WA), –The “Northwest Washington Marine Industry Cluster Study”, released Aug 7, supports the significance and strength of the marine trades to Washington State.

This collaborative effort by fourteen entities and over 50 private sector stakeholders, bridging Whatcom, Skagit, Island and San Juan counties, received \$72,000 funding from the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development through a competitive grant process initiated by the Washington State Legislature and Governor Gregoire’s “Next Washington” economic development blueprint.

#### **Highlights:**

The study finds that the Northwest marine industry generates significant economic benefits to the region and the state: The analysis in this report and directory describes the total economic activity of the Northwest Marine Cluster’s ship building, boat building, boat dealer, and related marine industries on the statewide economy. Information compiled by Berk & Associates, a Seattle-based public policy consulting firm, shows for every one job created in boat and ship building, an additional 1.2 jobs are created through indirect and induced effects statewide. The total output for this regional cluster is \$362 million and that this level of output provides over 4,000 jobs with wages totaling nearly \$150 million.

Businesses in this industry include many small and family-owned firms that emerge from their communities. The businesses in this regional industry are known worldwide for the quality of their products and services.

#### **Recommended actions:**

Some key strategic action items include the following:

- Develop an industry brand and strategic marketing program
- Provide group safety and technical training through business-friendly scheduling and delivery

- Convene and facilitate best practices information sharing forums on environmental health and safety practices
- Develop and promote new facility space for marine businesses and expand moorage slips to house larger boats

### **Contacts:**

To read the report and directory, visit Northwest Center of Excellence for Marine Manufacturing & Technology: [www.marinecenterofexcellence.com](http://www.marinecenterofexcellence.com). For more information, contact any one of the participating team members:

- Western Washington University Center for Economic and Business Research (CEBR) – Hart Hodges, (360) 650-3909, [www.cbe.wvu.edu](http://www.cbe.wvu.edu)
- Northwest Workforce Development Council (NWDC) – Alex Kosmides, (360) 676-3207, [www.nwboard.org](http://www.nwboard.org)
- Skagit Valley College, and, the Northwest Center of Excellence for Marine Manufacturing & Technology (CoE) at Skagit Valley College – Ann Avary, (360) 697-5356, [www.marinecenterofexcellence.com](http://www.marinecenterofexcellence.com)
- Bellingham Technical College (BTC) – Satpal Sidhu, (360) 752-8317, [www.btc.ctc.edu](http://www.btc.ctc.edu)
- Economic Development Associations of Skagit County (EDASC) – Don Wick, (360) 336-6114, [www.skagit.org](http://www.skagit.org)
- Bellingham Whatcom Economic Development Association (BWEDC) – Nancy Jordan, (360) 676-4255, [www.bwedc.org](http://www.bwedc.org)
- Island County Economic Development Council (ICEDC) – Sharon Hart (360) 678-6889, [www.islandweb.org/edc](http://www.islandweb.org/edc)
- San Juan County Economic Development Council (SJCEDC) – Bill Watson, (360) 378-2906, [www.islandway.org](http://www.islandway.org)
- Port of Bellingham – Dodd Snodgrass, (360) 676-2500. [www.portofbellingham.com](http://www.portofbellingham.com)
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- Port of South Whidbey – Ed Field, (360) 331-5494, [www.portofsouthwhidbey.com](http://www.portofsouthwhidbey.com)
- Washington State Department of Revenue Labor Market & Economic Analysis (LMEA) – Tim Norris (360) 438-3163, [www.wa.gov/esd/lmea](http://www.wa.gov/esd/lmea)
- Berk & Associates – Bonnie Berk, (206) 324-8760, [www.berkandassociates.com](http://www.berkandassociates.com)