



New research study highlights breadth and impact of Pacific Northwest trade region
Leveraging Washington, Oregon advantages can increase global reach and growth potential

November 17, 2021. Seattle, WA, Portland OR – By leveraging economic and geographic advantages, increasing synergies across borders and jointly pursuing smart investments and policies, Washington state and Oregon can increase the prominence of the Pacific Northwest as an export powerhouse according to a [new report](#) released today. The research study, published by the Washington Council on International Trade (WCIT) further outlines specific ways the two states can work together to maximize the economic benefit of trade for the region.

The report – [The Pacific Northwest Global Trade Hub](#) – provides details on the trade impacts of Washington state and Oregon, the factors that are driving international commerce and the actions both states can take to increase opportunities for farmers, businesses and workers in communities throughout the region. Among the many advantages the region enjoys, the report calls out the robust agriculture and manufacturing sectors, leading technology, an extensive network of ports and proximity to the Asian market.

“Trade supports hundreds of thousands of jobs in both states and bolsters the Pacific Northwest’s position as a global trade hub,” said WCIT President Lori Otto Punke. “The clear benefits international engagement has on both states suggests that more could be done to partner on emerging trade issues.”

The study highlights the importance of trade on the regional economy noting that in 2018, Washington and Oregon together generated over \$135 billion and supported some 1.5 million jobs in the region. The effectiveness and reach of the region’s system of ports was called out as well. When combined, Columbia River ports in both states and the Northwest Seaport Alliance represent the second largest agricultural export port system in the nation, comprising almost 20% of total U.S. exports. These factors, the study contends, pay higher wages to the region’s working families. In particular, workers with jobs tied to export-supported manufacturing industries in both states receive, on average, a trade earnings premium in excess of 10%.

“Trade policy impacts not only our region’s core businesses, but also the success of our customers, and the vitality of our local communities,” said Kristen Leonard, Chair of Oregon’s Pacific Northwest International Trade Association (PNITA).

The study further shares specific policy recommendations intended to spur mutually beneficial development that aligns the region’s international commercial interests with the needs and opportunities of the global economy. These measures include removing tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade, pursuing

effective implementation of existing trade agreements, forging new trade pacts with mature and emerging markets, investing in resilient infrastructure to improve local trade corridors, and addressing impediments to digital trade.

“Recognizing this shared potential, Washington and Oregon can address challenges and opportunities to their respective economies through greater cooperation on important trade issues,” said Otto Punke. “Fostering resilient trade partnerships and investing in joint infrastructure projects can help counter the drags on the economy created by recent trade disputes and the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“With greater cooperation on priority trade areas and issues of importance, both states can work together to address challenges and opportunities to their respective economies in a way that can serve as a catalyst for regional and national growth,” said Leonard.

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