



August 11, 2009

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

August 11, 2009

For Information Contact:

Pete Stoltz 206-768-7636

Joel VanEtta 206-292-3000

Glacier Northwest offers to work with Goldmark to answer Maury Island questions
Collaboration would resolve questions while construction proceeds

SEATTLE – Glacier Northwest has committed to collaborate with Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark and his staff in response to a letter Goldmark sent the company last month regarding the Maury Island mine project.

“We have informed Commissioner Goldmark by letter of our continued commitment to protect the nearshore environment and that our activities have been shown in repeated studies to pose no threat to Puget Sound,” said Mark Leatham, vice president and general manager of Glacier Northwest. “We committed to collaborate with the commissioner and his staff to promote the objectives of the Maury Island Aquatic Reserve plan, to address the questions posed in his letter and to work with DNR on additional environmental studies.

“We also informed him that we intend to complete the new dock while this collaboration is occurring,” Leatham said. “We have a valid lease and all the local, state and federal permits needed to complete construction. DNR issued its lease. We will live up to our commitments under this contract and we expect DNR to live up to the contract as well. DNR cannot rewrite the contract or impose new obligations on our company that are not provided for in the lease.”

(--MORE--)

- This project has been under review for nearly 11 years;
- Prior to issuance of the lease in December 2008, the potential impacts to eelgrass patches and every other stated environmental concern had been reviewed by no fewer than *seven* local, state, and federal agencies;
- Each of these agencies concluded that Glacier's project would not harm the nearshore environment, including the eelgrass;
- The Shorelines Hearings Board, the Pollution Control Hearings Board, the Office of Administrative Hearings, and the Washington Court of Appeals all *unanimously* rejected challenges to these agency conclusions;
- Ever since the existing barge-loading dock was built in 1968, DNR has recognized that the dock is a water-dependent use, and by law, "the management of state-owned aquatic lands *shall preserve and enhance water-dependent uses;*" and
- After a meticulous and lengthy review by highly experienced and professional staff, DNR concluded last year that the project was consistent with each and every applicable provision of the Maury Island Aquatic Reserve Management Plan.

"Time and time again the courts and the agencies responsible for protecting the environment have heard the same arguments against our project," Leatham said. "And every time, those regulatory agencies in charge have concluded that the environment, endangered and threatened species and their habitat will be protected while our project proceeds. This specifically includes salmon, killer whales and eelgrass. This also includes the island's groundwater aquifer."

Glacier has also formally submitted its grants of permanent conservation easements to DNR of the bluffs overlooking Puget Sound, and the tidelands adjacent to its site. This is nearly a mile of nearshore and tideland property comprising approximately 75 acres that will be permanently granted to the state compared with the six acres of bedlands below the low tide mark that the company is leasing.

"We are looking forward to the commissioner's acceptance of these conservation easements as part of our lease requirements and to a successful collaboration with DNR and the commissioner's office as called for in the Aquatic Reserve Management Plan," Leatham said.

(--END--)