



August 15, 2017

Major General Scott A. Spellmon  
Commander, Northwest Division  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 2870  
Portland, OR 97208-2870

Colonel Mark A. Geraldi  
Commander, Seattle District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
PO Box 3755  
Seattle, WA 98124-3755

Dear General Spellmon and Colonel Geraldi:

As the city mayors and county executive in King County, Washington, we are writing to the Northwest Division and Seattle District Leadership of the US Army Corps of Engineers to request your attention to an urgent infrastructure funding need at the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks, otherwise known as the Ballard Locks. The Ballard Locks require between \$30 and \$60 million in investments above the President's budget to perform necessary non-routine major maintenance on systems and equipment that are becoming increasingly vulnerable to failure due to their age. We request additional funding in the 2018 budget to support restoration of the Ballard Locks.

The Ballard Locks are critical to the region's economy, salmon restoration efforts, transportation, and flood control infrastructure. Unfortunately, much of the equipment and infrastructure at the Locks is long past its design lifespan and urgently needs repair. Some critical facilities, including the large lock emergency closure system and pump plant, have already failed. And, in 2012, the Corps lowered the dam safety rating to a two out of five because they could fail in an earthquake, with significant economic consequences.

The Ballard Locks are the busiest in the nation, with 50,000 boats passing through them each year. The cost of restoring this critical infrastructure is far outweighed by the economic benefit the Locks bring to this region, including:

- \$1.2 billion in business activity;
- \$120 million in annual payroll;
- 3,000 jobs; and,
- \$15 million annual federal tax revenues.

Failure of the Ballard Locks would further impact the regional economy by rendering the I-90 and Highway 520 floating bridges unusable, affecting more than a quarter million commuter and freight trips per day. In addition, the Northwest Pacific Fishing Fleet and innumerable docks on Lake Washington and Lake Union would be significantly impacted.

Just last month, Puget Sound residents and visitors celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ballard Locks, and the vital role they play in the region's economy. With investment in critically needed maintenance, we hope this infrastructure can function safely and effectively for another century to come.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. For more information, please contact Kenmore Mayor David Baker, 2017 SCA Board President, at [dbaker@kenmorewa.gov](mailto:dbaker@kenmorewa.gov) or 425-398-8900.

Sincerely,



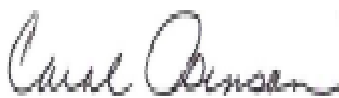
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Suzette Cook, Mayor  
City of Kent



Amy Walen, Mayor  
City of Kirkland

**Sound Cities Association**

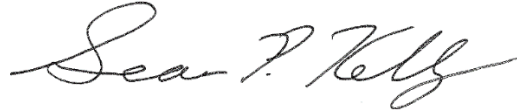
6300 Southcenter Boulevard, Suite 206, Tukwila, WA 98188

[www.soundcities.org](http://www.soundcities.org)

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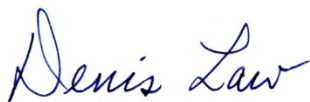
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**Sound Cities Association**

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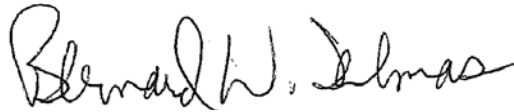
Alan A. Grider, Mayor  
Town of Skykomish



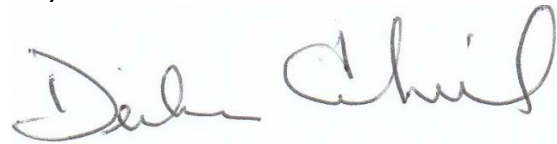
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Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

CC: Senator Maria Cantwell  
Senator Patty Murray  
Representative Suzan DelBene  
Representative Rick Larsen  
Representative Jaime Herrera Beutler  
Representative Dan Newhouse  
Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
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