



Increasing Shipyard Capabilities Through Collaboration

New report offers solutions to critical challenges faced by Pacific Northwest shipyards

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON (January 8, 2026) - In a [newly published report](#), Maritime Blue and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) share challenges faced by U.S. shipyards, including those unique to Washington and Oregon facilities.

The Pacific Northwest has a strong maritime heritage that endures today. The maritime sector is a major driver of Washington's economy. Shipbuilding, repair, and maintenance are the second largest contributors to direct employment by the maritime industry in Washington, at 18,500 jobs, just behind maritime logistics and shipping sector employment (*McKinley Research Group, 2022*). Oregon and Washington are home to over 100 commercial shipbuilding and repair organizations (*Department of Revenue, Washington State*).

Most of the commercial vessels registered in Washington and Oregon are older than the national average, which is already older than the global fleet. As vessels require more maintenance, and owners seek out new builds and retrofits, these shipyards are especially critical to a resilient maritime industry. Challenges described in the report include barriers to process optimization, integration of novel powertrains and technologies, training and retaining a strong workforce, inconsistent demand, and financing gaps.

Across the country, there has been increased interest to reinvigorate American shipbuilding. The recent attention by the Trump Administration and Congress is a positive signal. Durable federal and regional attention can lead to the support necessary for the industry.

The [report](#) highlights that the Pacific Northwest is home to deepwater ports, co-location of commercial shipyards with major U.S. Naval facilities, and a concentration of industry and technology innovation, making the region particularly well-positioned to lead in the revitalization of domestic maritime excellence.

Recommendations include collaborative approaches to standardizing design and building processes, workforce development, and meeting industrial energy demands. With increasing models for coordinated efforts to implement advanced manufacturing and incorporate emerging vessel technologies, many of the understood challenges could be addressed.

"We know that a strong workforce, trusted relationships, and innovative problem-solving lies at the heart of addressing many of these challenges," says Joshua Berger, President and CEO of

Maritime Blue. "Our region has a proven history of building coalitions that tackle these complex issues and turn them into economic, equitable, and environmental wins."

This [report](#) combines findings from two complementary efforts by the American Bureau of Shipping, Glosten, Noise Control Engineering, and Maritime Blue to identify barriers faced by U.S. shipbuilders in implementing emerging technologies and by PNNL to engage with shipyards in Washington and Oregon to understand their challenges. The joint [report](#) contextualizes Pacific Northwest shipyards in the broader domestic context, providing region-specific solutions.

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About Maritime Blue

Maritime Blue is a strategic alliance propelling the Pacific Northwest toward global leadership in ocean-based innovation. We foster collaboration among industry, government, academia, communities, and investors to create sustainable maritime and ocean industries. We empower our region to thrive in the Blue Economy by accelerating innovation and entrepreneurship, centering equity, addressing climate change, restoring marine ecosystems, and building a diverse workforce. Learn more at www.maritimeblue.org. Stay up to date on Maritime Blue news on [LinkedIn](#) and join our [Mailing List](#).