



Washington Maritime Blue
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Powering Maritime Innovation in the Pacific Northwest: Methanol Bunker Barge Design

Request for Proposals (RFP)

May 11, 2026

Washington Maritime Blue (Maritime Blue), in collaboration with the Port of Seattle, Port of Tacoma, Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA), and American Bureau of Shipping (ABS), is seeking a qualified naval architecture firm to develop design schematics for a methanol bunker barge. This barge will be used as the supply ship in a ship-to-ship methanol bunkering exercise during a high-level risk assessment workshop planned for September 2026. The design is intended for a desktop exercise to identify operational requirements and safety gaps for green methanol bunkering in the Seattle-Tacoma Gateway. We invite your company to submit a proposal in accordance with the requirements set forth in this Request for Proposals (RFP).

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Background

This project is part of a three-year planning effort funded by an EPA Clean Ports grant, called *Powering Maritime Innovation in the Pacific Northwest (PMI)*, through which the Ports are collaboratively exploring green methanol as a key sustainable maritime fuel to support reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improved air quality in the Seattle-Tacoma Gateway. Supporting the adoption of green methanol and eliminating obstacles to its adoption is aligned with the Ports' goal of eliminating emissions from seaport-related activities by 2050.

ABS is leading the *Methanol Bunkering Port Readiness Feasibility Study*, which aims to create a roadmap for addressing technical and operational challenges associated with bunkering methanol in the Gateway. The study consists of research and regional stakeholder engagement to identify baseline requirements and issues, a multi-stakeholder desktop exercise planned for September 2026 to discuss strategies for increasing methanol bunkering readiness (a high-level risk assessment workshop), and development of a roadmap for green methanol bunkering.

Methanol presents unique risks, including toxicity, low flashpoint, and flammability, that differ significantly from traditional marine fuels. The barge designs provided by the selected contractor will allow workshop participants to evaluate these risks in real-world scenarios at Seattle and Tacoma ports and bunkering to different types of ships.

Deliverables

Task 1. Technical Drawings

The bunker barge should meet the following specifications:

- Expected methanol capacity approximately 30,000 m³
 - Contractors may propose alternative capacities with justification
 - The receiving ship for the workshop has not been selected yet, but is anticipated to be a cargo, container, cruise, or ro-ro ship
- Route may be proposed by the contractor
- Unmanned and not self-propelled
- Bunker barge intended solely for the transport and transfer of methanol as a fuel; to maintain the scope of this exercise, the design should not include any onboard fuel conversion or green fuel production capabilities
- Comply with all applicable federal and international regulations and standards

The contractor is responsible for providing the following technical drawing for the bunker barge:

- **Deliverable 1.1:** General Arrangements and high-level Concept of Operations (CONOPS), including bunkering procedures
- **Deliverable 1.2:** Methanol Piping Diagrams showing location and arrangement of piping system
- **Deliverable 1.3:** Tank capacity summary tables, including location and capacity
- **Deliverable 1.4:** Hazardous Area Drawings
- **Deliverable 1.5:** Fire & Gas Detection and Firefighting System Plans
- **Deliverable 1.6:** Emergency Shutdown (ESD) Layouts and Procedures
- **Deliverable 1.7:** Mooring Arrangement, including towing procedures

The primary function of these drawings is to provide a realistic technical foundation for a qualitative risk analysis. While designs must accurately reflect the vessel's configuration and safety systems to ground risk mitigation discussions, high-level schematics are sufficient; equipment lists and granular construction details are not required for this conceptual exercise.

As this project is a central component of the EPA Clean Ports-funded PMI project, respondents should be aware that the technical drawings and design specifications provided for the bunker barge will be provided to workshop participants and may be included in the final Risk Assessment Report, which may be publicly available. These documents are intended to serve as a decision-making tool for the maritime industry and as supporting evidence for future regulatory and stakeholder engagement. While Maritime Blue and its partners will work with the selected contractor to handle sensitive information appropriately, all final deliverables must align with the transparency mandates of the EPA grant to ensure the successful creation of a public roadmap for regional decarbonization.

Due date for Deliverables 1.1-1.7: **Fri, July 31, 2026.**

Task 2. Deliverables Review

The contractor will be asked to participate in one or several review sessions with ABS in August or September in preparation for the workshop.

Task 3. Workshop Attendance

It is highly favorable for the proposing firm to send a representative to sit in on the 2-day Risk Assessment workshop to provide real-time technical expertise and answer questions regarding the barge design during scenario brainstorming. The workshop is currently intended to be in-person in the Seattle-Tacoma metro area in mid-September. A virtual option may be provided for remote participants.

COMPENSATION & PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Total budget is not to exceed \$30,000 over the course of the study, inclusive of any expenses and travel costs. Travel may be necessary to attend the workshop.

Payment schedule to be proposed by contractor as part of the proposal (see Selection Criteria below).

APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

Interested applicants should demonstrate:

1. **Naval architecture expertise:** proven experience in designing bunker barges or liquid bulk carriers.
2. **Low-flashpoint fuel proficiency:** deep technical knowledge of methanol's thermo-mechanical properties and associated hazards.
3. **Regulatory knowledge:** familiarity with designing in accordance with applicable codes, regulation, and standards.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposal Contents

The proposal should be concise, no more than 5 pages in length, not counting a cover page and any references, resumes, or appendices the proposer feels are necessary for providing a full proposal. Excessive use of unrelated images and company branding is discouraged. Longer proposals will be disqualified, and there is no requirement to fill the full allowed length if qualifications can be articulated in fewer pages.

Pages shall be standard 8.5" x 11" letter size, using 11 to 14-point size, with 1 to 1.5-line spacing. All pages must maintain a minimum one-inch margin on all sides, and pages must be consecutively numbered. Proposals that do not adhere to these formatting specifications may be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated.

Proposals should include the following components:

- **Cover Page:** A short summary of your proposal and interest in the project, highlighting key strengths and differentiators.

- **Technical Approach:** A description of how the firm will develop the required Task 1 deliverables.
- **Company profile:** Background on the firm’s experience with ship and alternative fuel design projects. The proposal must indicate primary staff contributing to the project, their roles, and relevant experience.
- **Project Timeline:** Confirmation of ability to provide final designs to ABS by July 31, 2026.
- **Cost Proposal:** A detailed breakdown of costs for the design phase and workshop participation, in-person or virtual.

Proposal Submission

All proposals must be submitted by Monday, June 1, 2026, 3:00 PM PDT. Late proposals will not be considered.

- Proposals should be submitted to margaret@maritimeblue.org.
- Please write “Methanol Bunker Barge Proposal - [your name or your company’s name]” in the subject line of your email.

Questions

All questions and communications regarding this RFP should be submitted by Tuesday, May 26, 2026, 5:00 PM PDT, and should be directed to:

Margaret Woodbridge
 Maritime Decarbonization Senior Program Manager
margaret@maritimeblue.org

Anonymized questions and answers will be posted on Maritime Blue’s website in this document: [Methanol Bunker Barge Design RFP Questions and Answers](#)

PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS & SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed by Maritime Blue, Port of Seattle, Port of Tacoma, Northwest Seaport Alliance, and ABS project staff.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Technical merit:** The accuracy and detail of the proposed design methodology.
2. **Experience:** Specific expertise in designing for methanol as a cargo.
3. **Schedule:** Ability to meet the July deadline.
4. **Value:** Competitive pricing for the scope of work, including the ability to support attending the risk assessment workshop.

PROPOSAL SCHEDULE

Milestone	Due Date
Issue Request for Proposals (RFP)	Mon, May 11, 2026
Question period open	Mon, May 11, 2026
Last day to submit questions	Tues, May 26, 2026, 5:00 PM PDT
Proposals due	Mon, June 1, 2026, 3:00 PM PDT
Announce “Apparent Successful Contractor” and send notification via email to unsuccessful proposers	Fri, June 12, 2026
Earliest date a contractor could be signed with the Successful Contractor	Fri, June 26, 2026
Project complete	After Risk Assessment Workshop (pending date selection in September 2026)

Maritime Blue reserves the right to revise the above schedule.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Maritime Blue’s standard terms and conditions are in [Appendix A, Terms & Conditions](#).

Right to Reject Proposals

Washington Maritime Blue reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this Request for Proposals (RFP). The rejection of a proposal may occur if, in the sole discretion of Washington Maritime Blue, it is determined that the proposal does not meet the specified requirements, lacks key information, or if the proposer fails to comply with the terms and conditions outlined in this RFP.

Washington Maritime Blue also reserves the right to reject any proposal, in whole or in part, if it is deemed in the best interest of Washington Maritime Blue to do so. The decision to reject a proposal will be final, and Washington Maritime Blue is under no obligation to provide feedback or justification for the rejection.

Vendors submitting proposals acknowledge this right of Washington Maritime Blue and agree not to challenge or dispute the decision to reject any proposal. In the event of a rejection, Washington Maritime Blue may, at its discretion, enter into negotiations with another vendor or reissue a revised Request for Proposals.

Washington Maritime Blue appreciates the effort and resources invested by all participating vendors and will notify each vendor of the outcome of the proposal evaluation process.

Maritime Blue looks forward to receiving your proposal and appreciates your interest in working with us on this project. Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please contact Margaret Woodbridge at margaret@maritimeblue.org.

APPENDICES

- A. Standard Terms & Conditions

Appendix A: Standard Terms & Conditions

This Contract is made and entered into by and between Washington Maritime Blue and the below named firm, hereinafter referred to as "Contractor."

Name

Address 1

Address 2

NOW THEREFORE, Washington Maritime Blue and Contractor mutually agree as follows:

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF WORK

The purpose of this agreement is to perform the activities and meet the specifications outlined in Attachment A, "Scope of Work," hereinafter referred to as the "Project." Contractor will provide services, and otherwise perform all tasks, functions and activities necessary for or incidental to the performance of the scope of work.

TERM OF AGREEMENT

This agreement shall commence on (date) and terminate on (date). Washington Maritime Blue and Contractor agree to review and/or renegotiate the terms of this agreement not later than thirty (30) days before its conclusion. Altered and/or added terms, and date(s) of extension, shall be memorialized in a signed amendment. Future amendments to change and/or extend this agreement and/or its amendment(s) are allowed ad infinitum so long as this agreement or one of its amendments remains in effect.

In such case that the agreement is signed by all parties after the agreement's stated effective date, it is to be understood by all parties that by signing this agreement all performance and activities under this agreement are retroactively approved and authorized pursuant to the date that performance commenced.

STOP WORK AND TERMINATION

Washington Maritime Blue may, by written order to the Contractor, require the Contractor to stop all, or any part, of the work called for by this agreement upon the occurrence of any of the following enumerated circumstances:

- A. Contractor is adjudged or becomes bankrupt or insolvent, is unable to pay its debts as they become due, or makes an assignment for the benefit of its creditors; or,
- B. Contractor voluntarily or involuntarily undertakes to dissolve or wind up its affairs; or,
- C. Contractor is suspended or debarred by the United States government; or,
- D. Contractor is in noncompliance with any term of this agreement, including reporting and performance requirements; or,

- E. Washington Maritime Blue learns that Contractor has an organizational conflict of interest, or any other conflict of interest, as determined in the sole discretion of Washington Maritime Blue, that Washington Maritime Blue believes, in its sole discretion, cannot be mitigated; or,
- F. The funding source with which Washington Maritime Blue is financing this activity issues an early termination covering all or part of the Project.

A stop work order issued under this section may be applied to the Project in its entirety, or to any portion thereunder. Such an order shall take effect immediately upon receipt by the Contractor of Washington Maritime Blue's written order to stop work. Upon receipt of the order, Contractor shall immediately comply with its terms. Washington Maritime Blue shall not be liable for costs incurred by the Contractor during the period covered by the stop work order, unless such costs are explicitly allowed in said order.

Within a period of 90 calendar days after a stop-work order is delivered to the Contractor, or within any extension of that period to which the parties shall have agreed, Washington Maritime Blue shall either cancel the stop-work order or terminate the agreement.

Additionally, either party may terminate this agreement by providing thirty (30) days written notice of such termination.

TERMINATION PROCEDURES

In the event of termination of this agreement prior to project completion, Contractor shall immediately (unless otherwise directed by Washington Maritime Blue in its notice if Washington Maritime Blue initiated the termination) undertake all reasonable steps to wind down the project cooperatively with Washington Maritime Blue, including but not limited to the following:

- A. Stop any portion of the project's work that is incomplete (unless work to be completed and a different date for termination of work are specified in Washington Maritime Blue's notice).
- B. Place no further work orders or enter into any further subawards or contracts for materials, services, or facilities, except as necessary to complete work as specified in Washington Maritime Blue's notice.
- C. Terminate all pending project work orders, subawards, and contracts for work that has not yet commenced.
- D. With the prior written consent of Washington Maritime Blue, promptly take all other reasonable and feasible steps to minimize and/or mitigate any damages that may be caused by the failure to complete the project, including but not limited to reasonable settlements of any outstanding claims arising out of termination of project work orders, subawards, and contracts.
- E. Deliver or make available to Washington Maritime Blue all data, drawings, specification reports, estimates, summaries, and such other information and material as may have been accumulated under this Agreement, whether completed or in progress.

In the event of termination, Washington Maritime Blue shall be liable only for those payments for services rendered prior to the effective date of termination and for which Washington Maritime Blue has received payment from the funding source.

COMPENSATION

Total compensation payable to Contractor for satisfactory performance of the work under this agreement shall not exceed [amount]. [Insert payment schedule details]

BILLING PROCEDURES AND PAYMENT

Company will pay Contractor upon acceptance of services provided and receipt of a properly completed invoice, which shall be submitted to the Company's Billing Contact not more than once each calendar month. Invoices must be submitted no later than the 10th calendar day of the month following provision of services. The invoice shall be transmitted to the Billing Contact at the address specified below:

Camille Smith, Contract and Finance Manager
finance@maritimeblue.org
(360) 230-8184

Invoices shall describe and document, to the Company's satisfaction, a statement of actual services performed and progress of the project.

Payment shall be considered timely if made by Washington Maritime Blue within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of properly completed invoices, subject to receipt of funds from the awarding agency. Payment shall be sent to the address designated by the Contractor.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The Company's Project Manager shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of and shall be the principal point of contact for the Contractor on all matters other than Contract Execution and Amendment. Company's Project Manager is identified as follows:

[Name]
[email]

Contractor's Project Manager is identified as follows:

[Name]
[email]

CONTRACT EXECUTION AND AMENDMENT

The individuals identified below shall be the individuals designated by the parties to execute the Contract and any amendments thereto. No Contract or Amendment shall be deemed valid unless signed by the designated parties.

Company Representative: Joshua Berger, President/CEO, Washington Maritime Blue

Contractor Representative: [Name, Title]

ASSURANCES

Company and the Contractor agree that all activity pursuant to this agreement will be in accordance with all the applicable current federal, state and local laws, rules, and regulations.

SUSPENSION AND DEBARMENT

Contractor certifies that it has not been suspended or debarred from doing business with the federal government.

INDEMNIFICATION

To the extent permitted by law, and for the limited purposes set forth in this agreement, Company and Contractor shall protect, defend, indemnify and hold harmless the other party, their officers, elected officials, agents and employees, while acting within the scope of their duties as such, from and against any and all claims (including demands, suits, penalties liabilities, damages, costs, expenses, or losses of any kind or nature whatsoever) arising out of or in any way resulting from such Party's own negligent acts or omissions related to performance of this agreement.

Company and Contractor agree that their obligations under this subsection extend to any claim, demand, and/or cause of action brought by or on behalf of any of its employees or agents. For this purpose, Company and Contractor, by mutual negotiation, hereby waive, with respect to the other party only, any immunity that would otherwise be available against such claims under the industrial insurance act provision of Title 51 RCW. This section shall survive termination or expiration of this agreement.

ENTIRE AGREEMENT

This Contract represents all the terms and conditions agreed upon by the parties. No other statements or representations, written or oral, shall be deemed a part hereof.

CONFORMANCE

If any provision of this Contract violates any statute or rule of law of the state of Washington, it is considered modified to conform to that statute or rule of law.

DELIVERABLES AND BUDGET

Contractor agrees that all work performed for this agreement is uniquely funded by Washington Maritime Blue, such that the Contractor is not being paid by others for the same work.

REPORTING

Washington Maritime Blue will request any data that it finds useful to demonstrate the effectiveness of services, performance measures, and objectives.

APPROVAL

This Contract shall be subject to the written approval of the Company's authorized representative and shall not be binding until so approved. The Contract may be altered, amended, or waived only by a written amendment executed by both parties. This Contract is executed by the persons signing below, who warrant they have the authority to execute the Contract.

Signature
Company Authorized Representative

Date

Signature
Contractor Authorized Representative

Date