

**Statement by Rick Finn
Federal Affairs Manager, Port of Portland (Oregon)
Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining
Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Hearing on S. 2031, the American Soda Ash Competitiveness Act
October 1, 2015**

My name is Rick Finn, and I am the Federal Affairs Manager at the Port of Portland in Portland, Oregon. I appreciate the opportunity to express the Port's support of S. 2031, a bill that would set the federal royalty rate on soda ash leases at two percent for five years.

The Port of Portland is a consolidated public port authority that owns and operates aviation, marine, and industrial park facilities. The Port's marine assets consist of four marine terminals on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers and a large pipeline dredge that operates under contract to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to maintain the federal navigation channel on the Columbia River. In addition, the Port owns and operates Portland International Airport, two general aviation airports, and several industrial and business parks.

The Port of Portland is linked with other deep-draft and shallow-draft ports to form the Columbia-Willamette-Snake River navigation system—one of the largest and most important commercial waterways in the United States. Each year, about 2,000 ocean-going ships call on ports in this navigation system, carrying about \$20 billion in imports and exports. Exports of agricultural and mineral products dominate the trade from the Columbia River, providing a gateway for the distribution of goods from the Pacific Northwest and the interior of the United States and Canada to overseas markets.

Soda ash, principally from the Green River area of Wyoming, is the second largest commodity exported from the Port of Portland in terms of tonnage and the fourth largest as measured by value. To reliably support this export, the Port developed a marine facility dedicated exclusively to handling soda ash in 1987. Over time the Port and Kinder Morgan, which is the private company that manages the soda ash export facility under a long-term lease with the Port, have invested millions of dollars to improve the capability, efficiency, and environmental practices of the terminal. Most recently, Kinder Morgan installed a new state-of-the-art, high-capacity ship loader, and the Port carried out necessary demolition work and maintenance dredging.

During 2014, 75 ships docked in Portland to load 2.8 million short tons of soda ash for export to Pacific Rim countries, as well as Europe, Africa, and South America. In fact, about 40 percent of all U.S. soda ash waterborne exports moves through Terminal 4 at the Port of Portland.

All of the combined activities associated with receiving soda ash by rail and then loading the product onboard ships generate an important local economic benefit. The following statistics illustrate the local economic benefits of exporting soda ash through the Port of Portland:

- About 200 direct, indirect, and induced jobs
- Each direct job pays an average salary of \$50,400
- All 200 jobs generate total income of \$6.9 million
- \$3.8 million in state taxes
- \$43.4 million in local purchases of supplies and services

Soda ash exports generate another less quantifiable, but still significant benefit to the Portland region. The Union Pacific Railroad transports soda ash to the Port of Portland, and the railroad values the steady, reliable revenue that is generated by the long-haul shipment of this kind of cargo. Therefore, soda ash shipments from Wyoming to Portland serve as an incentive for the Union Pacific to maintain and improve its rail network in the Portland region. As a result, other international and domestic shippers that move their cargo through Portland benefit from the railroad's investments in its Portland rail network.

As you can see, the Port of Portland and its many stakeholders, including shippers and labor, derive important benefits from the export of soda ash. The Port strongly supports efforts by the U.S. soda ash industry to remain competitive in overseas markets by reducing their production and supply chain costs. In that context, the Port of Portland urges this Subcommittee and the full Energy and Natural Resources Committee to act favorably on S. 2031, the American Soda Ash Competitiveness Act.

Thank you for your consideration of the Port of Portland's views on this matter.