



CDR Xochitl Castañeda
Director, Pacific Northwest & Alaska Gateway Office
Office of Maritime & Intermodal Outreach
U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration

Xochitl (pronounced So-chee) Castañeda is the Director of the Pacific Northwest & Alaska Gateway Office in Seattle, Washington. Her area of responsibility includes the states of Alaska, Oregon, and Washington, featuring over one hundred ports, the most extensive ferry system in the United States (Washington State Ferry System), and the most extended ferry system in the country (Alaska Marine Highway System), as well as the homeport for the largest fishing fleet in the Nation (Seattle).

Xochitl hails from Pearblossom, CA. In 1990, she enlisted in the US Coast Guard and served as a quartermaster on the CGC MIDGETT. Following this tour, she pursued her education and returned to military service in 1995 in the US Navy Reserves and later the US Coast Guard Reserves. She was recalled to US Coast Guard active duty in 2001 and earned her commission in 2002.

Xochitl served afloat and ashore, earning expertise in navigation, energy projects, pollution response, waterfront facilities, vessels, mariner licensing, waterways, and emergency management.

She started her education at Antelope Valley College and then transferred to the University of California at Santa Barbara, where she earned a B.S. in Aquatic Biology. Later, she earned a Master's in Transportation and Logistics with a Maritime Engineering Concentration from American Military University.

She volunteers as the National Historian to the Association of Naval Service Officers (ANSO), which works to recruit, retain, and advance Hispanics in the Sea Services.