



OCT 23 2012

Ms. Gloria Shepard  
Associate Administrator for  
Planning, Environment, and Realty  
Federal Highway Administration  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Shepard:

Over the last couple months we have discussed several items regarding the Navigation Impact Analysis (NIA) that the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project will be submitting to the Coast Guard in November. This is to summarize in one place several items for ease of reference and for the convenience of project personnel.

- **CRC Work Plan:** As you know, Admiral Keith Taylor responded to a draft version of the CRC work plan provided by the state DOTs, and recommended several courses of action to assist in a successful product. We have agreed that CRC will not spend administrative time revising and reissuing this plan, but USCG comments will be incorporated in product documents (e.g. Navigation Impact Analysis, Bridge Permit Application). A summary of the response to each USCG comment will be provided in a letter.
- **NIA and Measures for Impacted River Users:** The NIA will include a description of measures needed to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts to navigation. Each impacted user will be addressed. Future use of the river should also be addressed as described in the white paper we provided and that is posted on our website. While it is not necessary to have all these measures finalized with the NIA, we will need to have some assurance that proposed measures are practical and have a high probability of success (e.g. that an impacted user will agree with the mitigation measure proposed).
- **Bridge Heights:** CRC is limiting the NIA to studying impacts to vessels based on a bridge in the mid-height range selected in the EIS. For purposes of the Statement of Protocols, we agreed to examine those mid-level heights before moving to higher levels, if necessary. However, the Coast Guard continues to believe that mid-level heights have a low probability of meeting the reasonable needs of navigation or obtaining a Coast Guard Bridge Permit. Based upon the validated vertical clearance needs of existing navigation, as well as the navigable capacity of the waterway, we recommend CRC expand their scope of analysis and design alternatives up to the existing navigation clearance of 178' above CRD. This will greatly increase the probability that we will have sufficient information to be able to accept a permit application and make a permit decision.

I hope this summary is helpful and I look forward to continuing to work with you on this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. A. Goward', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

D. A. GOWARD  
Director, Marine Transportation Systems  
U. S. Coast Guard

Copy: Thirteenth Coast Guard District (d), (dw)