


From: [Bomar, Audri](#)
To: feedback@columbiarivercrossing.org;
CC:
Subject: FW: CRC Draft EIS 
Date: Tuesday, July 01, 2008 4:27:16 PM
Attachments: [CRC Task Force Letter.doc](#)
[Freight Roster 6-30-08.doc](#)

From: Gundersen, Heather
Sent: Tuesday, July 01, 2008 4:15 PM
To: Bomar, Audri; Strickler, Kris
Cc: Parisi, Dave
Subject: FW: CRC Draft EIS

*Thanks,
Heather
p. 360.816.2199*

From: Hillier, Robert [mailto:Robert.Hillier@pdxtrans.org]
Sent: Monday, June 30, 2008 5:16 PM
To: Gundersen, Heather
Cc: Gillam, John
Subject: CRC Draft EIS

Heather,
Please find attached comments from the Portland Freight Committee (and attached committee roster) on the CRC Draft EIS to be entered into the public record. I will also send you hard copies of the letter. Please contact me if you have any questions. Thanks

Robert Hillier
Freight Program Coordinator
Portland Office of Transportation
1120 SW Fifth Avenue, Room 800
Portland, OR 97204

503-823-7567

robert.hillier@pdxtrans.org

<<CRC Task Force Letter.doc>> <<Freight Roster 6-30-08.doc>>

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**PORTLAND FREIGHT COMMITTEE**

June 30, 2008

CRC Task Force Co-Chairs Hewitt and Dengerick
Columbia River Crossing
700 Washington Street
Vancouver, WA 98660

Dear CRC Task Force Co-Chairs Hewitt and Dengerick:

The Portland Freight Committee (PFC) appreciates the opportunity to provide the following comments regarding the Columbia River Crossing Draft EIS. The PFC is advisory to Portland City Council and its membership includes 30 private sector representatives of freight service providers, shippers, trade associations and businesses directly related to multi-modal freight activities. Our roster is attached.

The PFC views the CRC as the most important transportation project presently under consideration in this region. Interstate 5 is the only continuous north/south interstate highway on the West Coast, linking the United States, Canada and Mexico. The June 24, 2008 vote by the CRC Task Force to recommend the replacement bridge with light rail transit as the locally preferred alternative in the Draft EIS further demonstrates that these alternatives would provide the most benefit to the region. The replacement bridge provides more congestion relief, better safety, river navigation improvements, less seismic vulnerability, and less impact on water quality than the supplemental river crossing. The light rail transit alternative provides better travel times, greater reliability, more direct access to key transit markets, and attracts more transit riders than the bus rapid transit (BRT) alternative.

Safety is extremely important to the members of the Portland Freight Committee. The stretch of I-5 within the project area, including the existing bridges and interchanges, has crash rates nearly 2 ½ times higher than statewide averages for comparable facilities. Not only is the high crash rate unacceptable from the standpoint of bodily injury and property damage but it contributes greatly to the congestion problem. Another safety issue is that the existing bridges do not meet seismic standards and there is not a cost effective way to upgrade them. The loss of either bridge due to an earthquake would have catastrophic consequences for the entire West Coast.

In economic terms, I-5 is a critical piece of real estate for Oregon and Washington. All freight flow – international, national, West Coast, and regional - is dependent on the daily function of the I-5 freeway. The bridge influence area is particularly important because it provides the main freight access to the Rivergate/Columbia Corridor Industrial Districts, which include the Port of Portland's intermodal marine terminals, and its international airport in North Portland, and the Port of Vancouver in Washington. In the Rivergate/Columbia Corridor alone, 47,000 jobs were

reported in the manufacturing, distribution and service sectors in 2004. There are no other major highways that provide ready access to this vital economic area.

Currently, about 70 percent of the regional freight tonnage moves by truck. Scheduling predictability is critical to meet the demands of freight customers. The increasing hours of congestion around the Columbia River bridges make it increasingly difficult to meet scheduling requirements. Most of the truck trips moving through the bridge area either originate or terminate in the bridge influence area. Continuing three through traffic lanes in each direction, as recommended by the CRC Task Force, along with the additional auxiliary lanes and redesigned interchanges will more efficiently and safely move traffic on and off of I-5 and provide the additional capacity necessary to reduce traffic congestion. In addition, the provision of light rail transit, coupled with a variable rate tolling strategy and improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities, will reduce automobile trips and further reduce traffic congestion along the I-5 corridor.

Many citizens, including members of the Portland Freight Committee, have expressed concerns about the projected cost of a new bridge. It is important to point out that the bridge span itself is estimated to be less than 1/3 of the total project cost. The new interchanges, light rail transit service and improved facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians all add significantly to the cost. The old bridge has lasted over 90 years. A new bridge will likely last for 100 years or more. To postpone the project for any length of time will only increase the costs. From the perspective of the Portland Freight Committee, an investment in the replacement bridge is an investment in the region's future.

The Portland Freight Committee supports the CRC Task Force Resolution that recommends a replacement bridge with light rail transit as the locally preferred alternative.

Sincerely,

Corky Collier
PFC Chairman



Gary Eichman
PFC Vice Chairman



Cc: Director Susan D. Keil,
City of Portland – Office of Transportation

Heather Gundersen,
CRC Environmental Manager

Portland Freight Committee Roster

Members in Full-standing

Steve Bates
Vice President
Redmond Heavy Hauling
PO Box 11269
Portland, OR 97211
503-285-3816
sbates@babler.com

Linda Braden
Manager of Intermodal Operations
BNSF
3930 NW Yeon Avenue
Portland, OR 97210
503-241-4481
Linda.Braden@bnsf.com

Corky Collier
Executive Director
Columbia Corridor Association
PO Box 55651
Portland, OR 97238
503-287-8686
corky@columbiacorridor.org

Gary Eichman
President
Oregon Transfer Company
PO Box 2804
Portland, Oregon 97208-2804
503-943-3505
Fax: 503-943-3535
GaryEichman@oregontransfer.com

Peter George
4445 Kenthorpe Way
West Linn, OR 97068
503-635-6532
pwgeorge@comcast.net

Jerry Grossnickle
Chief Financial Officer
Bernert Barge Lines
13510 NW Germantown Road
Portland, OR 97231
503-289-3046
JerryGBW@aol.com

Earl Bliven
Kroger NW Regional Logistics Manager
3800 SE 22nd Avenue
Portland, OR 97202
503-797-3040
earl.bliven@fredmeyer.com

William D. Burgel
Consultant and Vice President
HDR Engineering, Inc.
1001 SW 5th Avenue, Ste. 1800
Portland, OR 97204-1134
503-423-3728
Cell: 503 789-4147
bill.burgel@hdrinc.com

Tom Dechenne
Sr. Marketing Consultant
Norris Beggs & Simpson
121 SW Morrison, Ste 200
Portland, OR 97204
503-273-0356
tdechenne@nbsrealtors.com

Ann L. Gardner
Government Relations Manager
Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc.
3200 NW Yeon Avenue
Portland, OR 97210
503-417-2041
agardner@schm.com

Lanny Gower
Con-Way, Inc.
PO Box 6046
Portland, OR 97228
503-450-5502
Gower.Lanny@CNF.com

Bruce Halperin
Modern Fuel Sales
2717 SE 33rd Pl.
Portland, OR 97202
503-546-6831
bruce@modernfuelsales.com

Portland Freight Committee Roster

Marion Haynes
 Policy Analyst
 Portland Business Alliance
 520 SW Yamhill
 Portland, OR 97204
 503-224-8684
MHaynes@portlandalliance.com

Lee Johnson
 President
 Jet Delivery
 6225 NE 112th Avenue
 Portland, OR 97220
 503-256-3621
leej@jetdeliverysystems.com

Rob Mathers
 Kinder-Morgan
 5880 NW St. Helens Road
 Portland, OR 97210
 503-220-1258
rob_mathers@kindermorgan.com

Brad Roos
 UPS
 6707 N. Basin Avenue
 Portland, OR 97217
 503-283-6620
pdx1bxb@ups.com

Bob Short
 Public Affairs Manager
 Glacier Northwest, Inc.
 1050 N. River Street
 Portland, Oregon 97227
 503-335-2614
BShort@calportland.com

Charles Tindall
 Vice President
 Blue Line Transportation Company
 2606 N. Newmark
 Portland, Or 97217
 800-567-2134
Charlie@bluelinetrans.com

Terry Finn
 Director of Government Affairs
 BNSF
 2454 Occidental Avenue, S.
 Suite 1A
 Seattle, WA 98134-1451
 206-625-6135
terry.finn@bnsf.com

Wayne Kingsley
 Chairman
 The Portland Spirit
 110 SE Caruthers Street
 Portland, OR 97214
 503-224-3900
wayne@portlandspirit.com

James Nave
 Regional Director – Sales – Industrial Products
 Marketing and Sales
 Union Pacific Railroad
 222 N.E. Park Plaza Dr, Ste. 125
 Vancouver, WA 98684
 360-514-9724
jmnave@up.com

Robert Russell, President
 Oregon Trucking Associations, Inc.
 4005 SE Naef Rd
 Portland, OR 97267
 503-513-0005 or 888-293-0005 – Cell: 503 930-3535
Russell@ortrucking.org

Dick Swennes
 President (retired)
 Convoy Company
 5295 SW Dover Lane
 Portland, OR 97225
SwennesTR@MSN.com

John W. Trumbull
 Senior Project Manager
 Transportation Business Group
 CH2M Hill
 2020 South West 4th Avenue
 3rd Floor
 Portland, OR 97201-4958
 Phone: 503-736-4135
 Email: john.trumbull@ch2m.com

Portland Freight Committee Roster

Elizabeth Wainwright
Executive Director
Merchants Exchange
200 SW Market St, Ste 190
Portland, OR 97201
503-228-4361
wainwright@pdxmex.com

Pia Welch
Portland Air Cargo Association
5159 NE Cornfoot Road
Portland, OR 97218
503 249-6414
pswelch@fedex.com

Tracy Ann Whalen
Corporate Traffic Manager
ESCO Corporation
2141 NW 25th Avenue
Portland, OR 97210-2578
503-778-6252
tracy.whelen@escocorp.com

Bob Wilhelm
Wilhelm Trucking Company
PO Box 10363
Portland, OR 97296
503-227-0561
bobwilhelm@wilhelmtruck.com

Dale Kawata
Manager, Transportation and Networks
U.S. Postal Service
PO Box 3099
Portland, OR 97208-3099
503 294-2206
Dale.B.Kawata@USPS.gov

Megan E. Colerick
Senior Account Manager
ICAT Logistics, Inc.
12413 NE Marx Street
Portland, Oregon 97230
tel: 503 408 6624
fax: 503 408 0501
megan.colerick@icatlogistics.com

Monica Isbell
Starboard Alliance Company, LLC
17307 NW Camelback Lane
Beaverton, Oregon 97006
503 310-7781
monica@starboardalliance.com

Jeff Swanson (Alternate: Kathy Gibson)
Director of Logistics- Western Region
Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc.
3200 NW Yeon Avenue
Portland, OR 97210
503 286-6919 (direct)
503 224-9900 (main office)
jswanson@schm.com

Adam Winston (Alternate: John Graham)
District Manager
Waste Management, Inc.
7227 NE 55th Avenue
Portland, OR 97218
503 493-7858
Awinston@wm.com

Associate Members

Sam Adams
Commissioner
City of Portland
1121 SW 4th Avenue, Room 220
Portland, OR 97204
503-823-3008
samadams@ci.portland.or.us

Comm. Maria Rojo de Steffey
Multnomah County Commissioner District 1
501 SE Hawthorne Boulevard
Suite 600
Portland, OR 97214
503 988-5220
distr1@co.multnomah.or.us

Portland Freight Committee Roster

Seth Hudson
 Program Manager
 Portland Development Commission
 222 NW 5th Avenue
 Portland, OR 97209
 503-823-9066
HudsonS@pdc.us

John Gillam
 Policy Section Manager - Transportation Planning
 Portland Office of Transportation
 1120 SW Fifth Avenue, Room 800
 Portland, OR 97204
 503-823-7707
John.gillam@pdxtrans.org

Susie Lahsene
 Manager, Land Use and Transportation Policy
 Port of Portland
 PO Box 3529
 Portland, OR 97209
 503-944-7517
lahsene@portofportland.com

Rian Windsheimer
 Region 1 Policy & Development Manager
 Oregon Department of Transportation
 123 NW Flanders
 Portland, OR 97209
 503-731-8456
rian.m.windsheimer@odot.state.or.us

Nick Fortey
 Transportation Safety/Transportation Operations
 Engineer
 Federal Highway Administration
 530 Center Street N.E., Suite 100
 Salem, Oregon 97301
 503-587-4721
nick.fortey@fhwa.dot.gov

Steve Kountz
 Senior City Planner
 Portland Planning Bureau
 1900 SW 4th, Room 400
 Portland, OR 97204
 503-823-4551
skountz@ci.portland.or.us

Barry Hennelly
 Principal Transportation Planner
 Metro
 600 NE Grand Avenue
 Portland OR 97232
 (503) 813-7535
platmand@metro.dst.or.us

Staff

Robert Hillier
 Freight Program Coordinator
 Portland Office of Transportation
 1120 SW Fifth Avenue, Room 800
 Portland, OR 97204
 503-823-7567
robert.hillier@pdxtrans.org

Tom Miller
 Chief of Staff, Commissioner Adams
 City of Portland
 1121 SW 4th Avenue, Room 220
 Portland, OR 97204
 503-823-1121
tommiller@ci.portland.or.us
