



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY Washington, D.C. 20240

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND COMPLIANCE

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Washington, DC 20240

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JUL 02 2008

via Fax

Columbia River Crossing

To: Ms. Heather Gundersen Date: July 2, 2008

CRC Env. Manager

Vancouver, WA

FAX: 360-737-0294

Pages: 16, including this cover sheet.

From: *STET*
[Signature]
ETHEL SMITH

Subject: I-5 Columbia river Crossing Project, WA/OR [ER 08/452]

Attached is the Department of the Interior's comments dated July 2, 2008, on subject project.



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240



ER 08/452

JUL 2 2008

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PEP/NRM

Ms. Heather Gundersen
Environmental Manager
Columbia River Crossing
700 Washington Street, Suite 300
Vancouver, WA 98660
Fax: 360-737-0294

Dear Ms. Gundersen:

The Department of the Interior (Department) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the **I-5 Columbia River Crossing Project (CRC), Vancouver, Washington; and Portland, Oregon**, and offers the following comments:

Five alternatives have been proposed for inclusion in this DEIS but a preferred alternative has not been identified. These include:

- Alternative 1. No build;
- Alternative 2. Replacement bridge with bus rapid transit;
- Alternative 3. Replacement bridge with light rail;
- Alternative 4. Supplemental bridge with bus rapid transit;
- Alternative 5. Supplemental bridge with light rail.

The replacement river crossing (Alternatives 2 and 3) would involve removing the existing I-5 north and southbound bridges and building two or three new bridges to the west of the existing alignment. Two new bridges would carry north and southbound traffic, with a third bridge carrying high-capacity bus or rail transit and an exclusive path for bicycles and pedestrians. Under the two replacement alternatives, there is also a "Stacked Transit/Highway Bridge" (STHB) design option that would require only two new bridges, rather than the three needed for the standard replacement crossing design. The STHB would include transit beneath the highway deck of the I-5 southbound bridge and would suspend the bicycle and pedestrian path under the eastern edge of the northbound I-5 bridge.

The supplemental river crossing (Alternatives 4 and 5), would include a new bridge to the west of the existing I-5 bridges, and would include two lanes or tracks for high-capacity transit and four lanes of southbound Interstate traffic. The supplemental river crossing would use both existing I-5 bridges to carry four lanes of northbound I-5 traffic, bicycles, and pedestrians.

Section 4(f) Comments

The Department appreciates the detail contained in the DEIS and in the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation, especially in the maps. Overall, the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation was thoughtfully written.

Generally, Section 4(f) requires the Department of Transportation to avoid the "use" of protected resources, including historical sites, wildlife refuges, and parks. If avoidance is not prudent and feasible, all possible planning to minimize harm must occur. Further, the new Section 4(f) Final Rule (March 2008) indicates that "the relative significance of each Section 4(f) property" must be considered in determining the alternative that causes the least overall harm. We consider the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site (FOVA), Fort Vancouver National Historic Reserve (VNHR), and the Lewis and Clark National Historical Trail (Trail) to be pre-eminent Section 4(f) resources in the area.

The Department prefers the option of shifting the replacement crossing alignment west to reduce harm to, or completely avoid, FOVA and the VNHR. However, we recognize that this option may not be feasible or cost-effective. We would support shifting the replacement crossing to an intermediate alignment (see page 5-65). We also tentatively support the supplemental crossing, but strongly encourage additional design refinements and mitigation measures.

For the FEIS and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation, it would be helpful to see not only the proposed acquisition and easement areas on maps, but also proposed new pavement areas within the acquired/easement areas. It would also be helpful to see ground-level photographs of all of the protected Section 4(f) park resources. In addition, it would be useful to have visual simulations of each of the build alternatives for each of the parks, so that it is possible to see how views will be impacted. Chapter 3.9: Visual and Aesthetic Qualities contained some visual simulations, but they were general and covered large areas. Without more specific visual simulations, it is difficult to fully understand the visual impacts that may occur. Finally, it would be helpful to re-state the total acreage of each protected 4(f) resource when there is discussion about how much area may be "used." Currently, the total acreages are only listed on Exhibit 5.2-1: Summary Information About 4(f) Park and Recreation Resources Potentially Used by the Project and the reader must continually refer to this chart.

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site and Fort Vancouver National Historic Reserve

The United States Congress created FOVA in 1948 and expanded it in 1961. The Base Realignment and Closure Act authorize Vancouver Barracks to be transferred from the U.S. Army Reserve Command to the National Park Service (NPS). Transfer is expected to occur by 2012.

The NPS Organic Act of 1916, as well as the enabling legislation for FOVA, requires preservation and conservation of FOVA, including the natural, historical, and recreational resources therein, for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

Congress later created the VNHR in 1996. VNHR encompasses 366 acres and includes FOVA, Vancouver Barracks, and park areas managed by the City of Vancouver, including Officer's Row, the West Vancouver Barracks, and Old Apple Tree Park. VNHR is managed under a partnership of the NPS (represented by the Superintendent of FOVA), the City of Vancouver, the State of Washington, and the U.S. Army Reserve Command. The VNHR Trust serves as the official non-profit fundraiser for the VNHR partners. Today, over one million visitors come to the VNHR each year to learn more about the history of the Pacific Northwest region. The VNHR is an important cultural resource in the area for which losses cannot be easily mitigated.

We concur that all of the build alternatives, except those that completely avoid the VNHR, will adversely affect the VNHR Historic District, which includes the FOVA. It is highly likely that the CRC project will directly alter, destroy, or otherwise adversely affect the cultural landscape of VNHR, including FOVA, the setting of historically significant buildings, and significant, intact archaeological resources.

The Hudson's Bay Company Village/"Kanaka" Village is an archeological resource that is particularly threatened by the CRC project. The Kanaka Village site boundary includes the FOVA waterfront, Old Apple Tree Park, the area adjacent to the Confluence Project Land Bridge, and areas within FOVA that are currently managed by the U.S. Army Reserve Command. The Kanaka Village contains tangible remains of the multicultural, fur-trade-era village that formed a critical part of Fort Vancouver's and the Pacific Northwest's history, including foundations, cellars, and other architectural remains of houses, outbuildings, and fence lines, as well as objects of stone, glass, ceramic, wood, and metal. The Kanaka Village was inhabited by people from across the world, including American Indians representing many Pacific Northwest and other North American tribes, the Métis, Native Hawaiians, English, Scots, Irish, French-Canadians, and other ethnicities.

Adverse effects will also occur to the archaeological remains of the U.S. Army's Quartermaster Depot, which was the first of its kind in the Pacific Northwest, the first Post Cemetery, located on the western edge of Officer's Row, and other U.S. Army and Hudson's Bay Company archaeological deposits on the western edge of Vancouver Barracks.

The Barracks Hospital will be adversely affected by construction vibration and the presence of the new highway degrading the hospital's historical setting, as well

as the setting of the two non-commissioned officers duplexes south of the Barracks Hospital that are closest to I-5. We consider the adverse effects to both the Barracks Hospital and the duplexes to be a "constructive use" under Section 4(f) for the replacement river crossing option, which would bring the right-of-way to within 14 to 16 feet of the hospital building, and similarly close to the duplexes. See 23 C.F.R. § 774.15(e)(2), which states that FHWA has determined that a constructive use occurs when "The proximity of the proposed project substantially impairs esthetic features or attributes of a property protected by Section 4(f), where such features or attributes are considered important contributing elements to the value of the property. Examples of substantial impairment to visual or esthetic qualities would be the location of a proposed transportation facility in such proximity that it obstructs or eliminates the primary views of an architecturally significant historical building, or substantially detracts from the setting of a Section 4(f) property which derives its value in substantial part due to its setting...."

In addition to the CRC project implementing or funding landscaping and mature vegetative screening, we believe that upgrading the buildings to meet seismic standards and connecting downtown with the Reserve through a Seventh Street pedestrian access would mitigate for adverse effects. Retrofitting the buildings would preserve their structural integrity throughout the CRC project and connecting people to the Reserve, including the Barracks Hospital, would facilitate education and appreciation of this important historical area.

Old Apple Tree Park and Heritage Apple Tree

As mentioned above, Old Apple Tree Park is part of the VNHR. Heritage Apple Tree, located within the park, is a protected historical resource. It is also part of the Kanaka Village/Fort Vancouver Village. This should be more clearly stated throughout the FEIS and Final 4(f) Evaluation.

The dual-loop I-5/SR 14 interchange under the replacement bridge crossing alternatives would require 0.27 acres of this 1.3-acre park or 35% of the park for an elevated ramp. See page 5-28. The area of acquisition dissects the park. There will be increased shading to the Heritage Apple Tree. Additional information regarding shading should be provided in the Final Section 4(f) Evaluation, including whether shading would kill the tree and therefore be an irretrievable loss.

This park is also an entrance to the Confluence Land Bridge. There should be more discussion in the FEIS of how Old Apple Tree Park contributes to the experience of the land bridge.

Finally, the Heritage Apple Tree is protected by the Federal Lands to Parks (FLP) Program (see below) and separate/additional mitigation, pursuant to this program, may be required.

Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail

The Trail, which is defined as the outbound and return route of the 1804-1806 Corps of Discovery Expedition, was authorized in the 1978 amendment to the National Historic Trails Act. Under this law, NPS administers the Trail, and has as its purpose the identification and protection of the historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for the public enjoyment. The Organic Act of 1916 also guides NPS management of the Trail; NPS is required to manage the Trail in such a way as to preserve and conserve the natural, historical, and recreational resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

The majority of Lewis and Clark's travels were by water along the Missouri and Columbia Rivers drainages. On October 18, 1805, the Expedition began its journey down the Columbia River. A Lewis and Clark campsite is located just outside and east of the Columbia River Crossing project area on the north bank of the Columbia River. The Expedition camped here on their return route on March 30, 1806.

The DEIS and Draft 4(f) Evaluation fail to address any potential impacts to the Trail, even though the NPS alerted the Columbia River Crossing Project that the Trail is within the vicinity of the proposed project in a letter dated September 26, 2007, please see attachment). The Department requests acknowledgment of the location of the Trail along the Columbia River in the project area and consideration of potential impacts to the Trail in developing the FEIS and Final 4(f) Evaluation.

Section 6(f) Comments

Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act protects recreational sites developed or acquired with LWCF money from conversion. There are no anticipated impacts to Section 6(f) sites.

Federal Lands to Parks Program

The following sites within the vicinity of the CRC project are protected by the FLP Program, which may require replacement property for conversion to a non-recreational use:

College Park
Marshall Community Park
Heritage Apple Tree
Vancouver Barracks

Please note that a conversion may occur due to indirect impacts, such as aesthetics and noise. Coordination should occur with the contact person below to

determine whether there is a conversion and whether any separate mitigation is required under the FLP program.

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Comments

On January 25, 2006, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) signed the Interstate Collaborative Environmental Process group (InterCEP) agreement. Through this agreement, certain resource agencies, including the FWS, have established early coordination and collaboration on this project DEIS through meeting attendance, written advisory comments and formal concurrence points. The FWS has worked closely with the InterCEP group in early agency coordination with the goal to effectively implement the policy of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of impacts to affected resources (Appendix A, page 2). As project planning continues, the FWS looks forward to working with the InterCEP group and through its authorities with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, (16 U.S.C. § 1531 *et seq.*) and recommendations and coordination with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401), as amended, to further this goal.

The proposed project site is within a heavily developed corridor with degraded environmental conditions. Riparian habitat quality along both the north and south banks of the Columbia River is poor. Much of the historical habitat was forested wetlands and uplands. In Oregon, the shoreline was once part of a large active floodplain. Currently, urban, industrial, commercial, recreational, and residential development occupies most of the land around the proposed CRC project.

The DEIS alternatives analysis is based primarily on conceptual designs (e.g., the stormwater treatment system) and not final designs, therefore, the Department's comments reflect that level of detail. We will not be commenting at this time on the effects of alteration or removal of terrestrial or wetland habitat because the DEIS states that wetlands have already been avoided to the extent practicable, alteration or removal varies little between the action alternatives, and the preferred alternative has yet to be determined. The FWS will continue to work on these alternative specific environmental items through the InterCEP process.

The Department is particularly concerned about two environmental issues regarding the proposed project: water quality from roadway stormwater runoff and hydrologic changes from bridge piers. These two issues have the potential to have long term project-related effects to aquatic natural resources depending on the alternatives selected.

Water quality is currently being limited by elevated temperature, industrial and agricultural contaminants, and dissolved contaminants such as copper from stormwater runoff. Upstream hydroelectric dams impound water raising its temperature, making fish passage difficult. Untreated roadway stormwater runoff from the existing I-5 bridges currently runs directly into the Columbia River

impacting water quality. The existing I-5 bridges currently have no stormwater management and retrofitting them with a collection and treatment system will have limited effectiveness because of the lift spans.

All of the build alternatives would improve existing stormwater treatment over existing conditions. With the no-build alternative, the stormwater runoff from the existing I-5 crossing and much of the highway would continue to flow untreated to the Columbia River and other surface waters. As traffic and congestion continues to increase in the future, pollutants like copper, would likely increase (page 3-385). The adverse impacts of stormwater runoff from the bridges are best minimized in Alternatives 2 and 3.

The I-5 crossing structure influences aquatic habitat conditions in the main channel and North Portland Harbor. Bridge piers in the river provide refuge from the current for both predatory fish and juvenile salmon and provide very low quality habitat and may increase predation rates on salmon. In addition, seismic upgrades to the existing piers would be necessary. Alternatives 4 and 5 would include retrofitting the 10 piers of the existing bridges, increasing their area by a total of 0.5 acres and their volume by a total of approximately 3,800 cubic yards. The supplemental bridge would consist of six additional piers, adding approximately 1.14 acres in area and approximately 33,000 cubic yards in volume. Retrofitting the existing bridges for seismic upgrade could include extensive in-water temporary structures and would result in large permanent piles surrounding the existing piles. A conceptual design is illustrated in Exhibit 2.3-4 (page 2.22). The cumulative increase in number and size of piers would likely cause changes in water velocities and may further increase predation on juvenile salmon. The alignment of the new and old piers could also affect hydrology, however, it would seem that for safety and navigability purposes, aligning the piers would be crucial thus this may not be an issue.

Alternatives 2 and 3 would have six piers for each bridge (totaling 18 piers) in the Columbia River. Fewer piers would be located in water less than 20 feet deep, where juvenile fish are more likely to congregate and contribute to increased predation. Reduction in total piers for the replacement crossing would be an improvement over existing, no-build, and supplemental crossing conditions. The STHB option for Alternative 2 and 3 also have six piers per bridge in the Columbia River (totaling 12 piers) which further reduces the number of piers in the river over existing, supplemental, or standard-design replacement crossings. This option would put approximately 18 percent less structure in the water, assuming 96-inch vertical piles are used to support the piers. It may however, result in additional smaller piers in shallow-water habitat near the south shore of the Columbia River main channel, which may negatively impact fish (page 3-349).

In addition to the long term concerns with stormwater management and increased inwater structure, Alternatives 2 and 3 could be operational within 3

years, with the river crossings and adjacent interchanges completed within about 4 years. All in-water construction and associated interchange construction from Alternatives 4 and 5 would not be finished for about 5 and one half years (Exhibit 2.4-1, page 2-43). This reduction in in-water construction would reduce the duration of negative temporary effects. The Department will not comment on specific construction-related impact minimization further because accepted best management practices to reduce temporary construction impacts (e.g., to reduce turbidity) are anticipated to be employed and will be further addressed when final designs are developed.

Mitigation Measures

While it is difficult to accurately compare the environmental impacts of alternatives based on conceptual designs, based on the information presented in the DEIS, the Department supports Alternative 2 or 3, particularly with the STHB option, to minimize impacts to FOVA, the VNHR, the Trail, and aquatic natural resources, especially native salmonids. The Department strongly supports shifting the replacement bridge crossing to the west as it would reduce impacts to the VNHR and area natural resources. We would also support shifting the replacement crossing to an intermediate alignment.

Alternatives 2 and 3 have the potential for long term benefits to aquatic natural resources because they would result in less structure in the water and provide the best options for stormwater management. Alternatives 2 and 3 would also have the fewest short and long term impacts to the aquatic resources in terms of construction timing and future bridge maintenance (Exhibit 27, page S-31). The stacked bridge design would reduce the footprint of the project, and most impacts to natural resources, by eliminating the separate bridge for transit use. Together, the replacement bridge designs and environmental impact minimization features associated with Alternatives 2 and 3, with STHB option, appear to improve environmental conditions over the existing bridge for numerous native salmon populations and bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) in the Columbia River.

The existing bridges with their lift towers already introduce a disruptive feature on the viewshed, as observed from FOVA (see Exhibit 3.9-7, p.3-259). The supplemental bridge crossing alternatives would introduce a second, incongruent element that would further disrupt the intactness of the view. Although the replacement bridge crossing alternatives include dual bridges higher and wider than the existing spans, the overall impact on the viewshed would be less disruptive due to the cleaner lines and symmetry of modern construction.

For park, historical, cultural, and archeological resources, we recommend the following additional mitigation measures to lessen the impacts to resources protected by the National Park Service Organic Act of 1916, enabling legislation for FOVA, the National Historic Trails Act, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act:

- It is anticipated that the bulk of artifacts recovered north of the Columbia River will be curated at FOVA. The Department strongly encourages the CRC project to provide support to NPS for the development of a facility within FOVA, as listed in Section 3.8.5, p. 3-252, for the appropriate storage, testing, and interpreting of artifacts and cultural resources information. The facility will house artifacts collected from the CRC project under agreement between Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and NPS, as well as artifacts from previous WSDOT and FHWA/FTA projects. This facility would also complement and augment the existing FOVA Fur Store curation facility within the reconstructed Fort Vancouver site.
- The Department supports mitigation for construction vibration impacts and visual impacts to Barracks Hospital, including those listed in Section 3.8.5 of the DEIS on page 3-252. Mitigation of impacts to the Barracks Hospital through seismic stabilization or retrofitting should also occur to minimize vibration impacts during construction. Further, the Department strongly favors the development of a community connection between downtown Vancouver and the VNHR that would lessen the negative impacts on the visual setting of the Barracks Hospital.
- As noted in the list in Section 3.8.5 of the DEIS, resources should be provided to NPS, through an MOA with WSDOT, to prepare interpretive panels that will describe the historic resources of the VNHR and downtown Vancouver, including the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. These resources will assist the VNHR partners in developing consistent interpretation that complements the existing interpretive displays and interpretation plans already developed for the Confluence Project Land Bridge and other facilities of the VNHR.
- NPS supports the Community Connection, specified in Section 3.8.5 of the DEIS on page 3-252, which will provide "improved connections between downtown Vancouver and the VNHR, including the construction of an expanded overpass/cover-connector between Evergreen Boulevard and 5th street." This Community Connection should include sound walls in its design for the two non-commissioned officers' duplexes closest to I-5 south of the Barracks Hospital and, as noted above, should attempt to minimize the effects to the historic setting of the historical buildings (duplexes and Barracks Hospital).
- Through an MOA with the NPS, the CRC project should provide support to design landscaping buffers that are consistent with and complement current Development Concept Plans for the Kanaka Village cultural landscape, and are consistent with the FOVA General Management Plan and the VNHR cultural landscape inventory. Landscaping should be

complementary to the Community Connection design. This will help to mitigate adverse visual and aesthetic impacts indicated on page 3-268 under Section 3.9.3.

- Through an MOA with NPS, and in cooperation with its VNHR partners and academic partners (Portland State University and Washington State University Vancouver), the CRC project should support ethnohistoric, cultural anthropology, and oral history efforts to better understand tribal connections to the VNHR and FOVA history.
- Through an MOA with NPS, and in consultation with its VNHR partners and institutional partners, including Portland State University and Washington State University Vancouver, the CRC project should support CRC-related Section 106 testing and data recovery excavations. These should include the development of research designs, cataloging and curation plans, and other studies for impacts that cannot avoid VNHR archaeological resources and related cultural deposits within the existing WSDOT right-of-way.
- Through an MOA with NPS, and in consultation with its VNHR partners and institutional partners, including Portland State University, Washington State University Vancouver, Clark College, and ESD-112, the CRC project should support the development of interpretive and educational exhibits and materials that build on existing programs at the VNHR. These programs should build on the existing long-range educational plan of the VNHR and should be geared to teaching the history and prehistory of the Pacific Northwest, including transportation history, from the unique standpoint of the VNHR. The CRC project should provide support to NPS to develop educational materials and exhibits related to the scientific exploration of cultural and natural resources, including sustainability, the reconstruction of past cultures, and environmental/ social consequences of leadership and policy.
- NPS supports returning historic properties affected by construction to their original condition and mitigating noise from construction during special events at the VNHR, including the site's Candlelight Tour, Brigade Encampment, and special events in the Vancouver Barracks, the Hudson's Bay Company Village, in Old Apple Tree Park, and on the Confluence Project Land Bridge.

Contact Information

For questions concerning FOVA and VNHR, please contact:

Ms. Tracy Fortmann
Superintendent
Fort Vancouver National Historical Site
612 E. Reserve St.
Vancouver, WA 98661-3897
(360) 816-6205

For questions concerning the Lewis & Clark Trail, please contact:

Mr. Dan Wiley
Chief, Resources Stewardship
National Park Service
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, NE 68102
(402) 661-1830

For questions concerning Section 4(f), please contact:

Ms. Kelly Powell
Regional Environmental Coordinator
National Park Service
168 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104-2853
(206) 220-4106

For questions concerning the FLP Program, please contact:

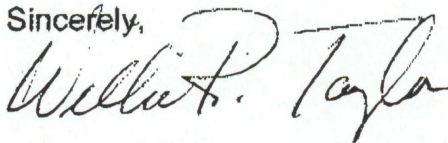
Mr. David Siegenthaler
Project Manager
1111 Jackson St.
Oakland, CA 94607-5807
(510) 817-1324

For questions regarding United States Fish and Wildlife concerns, please contact:

Ms. Kathy Roberts
Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office
2600 SE 98th Avenue, Suite 100
Portland, OR 97266
(503) 231-6179

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Willie R. Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "W".

Willie R. Taylor
Director, Office of Environmental
Policy and Compliance

Attachment



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Pacific West Region
909 First Avenue, Fifth Floor
Seattle, Washington 98104-1060



IN REPLY REFER TO:
PWRO-EC

September 26, 2007

Mr. Doug Ficco
Project Director
Columbia River Crossing Project
700 Washington Street, Suite 300
Vancouver, WA 98660

Dear Mr. Ficco:

The National Park Service, Pacific West Regional Office in Seattle, Washington, recently received a copy of Environmental Manager Heather Gunderson's letter addressed to the National Park Service, Fort Vancouver National Historic Site ("FOVA"), dated May 29, 2007, and of FOVA's response, dated June 28, 2007. Ms. Gunderson's letter solicited assistance from FOVA on identifying an appropriate "Area of Potential Effects" ("APE") as part of the National Historic Preservation Act's required Section 106 consultation process for the Columbia River Crossing ("CRC") project. We are responding directly to you as Project Manager and will copy in Ms. Gunderson.

In addition to FOVA, another unit of the National Park System ---the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail ("Lewis & Clark Trail")---is within the vicinity of the proposed CRC project. There is a campsite near the southeast corner of Fort Vancouver. Any Section 106 consultation that may be required for the Lewis & Clark Trail should be directed to:

Mr. Dan Wiley
Chief, Resources Stewardship
National Park Service
601 Riverfront Drive
Omaha, NE 68102
(402) 661-1830

The following parks in Washington State are protected under Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Funds ("LWCF") Act:

Arnold Park
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife fishing access sites along the Columbia River
Burnt Bridge Creek Trail

Under the LWCF Act, a conversion may occur if the project results in a change of outdoor public recreational use of the protected area. The NPS must approve the conversion, and the project proponent must provide replacement property of equal fair market value and reasonable equivalent usefulness and location.

**TAKE PRIDE
IN AMERICA** 

ATTACHMENT

In Oregon, East Delta Park is protected by Section 1010 of the Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery ("UPARR") Act, which has similar approval and conversion requirements to the LWCF Act.

The contact for Washington parks protected by the LWCF Act and for all parks protected by the UPARR Act is:

Heather Ramsay
LWCF & UPARR Project Manager
National Park Service
Pacific West Region, Partnership Programs
909 First Avenue, Floor 5
Seattle, WA 98104-1060
(206) 220-4123

Finally, the following parks in the CRC project area are protected by NPS through the Federal Lands to Parks ("FLP") program:

College Park
Marshall Park
Dr. McLoughlin's Apple Tree
GSA Park
Vancouver Barracks
East Delta Park

The contact for the FLP program is:

David Siegenthaler
Project Manager
1111 Jackson St
Oakland, CA 94607-4807
(510) 817-1324

Section 106 mitigation for resources within Fort Vancouver National Historic Site's boundary and that of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve should be coordinated with Ms. Tracy Fortmann, Superintendent. Mitigation for recreational impacts to any FLP, LWCF, and UPARR site within FOVA is separate from and in addition to any Section 106 mitigation, and should be coordinated through Ms. Ramsay or Mr. Siegenthaler, as appropriate. However, Superintendent Fortmann will continue to be the NPS lead and involved in all cultural resource issues within the National Park and the Vancouver National Historic Reserve.

Please note that Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act applies and requires avoidance of Section 4(f)-protected areas, unless there are no feasible and prudent alternatives. If no feasible and prudent alternative exists, then all possible planning to minimize harm must occur. Per the Federal Highway Administration's guidance on Section 4(f), the alternative that results in the least amount of harm to Section 4(f)-protected resources must usually be chosen, although non-4(f)-protected resources, such as wetlands or endangered species, may factor into choosing an alternative that results in more harm to 4(f)-protected resources.

Finally, under the Redwood National Park Expansion Act of 1978, the NPS has authority to address activities occurring outside a park unit that impact the park. In short, there is extensive protection over national and local parks, including cultural and historical resources, within the CRC project area. We appreciate the efforts already taken by the CRC project to identify an adequate APE in order in order to account for all potentially affected historic, archaeological, and traditional cultural properties. Even at this early stage, however, we note that the preliminary APE seems to suggest that all CRC project alternatives will be concentrated near the FOVA and other protected park areas. We strongly urge the CRC project administrators and project managers to make every effort to avoid impacts to these areas. We are enclosing a copy of Superintendent Fortmann's recent letter to Ms. Heather Gunderson for your additional information.

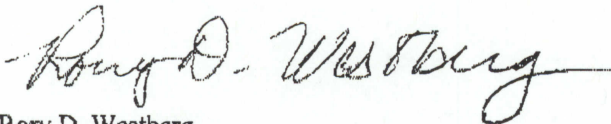
All reasonable and prudent alternatives must be considered that would provide an option to taking such a large swath through the I-5 corridor and its associated adverse impacts on the historic components of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve and of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site.

Ms. Kelly Powell reviews Section 4(f) analyses contained in various environmental planning documents on behalf of the NPS for projects proposed in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Please follow the enclosed environmental review process for the Department of the Interior. For your convenience, Ms. Powell's contact information is as follows:

Kelly Powell
Environmental Compliance Specialist
National Park Service
168 S. Jackson St., 2nd Floor
Seattle, WA 98104-2853

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and look forward to your working cooperatively with us to ensure the protection of these naturally significant resources.

Sincerely,



Rory D. Westberg
Deputy Regional Director

Enclosures

cc: Heather Gunderson, CRC Environmental Manager
Tracy Fortmann, NPS, Superintendent, Fort Vancouver, NHS
Dr. Doug Wilson, NPS, PWR Historical Archaeologist
Kelly Powell, NPS, PWR Environmental Compliance Specialist
David Siegenthaler, NPS, PWR FLP Project Manager
Heather Ramsay, NPS, PWR LWCF & UPARR project Manager