



November 22, 2016

Millennium Bulk Terminals EIS  
Attention: ICF International  
710 Second Avenue, Suite 550  
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: NEPA Draft EIS for Millennium Bulk Terminals-Longview

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Millennium Bulk Terminal Draft EIS. I am submitting this letter on behalf of the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA). PNWA is a non-profit trade association that advocates for federal policies and funding in support of regional economic development. We represent over 130 public and private sector member organizations in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Members include public ports, navigation, transportation, trade, tourism, agriculture, forest products, energy and local government interests.

The Columbia Snake River System is a 470 mile transportation link from the Pacific Ocean to Idaho. It is the nation's number one wheat export gateway and number two for soy. It is also the number one West Coast gateway for wood and mineral bulk products. Over 49 million tons of cargo moved on the Lower Columbia in 2014, supporting over 40,000 local jobs, and we are poised to handle more cargo than ever before.

In fall 2010, the Columbia River navigation channel deepening project was completed, bringing the federal channel depth from 40 to 43 feet. The channel deepening project included extensive analysis by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The deepened channel means the river system is better positioned for new projects, increased cargo movement, and more river-related jobs. Channel deepening has already resulted in over \$1 billion dollars of public and private investment in the scant six years since it was completed.

As a major bulk export gateway, the Columbia Snake River System moves a wide variety of cargos and serves as a major international trade gateway for our nation. Cargo from the heartland of our country is routinely moved by rail or barge to the lower Columbia River for export. Navigation stakeholders along the river system are committed to increasing these exports, ultimately bringing jobs, tax revenue and economic development to the region.

PNWA is supportive of thorough and fair reviews of all new projects on the river system. We are pleased to see that the study area for the impacts was appropriately defined as the State of Washington, as has historically been the case for similar projects. PNWA is concerned at the length of review and permit processing time. The increased cost and uncertainty of permitting projects is becoming an increasingly severe burden on businesses and raises the cost of investing in the region and the river system. We respectfully request that the review and finalization process for the EIS is completed in a reasonable period.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Sincerely,

*Kristin Meira*

Kristin Meira  
Executive Director  
Pacific Northwest Waterways Association