

**APPENDIX D: Port of Vancouver**

**Project Descriptions**

**COLUMBIA GATEWAY**

**RAIL ACCESS PROJECT**

## **Port of Vancouver Columbia Gateway and Rail Access Project Descriptions**

The Port of Vancouver (Port) provided comments on the City of Vancouver (City) Vancouver City Center Vision Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Port's comments indicated that old descriptions of the Port's Columbia Gateway site and rail projects were referred to in the EIS. The following information provides up-to-date information on the current project descriptions and National and State Environmental Policy Act (NEPA and SEPA) compliance. For additional information about the projects, please refer to the Port's website at: <http://www.portvanusa.com/property/columbiagateway.html>

The Port owns approximately 1,059 acres comprising Parcels 3, 4, and 5, known as Columbia Gateway, which are located south of SR 501 (Lower River Road) in the City. The Port originally proposed the development of Parcel 3 of Columbia Gateway to include a rail and road component. In April 2006, the Port and lead federal agencies made a collective decision to change from a Habitat Conservation Plan approach to an ESA Section 7 consultation through the Clean Water Act 404 permitting process. As a result, an agreement was reached that the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is the lead federal agency for the project.

At the same time, the draft traffic analysis for the build-out of the Columbia Gateway site had been completed and its results showed that, although the Columbia Gateway build-out would create traffic impacts, they could be mitigated by improvements to existing roadways. The extension of NW 26th Avenue would not be necessary to offset the traffic impacts from build-out of Parcel 3. The Port held discussions with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and City on funding and other issues related to the road. As a result of the traffic analysis and those discussions, the road improvement is now moving forward as a separate project under a different NEPA process with FHWA as the lead federal agency and the City as the applicant.

As the Port continued to examine the rail component and the needs of its existing tenants, it became apparent that rail improvements would be needed to serve the tenants within the existing Port facilities, regardless of the development of Parcel 3. The rail improvements within the existing Port facilities are also moving forward as a separate project under a separate NEPA process with FHWA performing as the funding and lead federal agency and the Port as the applicant.

Current descriptions of these Port projects are provided below.

### **Columbia Gateway Site Project**

The Port is proposing to develop its Columbia Gateway (Parcel 3) for marine and light industrial uses. Mitigation and habitat creation for impacts on Parcel 3 would be developed on Parcels 4 and 5. The proposed project would also include constructing a turning basin adjacent to the Columbia River navigation channel and constructing two to three marine terminals in the river. The Port is currently preparing a NEPA EIS for Columbia Gateway. The Corps is the lead agency for the NEPA EIS. A scoping meeting has been held, and the EIS is being prepared. The NEPA EIS is also intended for use during SEPA compliance for state and local permitting.

## **POV Rail Access Project**

Presently, the existing Port rail facilities extend from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) mainline to the Hill Track on Port property and terminate at Gateway Avenue at the Port's Terminal 4. The Port is proposing to construct a rail access project to allow for industrial and economic development. Rail access improvements to the Port have several project elements.

Schedule 1 begins in the vicinity of the BNSF Mainline near Esther Street to the west of the Boise property. This project will require SEPA compliance.

The remaining Schedules 2 through 4 include a rail access line between the Port's existing facilities and the BNSF mainline, and extend the tracks to Old Lower River Road to create better rail access for the Port's existing clients and redevelopment within the existing Port facilities.

The rail improvements within the existing Port facilities are a separate project under a separate NEPA process, with FHWA performing as the funding and lead federal agency with the Port as the applicant. NEPA compliance is beginning for this project. Separate SEPA compliance will also be completed as required.

# ATTACHMENT Q