

Public meetings planned on impacts of BP Cherry Point pier extension

Contact: Patricia Graesser (206) 764-3760

SEATTLE--Public scoping meetings are scheduled for September for an Environmental Impact Statement on impacts of BP Cherry Point pier extension for which the Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District, is the permitting and lead federal agency. The U.S Coast Guard is a cooperating agency.

The EIS will support the Corps' permit evaluation process under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act for the BP Cherry Point marine pier extension in the Strait of Georgia near Ferndale, Wash. The Corps plans to complete an EIS on the impacts of the permitted pier extension to the existing dock, including vessel traffic and risk of oil spills from potential increase in oil tanker traffic in Puget Sound and will reevaluate the pier extension's compliance with the Magnuson Amendment of the Marine Mammals Protection Act.

The purpose of the scoping meetings is to assist the Corps and Coast Guard in defining issues, public concerns, alternatives, and the depth to which they will be evaluated in the EIS.

Scoping meetings will be held:

* Port Angeles - Sept. 5 from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Port Angeles Public Library on 22108 Peabody Street, in Port Angeles, Wash. An open house will be held from 6:30 to 7 p.m. prior to the meeting.

* Anacortes - Sept. 7 from 7 to 9:30 p.m., at the Seafarer's Memorial Park Building, 601 14th Street, in Anacortes, Wash. An open house will be held from 6:30 to 7 p.m. prior to the meeting.

* Ferndale - Sept. 12 from 7 to 9:30 p.m., American Legion Hall on 5537 2nd Ave., Ferndale, Wash. An open house will be held from 6:30 to 7 p.m. prior to the meeting.

* Seattle - Sept. 13 from 7 to 9 p. m. at the Federal Center South, 4735 East Marginal Way South, in Seattle. An open house will be held from 6:30 to 7 p.m. prior to the meeting.

Written comments on the scope of the EIS or requests for information should be sent prior to Sept. 18 to:

Mrs. Olivia Romano, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle Regulatory Branch, Post Office Box 3755, Seattle, Washington 98124-3755, or sent via e-mail to olivia.h.romano@usace.army.mil

The EIS will evaluate a range of alternatives including a No Action Alternative. The EIS will consider alternatives that may result from comments received during the agency and public scoping period. The EIS will also discuss alternatives considered and eliminated from further detailed study. The Corps will use this evaluation to determine compliance with Section 10 of Rivers and Harbors Act and compliance with Magnuson Amendment of Marine Mammals Protection Act.

During the scoping period, the Corps invites federal agencies, state and local governments, Native American Tribes, and the public to participate in the scoping process either by providing written comments or by attending the public scoping meetings. The Corps has identified the following probable major topics to be analyzed in depth in the Draft EIS: oil spill impacts on aquatic resources, fish and wildlife habitat functions, threatened and endangered species impacts, surface water quality, and cumulative impacts. Both written and oral scoping comments will be considered in the preparation of the Draft EIS.

Development of the Draft EIS will begin after the close of the public scoping period. The Draft EIS is expected to be available for public review in the fall of 2008.

For further information contact: Mrs. Olivia Romano at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle Regulatory Branch, 4735 E. Marginal Way South, Seattle, Washington 98134, (206) 764-6960, or e-mail to Olivia.h.romano@usace.army.mil <<mailto:Olivia.h.romano@usace.army.mil>>

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