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Media Contacts:

Stephanie Dunn, Cowlitz County, 360-577-3065, ext. 9-2736, DunnS@co.cowlitz.wa.us

Linda Kent, Ecology media relations, 360-407-6239, linda.kent@ecy.wa.gov

Patricia Graesser, Corps of Engineers media relations, 206-764-3760, Patricia.graesser@us.army.mil

Scoping to begin Aug. 16 for environmental review of Millennium Bulk Terminals - Longview proposal

Agencies seek input before drafting environmental impact statement for export terminal proposal

COWLITZ COUNTY–The public is invited to comment on the scope of an environmental impact statement (EIS) that three agencies plan to jointly prepare for a proposed export terminal for shipping coal near Longview.

Millennium Bulk Terminals-Longview LLC proposes to build and operate a terminal to export coal from the site of the former Reynolds Aluminum smelter in Cowlitz County.

Cowlitz County, the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) are together conducting the EIS process for the proposed terminal project and will produce one joint EIS. Cowlitz County and Ecology must follow the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), and the Corps must follow the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

A 95-day comment period for the EIS scoping process will begin Aug. 16. It will end Nov. 18. The agencies have established an official website – www.millenniumbulkeiswa.gov – that provides information about the scoping process, how to submit comments, meetings and other helpful information about the environmental review process.

Through scoping, the agencies will decide what impacts to analyze in the EIS. The three lead agencies will ask other agencies, tribes and the public to recommend what should be studied in the EIS and identify specific issues and concerns. After considering comments, the lead agencies will decide what will be included in the EIS.

People can view information about the proposed projects and comment at any time during the 95-day comment period. Some options are available 24 hours a day:

- Via the official EIS website established by the three agencies for the EIS process: www.millenniumbulkeiswa.gov
- By email: comments@millenniumbulkeiswa.gov
- By U.S. mail: Millennium Bulk Terminals-Longview EIS, c/o ICF International, 701 Second Avenue, Suite 550, Seattle, WA 98104

The lead agencies also will host five scoping meetings. Each meeting will include an open house with information on the proposed project, staff available to answer questions, and opportunities to provide oral or written comments.

Meetings will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. No formal presentation will occur, so people may arrive and leave as they choose during the meeting hours.

Tentative meeting dates were announced in July. Final meeting dates are set for these dates and locations:

- **Longview:** Sept. 17, Cowlitz County Event Center, 1900 7th Ave.
- **Spokane:** Sept. 25, Spokane Convention Center, 334 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
- **Pasco:** Oct. 1, The Trac Center, 6600 Burden Blvd.
- **Clark County:** Oct. 9, Clark County Fairgrounds, 17402 N.E. Delfel Road, Ridgefield
- **Tacoma:** Oct. 17, Tacoma Convention Center, 1500 Broadway

All comments received during the scoping period will be given equal weight regardless of whether they are received at a scoping meeting, on the website, by email or U.S. mail.

Project-specific comments must be received during the official scoping period for the Millennium EIS. Scoping comments submitted for other proposals and scoping comments that are submitted before or after the official scoping period cannot be considered in the scoping process for the Millennium EIS.

In scoping, the lead agencies seek comments that will guide their decision on how the EIS will address:

- A reasonable range of alternatives including alternative sites and project designs based on the project purpose.
- Potentially affected natural, cultural, or community resources and the extent of study and analysis needed to understand each potential impact.
- Significant probable unavoidable adverse impacts.
- Measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate (offset) effects of the proposal.

The scoping process does not address whether the proposal should receive permits. It will help define what will be studied in the EIS. Decisions about permits cannot be made by local, state and federal agencies until after the final EIS is issued.

A limited amount of information submitted by the applicant will be available at this point in the process.

Following the comment period, the lead agencies will issue a scoping summary and then begin work on a draft EIS, which may take a year or more to prepare. After the draft EIS is written, the lead agencies will again seek public comment. After considering these comments, the lead agencies will issue a final EIS.

The EIS will meet the requirements of both the national and state environmental policy acts. The joint process enables the co-lead agencies to avoid duplicated efforts where the two laws overlap, and also meet each statute's separate requirements where the two laws differ.

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More information:

The agencies' environmental review is separate from a cleanup being conducted at the site under the state's Model Toxics Control Act at the site. Ecology is working with site owner Northwest Alloys-Alcoa and site operator Millennium Bulk Terminals to investigate and clean up the site where the Reynolds Metals Company owned and operated an aluminum smelter from 1941 to 2000. The smelter was permanently shut down in 2001. More information on the cleanup effort is available on Ecology's [Reynolds Metal cleanup website](#).

The proposed coal shipping terminal project is also separate from current operations on the site. Millennium Bulk Terminals currently moves alumina from ship to rail to supply a Wenatchee aluminum smelter. The company also imports a small amount of coal by rail for use by the neighboring Weyerhaeuser complex. For more information about current operations, see Ecology's [current operations website](#).

- [Official website](#) for Millennium proposal scoping process (www.millenniumbulkeiswa.gov)
- [Ecology's Millennium website](#) (www.ecy.wa.gov/geographic/millennium/index.html)
- [Cowlitz County](#) (www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/Index.aspx?NID=1559)
- [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District](#) (www.nws.usace.army.mil)
- [Washington Office of Regulatory Assistance](#) (<http://www.ora.wa.gov/>)
- [Ecology's social media](#) (www.ecy.wa.gov/about/newmedia.html)