

Chapter 7

Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

Public and agency outreach efforts for the Millennium Bulk Terminals—Longview State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) began in summer 2013, and have continued throughout this environmental review process.

Cowlitz County and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), the co-lead agencies for the SEPA environmental review, identified the following objectives to guide the public involvement process.

- Conduct a thorough, impartial, and transparent public review process that informs the development of the Draft and Final EISs.
- Provide clear milestones for public participation.
- Effectively and efficiently share with, and obtain information from, the public and stakeholders during the EIS development processes.
- Meet or exceed state and local requirements for public involvement as defined by the SEPA processes.

This chapter summarizes the public and agency outreach activities to date and outlines next steps following the close of the Draft EIS public comment period. Appendix J, *Scoping Summary Report*, includes scoping meeting materials, notices, and summaries of public scoping comments.

7.1 Scoping

The purpose of scoping is to determine the "scope" or content of an EIS. The scope identifies the potential environmental impacts and alternatives that need to be evaluated. The scoping process provides an opportunity for the public, communities, tribes, and agencies to recommend methods for analysis and alternatives to evaluate in the EIS and to identify issues and concerns. Public comments on the scope of the EIS help the co-lead agencies determine what should be addressed in the EIS.

The co-lead agencies used an expanded scoping process that provided for a 95-day comment period from August 16, 2013 to November 18, 2013. During this time, the public, agencies, communities, and tribes were able to learn about the Proposed Action, the EIS process, and provide scoping comments. Five public scoping meetings were held around Washington State. Agencies, local governments, tribes, and the public were invited to participate in the scoping process by providing comments and attending a public scoping meeting.

7.1.1 Public Notices and Media Activities

A broad-based, multimedia approach was used to notify the public about the Proposed Action and of the purpose, time, and location of the scoping meetings.

7.1.1.1 Website

Agency and the EIS project websites were used throughout public scoping for announcements and as a repository for scoping materials and information. The co-lead agencies emphasized the availability of the project website. The project website address was included in all news releases and informational materials and identified as the project information hub and portal for submitting comments during the scoping period. The website address was also provided to each scoping meeting venue for incorporation into venue websites.

The scoping meeting dates and locations were included on Ecology's public calendar and posted on the Cowlitz County Building and Planning home page.

7.1.1.2 Media Releases

Standard press releases, as well as social media, were used to inform the public of the scoping process, scoping meetings, and comment opportunities. Media releases from the co-lead agencies were distributed before each meeting, with designated contacts listed for reporter follow-ups. Social media such as Twitter were used as appropriate by the co-lead agencies.

Display ads were placed in local newspapers where scoping meetings were held, including *The Spokane Spokesman-Review*, *The Tri-City Herald* (Pasco), *The Columbian* (Vancouver/Clark County), *The Longview Daily News*, and *The Tacoma News-Tribune*.

7.1.1.3 Public Notices

People interested in updates on the project were added to the project LISTSERV before and during the scoping period. Announcements were sent to the LISTSERV group throughout the scoping period. Public notice was also provided via the SEPA Register.

Care was taken to ensure that notices of meetings reached minority and low-income populations. Approximately 6,000 flyers (in English and Spanish) were mailed to minority and low-income neighborhoods identified near the project area, including the Highlands neighborhood in Longview. Flyers were also placed at public locations near the target neighborhoods and posted to the project website. An example of this flyer is included in Appendix J, *Scoping Summary Report*.

7.1.2 Prescoping Meetings and Interviews

Meetings were held with stakeholders and local agency staff prior to public scoping. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss expectations, meeting ground rules, and general communication. Prior to the scoping meetings, various stakeholders, and local agency representatives were identified and interviewed to guide planning for the scoping process.

The interviews identified the following characteristics and opportunities for each stakeholder.

- Understanding and expectations about the scoping process and the Proposed Action.
- Experience with similar processes and lessons learned.
- Suggestions on scoping meeting design and ground rules.
- Effective communication channels and outreach methods, particularly for low-income and minority populations.

The co-lead agencies identified 40 individuals (or groups of individuals) to be contacted for interviews. Thirty interviews were conducted with stakeholders representing the following diverse range of interests and demographics.

- Environmental and conservation groups
- Landowner organizations
- Labor organizations
- Economic development and business organizations
- Port authorities
- River navigation pilots
- Local community groups

In addition to these interviews, a local agency meeting was held on August 6, 2013, in Kelso, Washington. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the Proposed Action, discuss the environmental process and preliminary schedule, and solicit input regarding scoping. Representatives from the following 11 jurisdictions were invited to participate in this meeting. Staff members from the Association of Washington Cities were also invited to participate in this meeting.

- Camas
- Kalama
- Kelso
- Longview
- Pasco
- Rainier, Oregon
- Spokane
- Tacoma
- Vancouver
- Washougal
- Woodland

7.1.3 Agency and Tribal Notifications and Scoping

On August 19, 2013, a letter informing tribes of the scoping process and requesting input was sent to all tribes in Washington State, as well as tribes in Oregon and Idaho that expressed interest in the Proposed Action. Appendix J, *Scoping Summary Report*, contains a copy of the letter sent to tribes.

In addition to tribal outreach, on October 23, 2013, a state agency scoping meeting was held at Ecology's offices in Lacey, Washington. State agency staff were given the opportunity to learn about the Proposed Action, ask questions, and suggest studies and activities for the EIS scope. Appendix J, *Scoping Summary Report*, contains a list of attendees.

7.1.4 Comment Period and Open Houses

During the 95-day scoping period, the co-lead agencies provided multiple opportunities for interested members of the public to learn about the Proposed Action and the EIS process and to provide scoping comments. The co-lead agencies invited members of the public, government agencies, tribes, and other organizations to provide scoping comments through the following methods.

- Sending a comment by mail to the co-lead agencies in care of ICF International, 710 Second Avenue, Suite 550, Seattle, WA 98104.
- Obtaining a comment form at a scoping meeting and submitting written comments at the meeting or through U.S. mail.
- Using the online comment form on the project website.
- Submitting a comment by email to a dedicated project email address
- Making a public verbal comment at a scoping meeting.
- Providing an individual verbal comment at a scoping meeting in a quiet room.

All comments received were posted on the website so users could review all comments submitted. For mass mailings or email petitions, the comments were reviewed individually, but only one representative document was uploaded on the project website. Similarly, some organizations collected a large number of comments from individuals and then submitted them in one package; a representative document was uploaded to the project website in the same format in which they were submitted. All comments were retained as part of the scoping period record.

Five scoping meetings were held (Table 7-1).

Table 7-1. SEPA EIS Open House Scoping Meetings

City	Meeting Date and Time	Venue
Longview	Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.	Cowlitz County Expo Center
Spokane	Wednesday, September 25, 2013, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.	Spokane Convention Center
Pasco	Tuesday, October 1, 2013, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.	The Trac Center
Clark County	Wednesday, October 9, 2013, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.	Clark County Fairgrounds
Tacoma	Thursday, October 17, 2013, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.	Tacoma Convention Center

7.2 Scoping Comments

Scoping comments were collected through a variety of methods and organized by comments received from individuals, agencies, tribes, and organizations. Scoping comments were considered in the development of the Draft EIS.

7.2.1 Total Comments Submitted

In total, 217,566 comments were received during the 95-day scoping comment period. Of the 217,566 submissions received, approximately 214,640 were from mass mail form letter or email campaigns. Of the roughly 3,000 unique submissions, approximately 2,000 were found to contain substantive text. Scoping comments were received in a variety of ways, including electronic, written, and verbal comments. Electronic comments were submitted online through the EIS website or via email to a designated email address or to the co-lead agencies. Written comments included unique letters, form letters, or comment cards that were received through U.S. mail or at the public scoping meetings. Written comments also included preprinted cards and form letters or postcards from nongovernmental organizations. Verbal comments were received at the public scoping meetings, either as presented to the audience or to a court reporter in a semiprivate setting.

7.2.2 Agency and Tribal Comments

Of the 217,566 comment letters received during the 95-day scoping comment period, 127 letters were received from federal and state agencies, state and locally elected officials, local agencies or organizations, and tribes. Table 7-2 lists the agencies and tribes that provided scoping comments.

7.3 Draft EIS Public Comment Period

Publication of the Draft EIS triggers a final round of public outreach and involvement, including notification to interested parties about the document's availability and a public hearing to solicit input on the Draft EIS.

During the 45-day Draft EIS public comment period (April 29 through June 13, 2016), the co-lead agencies will provide multiple opportunities to comment on the Draft EIS. The co-lead agencies invite members of the public, government agencies, tribes, and organizations to provide comments through the following methods.

- Sending a comment by mail to Millennium Bulk Terminals—Longview SEPA EIS in care of ICF International, 710 Second Avenue, Suite 550, Seattle, WA 98104.
- Obtaining a comment form at a public hearing and submitting written comments at the hearing or through U.S. mail.
- Using the online comment form on the project website.
- Making a public oral comment at a Draft EIS public hearing.
- Providing an individual oral comment at a Draft EIS public hearing in a quiet room.

Table 7-2. Agency and Tribal Scoping Commenters

Federal Agencies	State Agencies	Local and Regional Agencies	Elected Officials	Tribes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonneville Power Administration • Columbia River Gorge Commission (submitted two letters) • National Marine Fisheries Service • National Park Service • U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service • U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation • Washington State Department of Health • Washington State Department of Natural Resources • Washington State Department of Transportation • Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Camas, Washington • City of Cheney, Washington • City of Eugene, Oregon • City of Everett, Washington • City of Lacey, Washington • City of Livingston, Montana • City of Longview, Washington • City of Missoula, Montana • City of Mosier, Oregon • City of Olympia, Washington • City of Sandpoint, Idaho • City of The Dalles, Oregon • City of Vancouver, Washington • City of Washougal, Washington • Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments • Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue • Gallatin City-County Board of Health • Olympic Region Clean Air Agency • Port of Longview • San Juan County Council • Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington State Legislature, Representatives Larry Haler and Brad Klippert, 8th District • Washington State Legislature, Representative Joe Schmick, 9th District • Washington State Legislature, Representative Paul Harris, 17th District • Washington State Representative, Representative Liz Pike, 18th District • Washington State Senate, Senator Tom Sheldon, 35th District • Washington State Legislature, Representatives and Senators from Districts 23, 24, 27, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 40, 43, 46 • Metropolitan King County Council • King County Executive • Hood River City Council • Thurston County Commissioner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coeur d'Alene Tribe of Indians • Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission • Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation • Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation • Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (submitted two letters) • Cowlitz Indian Tribe • Nez Perce Tribe • Nisqually Indian Tribe • Upper Columbia United Tribes

7.3.1 Notification of Public Hearings and Comment Period

A broad-based, multimedia approach is used to notify the public of the purpose, time, and location of each public hearing. The following methods are used to notify the public of the hearings.

- **EIS project website.** Public hearing information is posted on the EIS project website and the websites of the co-lead agencies. The EIS project website address is displayed prominently in all news releases and informational materials and identified as the project information hub and portal for submitting comments during the review period. Each venue where the public hearings take place will incorporate the EIS project website into the venue website.
- **Media releases.** Media releases from the co-lead agencies are distributed no later than 7 days before each public hearing, with designated contacts listed for reporter follow-ups. An initial media release regarding the release of this Draft EIS was distributed on April 7, 2016.
- **Elected official alerts.** The co-lead agencies will send notices to designated elected officials on the local, state, and national levels. Notices will follow existing agency protocols for communication with elected officials.
- **Public hearing notification.** Notifications of public hearings are published in local newspapers where public hearings will be held: *The Longview Daily News*, *The Spokane Spokesman-Review*, and *The Tri-City Herald* (Pasco).
- **Local project mailing.** An informational flyer will be mailed to as many as 6,000 residents in neighborhoods near the project area, including the Highlands neighborhood, 2 weeks prior to the Longview public hearing on May 24, 2016.
- **Project email list.** An email will be sent to people who signed up for the project email notification service.

7.3.2 Public Hearings and Open Houses

The co-lead agencies will hold three public hearings and open houses at three locations:

May 24, 2016, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Cowlitz County Regional Conference Center
1900 7th Avenue
Longview, WA 98632

May 26, 2016, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Spokane Convention Center
334 W Spokane Falls Boulevard
Spokane, WA 99201

June 2, 2016, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.
TRAC Center
6600 Burden Boulevard
Pasco, WA 99301

The public hearings will provide a forum to present and receive comments on the Draft EIS. Attendees will be able to provide comments in person, either in a semiprivate setting or before an audience. Attendees will also be provided with comment forms for written comments.

Commenters will be encouraged to focus their comments on three topics.

- Methods used for the analyses.
- Findings in the Draft EIS related to potential resource impacts.
- Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts of the Proposed Action.

The public hearings will include an open house, which will allow the public to interact with agency representatives and to access information about the SEPA EIS process as well as details about the Proposed Action. Exhibit boards will show the proposed coal export terminal, the steps for developing the Draft and Final EIS document, findings contained in the Draft EIS, and a general timeline. Exhibit boards will also include guidance on providing comments during the Draft EIS comment period and information about how the comments will be used.

7.4 Next Steps

Comments on this Draft EIS will be received and compiled, and the co-lead agencies will prepare and release a Final EIS that includes responses to comments on the Draft EIS. The National Environmental Policy Act Draft EIS developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Proposed Action will also be considered for the Final EIS. The co-lead agencies anticipate the Final EIS will be published in 2017. The Final EIS will be used by Cowlitz County, Ecology, and other agencies for decision-making regarding permits for the Proposed Action. Seven days following publication of the Final EIS, permits for construction and operation of the Proposed Action may be issued. All local, state, and federal permits must be issued before construction of the Proposed Action may begin.