Vessel Transportation

The proposed export terminal would increase the number of large commercial vessels traveling the Lower Columbia River by adding 840 vessels each year. This equals 1,680 vessel transits (a one-way trip) in the Columbia River.

The study analyzed:

- Potential for the proposed export terminal's construction and operation to affect vessel transportation at the new docks and in the Lower Columbia River.
- Potential for increased vessel traffic to affect the risk of vessel incidents, such as collisions, allisions, groundings, and oil spills.

Bulk cargo vessels, such as the one shown above, would serve the proposed project

The study found:

- Construction – Construction activities would not substantially affect vessel transportation.
- Operations – The proposed export terminal would add a substantial number of large vessels to the traffic on the Columbia River. A vessel traffic model found that the increase in vessel traffic for the proposed export terminal would increase the risk of vessel incidents such as collisions, grounding, or fire by about 2.8 incidents per year. Substantial damage from an incident would be highly unlikely, and virtually none of the incidents would be expected to result in the total loss of a vessel. There would be no refueling at the proposed docks, but refueling could occur at other locations in the Lower Columbia River, like anchorages. The risks of spills would increase slightly due to the increase in the number of vessels.

What could be done to reduce impacts?

- The study did not identify impacts on vessel transportation that required mitigation.