

### Vessel Transportation Fact Sheet

The Columbia River navigation channel provides a path for large vessels to various ports. The proposed project 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 per year. Vessels would be up to 830 feet long and 130 feet wide. The proposed project's two new docks would be designed to accommodate two cargo vessels at a time. The lower Columbia River navigation channel is dredged to be 43 feet deep. The vessels for the proposed project would be this depth or less.

#### What impacts on vessel transportation were studied?

The study looks at how the proposed project's construction and operation could affect vessel transportation at the two new docks and in the lower Columbia River. The study evaluates how the increased vessel traffic in the lower Columbia River could affect the risk of vessel incidents, such as collisions with other vessels, collisions with a dock, groundings, and oil spills.



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

## Lower Columbia River Large Commercial Vessel Transits per Year

Condition	Vessel Transits
2014 Existing Conditions	3,862
2028 Future Without Proposed Project	4,440
2028 Future With Proposed Project	6,120

### How were impacts on vessel transportation analyzed?

The study describes the current conditions of vessel transportation at the project area and in the lower Columbia River. The analysis used information from the Columbia River Bar Pilots, the Columbia River Pilots and the Lower Columbia River Harbor Safety Plan. Data on oil spills from the U.S. Coast Guard and Washington State Department of Ecology were used. The study considers construction, operations, and vessel transport related to the proposed project. Next, it identifies potential impacts on vessel transportation. Finally, the study includes actions that can mitigate or offset the potential impacts.

The study describes the existing marine transportation system of the lower Columbia River. It provides an overview of existing vessel traffic with a focus on large commercial vessels such as cargo vessels. The analysis looks at historic data on vessel incidents and oil spills in the lower Columbia River. It accounts for navigational considerations like weather, tides, and vessel traffic patterns. A specialized computer model was built using this information and it identifies the potential for increased risks of vessel incidents.

The Columbia River navigation channel is used by large vessels. Vessel traffic moves in a two-way pattern, like a street. Large vessels are required to have certified vessel pilots onboard during the entire transit. The pilots use an information system that provides a real-time picture of vessel locations in the river. From 2004 to 2014, large vessel traffic ranged from about 2,900 to 3,900 vessel transits per year. Today's vessels are typically larger than in the past and hold more cargo, but vessel size on the Columbia River is limited because of the depth of the navigation channel. Commercial, tribal, and recreational boats also use the river.

### How would the proposed project affect vessel transportation?

#### Construction

At full build-out, the proposed project would build a dock that could accommodate two vessels at the same time. The dock would be approximately 2,300 feet long and 100 to 130 feet wide and would involve construction activities in the Columbia River. If construction material is delivered by barge, approximately 750 barge trips would be needed to move materials to and from the project area during the peak construction year. Permits would be required for construction and dredging. The study found that construction would not significantly affect vessel transportation.

#### Operations

The proposed project would load 840 vessels per year. This would result in 1,680 vessel transits in the Columbia River each year (840 incoming vessel trips and 840 outgoing vessel trips). This would add a substantial number of large vessels to the traffic on the river and would be an increase of 44 percent over traffic in 2014. Vessel pilots are expected to use tugs to move the vessels at the docks. Pilots may also require tugs during the vessel transit.

The study found the additional vessel traffic could increase the risk of a vessel emergency, such as a fire or striking a dock. Vessels are required to have firefighting equipment and automated fire-suppression systems. Based on a vessel traffic model, the analysis found a fire would likely affect only the vessel. The study found the risk of a vessel hitting the proposed docks would be once in 39 years. This would likely not result in serious damage as tugs would be used when moving the vessels at the dock.

All large commercial vessel traffic going to the Port of Longview or ports further upriver (including the Port of Portland, Port of Vancouver, and Port of Kalama) pass the project area. The increase in vessel traffic for the proposed project would increase the risk of vessel incidents. The vessel traffic model shows the risk of a collision, grounding, or fire increases by about 2.8 incidents per year. A grounding would be the most likely incident to occur. With these incidents, there would be a risk of an oil or coal spill. The study found an overall risk of a spill would be low, because an incident would not be likely to cause major damage that could affect fuel tanks where oil is stored.

Oil spills could also occur during the refueling of a vessel. Millennium has stated that no refueling from barges or tanker trucks would be allowed at the proposed docks. Refueling could occur at other locations in the lower Columbia River, like anchorages. In general, the risks of spills would increase due to the increase in the number of vessels. The vessels would follow Washington State requirements for refueling and spill prevention. Based on the study, the likelihood of spills due to a vessel incident is low because of the way vessels move in the navigation channel and vessel design requirements.

## **What can Millennium do to reduce impacts on vessel transportation?**

The study recommends the following potential mitigation measures to reduce impacts on vessel transportation:

- Millennium will attend at least one Lower Columbia River Harbor Safety Committee meeting before beginning operations. Millennium will present information on vessel traffic related to the proposed project.
- Millennium has stated that refueling will not be allowed at Docks 2 and 3. If that changes, Cowlitz County and Ecology will be notified and will determine if additional environmental review is required.

## **Are there significant and adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated?**

If a collision, grounding, or other incident happens, the impacts could be significant. The impacts would depend on the location, the weather conditions, and amount and type of oil that is spilled. The likelihood of a serious incident is very low, but there are no mitigation measures that can completely eliminate the possibility of an incident or its impacts.

## How can the public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

There are multiple ways for the public to provide comments. Comments will be accepted during the comment period from April 29 to June 13, 2016.

### By Mail

Millennium Bulk Terminals—Longview SEPA EIS  
c/o ICF International  
710 Second Avenue, Suite 550, Seattle, WA 98104

### Online

At [www.millenniumbulkeiswa.gov](http://www.millenniumbulkeiswa.gov)

### In Person

At a public hearing, orally or in writing

- **May 24, 2016**  
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm  
Cowlitz County Regional Conference Center  
1900 7th Avenue  
Longview, WA 98632
- **May 26, 2016**  
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm  
Spokane Convention Center  
334 W Spokane Falls Boulevard  
Spokane, WA 99201
- **June 2, 2016**  
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm  
TRAC Center  
6600 Burden Boulevard  
Pasco, WA 99301

## Where can I find more information?

Chapter 5, Section 5.4, *Vessel Transportation* of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has detailed information on current conditions, the analysis, and findings related to the potential impacts of the proposed project on vessel transportation. The following sections of the Draft EIS also include detailed information and analyses relevant to vessel transportation: Chapter 3, Section 3.4, *Cultural Resources*; Chapter 4, Section 4.2, *Surface Water and Floodplains*, Section 4.5, *Water Quality*, Section 4.6, *Vegetation*, Section 4.7, *Fish*, and Section 4.8, *Wildlife*.

Additional fact sheets that discuss surface water and water quality and fish, plants, and animals are also available.

Visit [www.millenniumbulkeiswa.gov](http://www.millenniumbulkeiswa.gov) for more information on the proposed project and the Draft EIS.