



McDonald Excavating, Inc

December 29, 2025

Commander
U.S. Coast Guard District Northwest
915 Second Avenue, Room 3510
Seattle, WA 98174-1067

RE: Comments on the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program Navigation Impact Report (NIR)

Submitted via email: d13-smb-d13-bridges@uscg.mil

Dear Commander:

On behalf of McDonald Excavating, Inc., I am submitting this letter to **affirm support** for the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program's **fixed span bridge configuration** option over the Columbia River with 116' of vertical navigation clearance.

Specific to our business, the Interstate Bridge is a critical piece of infrastructure as we transport aggregates and other construction materials between WA and OR on a daily basis. Over the last 3 decades just the wait for lift span interruptions has cost our small business tens of thousands of dollars. If taxpayers are going to spend upwards of \$10 billion on this project it not only needs to improve safety, but also efficiency. A fixed span bridge is the only way to meet these criteria. Another lift span that interrupts commerce on one of the Nations most critical routes would not be a prudent spend of public monies.

The I-5 bridge is the lifeline to our regional community and economy. The time is now to replace the antiquated and functionally obsolete I-5 bridge and improve its complex interchange network. Replacement is a far better option than pursuing seismic retrofit upgrades, deck replacement, painting and seismic improvements that otherwise would be required soon.

We appreciate the diligence of the IBR Program in studying multiple options to address the project's purpose and need while balancing many priorities. We believe our region is best served by a fixed span option allowing for a safe, practical and more cost-effective bridge design. We understand that formal Agreements have granted adequate mitigation for those few companies who depend upon a higher clearance for a portion of their commerce. Further, we note there is minimal additional economic, or development opportunity offered by a lift span because the dredged 43-foot shipping channel stops to the west of the current I-5 bridge and there is virtually no shoreline land available for development upriver.

With estimated construction costs rising by the day and congestion from the aging lift span continuing to impose real, escalating impacts on our economic viability, it is critical to our region, state and nation that replacement of the I-5 bridge begin as soon as possible.

We appreciate the efforts of all involved in planning, design and funding of this critical transportation facility expected to last a century. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Ryan McDonald
President
McDonald Excavating, Inc.

cc: info@interstatebridge.org
admin@iccbusiness.org