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January 8, 2026

Commander
U.S. Coast Guard District Northwest
915 Second Avenue, Room 3510
Seattle, WA 98174-1067
Submitted via: d13-smb-d13-bridges@uscg.mil

Re: Comments in Response to Public Notice (04-25)

Member Jurisdictions

*Clark County
Skamania County
Klickitat County
City of Vancouver
City of Camas
City of Washougal
City of Battle Ground
City of Ridgefield
City of La Center
Town of Yacolt
City of Stevenson
City of North Bonneville
City of White Salmon
City of Bingen
City of Goldendale
C-TRAN
Washington DOT
Port of Vancouver
Port of Camas-Washougal
Port of Ridgefield
Port of Skamania County
Port of Klickitat
Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Metro
Oregon DOT
14th Legislative District
17th Legislative District
18th Legislative District
20th Legislative District
49th Legislative District*

The Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC), acting as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (23 U.S.C. § 134) for Clark County (WA), and as a Joint Lead Agency for the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program's Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, supports the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program's (IBR) proposal to construct a 116-foot fixed-span bridge across the Columbia River.

RTC finds that the IBR Program's Revised Navigation Impact Report (October 6, 2025) provides robust analysis and compelling justification for authorizing construction of a 116-foot fixed-span bridge. The report concludes that the proposed bridge would materially enhance navigational conditions in the Columbia River by improving in-water pier locations and vessel navigation routes, including reducing the total number of piers and optimizing their spacing and alignment.

RTC further finds that a 116-foot fixed-span bridge more effectively supports the Federal-aid Highway Program performance goals established by Congress (23 U.S.C. § 150). RTC routinely monitors Interstate 5 transportation conditions and, in coordination with the Washington State Department of Transportation, has established regional/state performance targets to improve surface transportation asset conditions. Compared to a lift-span bridge, a fixed-span configuration more strongly supports national surface transportation performance goals related to safety (PM1); congestion reduction (PM3); system reliability (PM3); and freight movement and truck travel time reliability (PM3).

The Interstate 5 corridor is one of the nation's most important transnational trade routes, and the Columbia River bridge lies at the confluence of critical multimodal networks—interstate, river, and rail—that collectively support commerce at the regional and national levels. Accordingly, RTC respectfully requests the Coast Guard's diligent review and consideration of the IBR request to authorize a 116-foot fixed-span bridge configuration.

Sincerely,

Matt Ransom
Executive Director

DocuSigned by:
A blue ink signature of Matt Ransom, written in a cursive style.
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Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council