



WASTE CONNECTIONS
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January 06, 2026

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 Waste Connection of SW Washington, 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, Waste Connections depends heavily on over-the-road operations, and the current lift-span bridge creates costly, unpredictable delays. Every lift stops traffic, which disrupts our fleet, slows our subcontractors, and drives up our cost structure through added fuel, labor, and scheduling impacts.

We support a lower-profile bridge without a lift span because it would provide consistent travel times while still protecting barge access and waterway movement. A reliable, non-lifting crossing strengthens our ability to serve the community and keeps the region's transportation network moving efficiently.

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.



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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,

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