

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commandant
United States Coast Guard

2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20593-7418
Staff Symbol: CG-BRG-2
Phone: (202) 372-1521
Email: Shelly.H.Sugarman@uscg.mil

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29 Aug 2018

MEMORANDUM

From: Shelly Sugarman
Chief, Bridge Permits and Policy Division
(CG-BRG-2)

Reply to CG-BRG-2
Attn of: S. Sugarman
(202) 372-1521

To: Marshall Williams, USFWS
Northern Idaho Field Office
11103 East Montgomery Drive
Spokane, Washington 99206

Subj: BNSF SANDPOINT CONNECTOR PROJECT – REVISED BIOLOGICAL
ASSESSMENT

Ref: (a) Biological Assessment revised August 22, 2018

1. The BNSF Railway Company is proposing to construct new railroad bridges across Lake Pend Orielle and Lake Pend Oreille Inlet (Sand Creek) at Sandpoint, Idaho. The alignment of the new bridges will be adjacent to existing BNSF owned railroad bridges which will remain in service.
2. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), in accordance with federal statutes (33 U.S.C. § 401), is responsible for evaluating the application for the proposed new bridges and is preparing an Environmental Assessment for the project under the auspices of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and all other environmental control laws including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Endangered Species Act (ESA).
3. As described in the enclosed Biological Assessment (BA), the proposed action will have no effect on the following ESA-listed species: grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*), Canada lynx (*Lynx Canadensis*), North American wolverine (*Gulo gulo luscus*), and woodland caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*). No concurrence or other consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is required for "no effect" actions. The proposed action may, however, affect, and is likely to adversely affect, bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) and bull trout critical habitat. Therefore, USCG requests initiation of formal consultation under Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA.
4. Enclosed is a comment response tracking tool to use in your review showing how and where previous USFWS comments on the draft BA were addressed.
5. The USCG would like to arrange a facilitated review as early as practicable to evaluate previous USFWS comments regarding this project and assess how each have been addressed in the revised BA. Jacobs Engineering is the consultant for the applicant and hereby designated as the non-federal representative for this project. Mr. Jason Smith of Jacobs Engineering will be your primary point of contact and will reach out to you in order to schedule the facilitated review. Mr. Smith may be reached at Jason.Smith6@jacobs.com and/or (425) 456-9707.

Should you require additional information, please contact Mr. Steven Fischer at (206) 220-7282.

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Enclosure: (1) Revised Biological Assessment dated August 22, 2018
(2) Environmental Document Review Comment and Response Form