



## Introduction

Police, fire, and emergency medical responders promote safety and protect life and property. Industries, railroads, and government agencies plan and respond to accidents such as fires or spills of hazardous substances that can impact people and the environment. This fact sheet summarizes the potential impacts the proposed project would have on public services and incident response.

## What was studied?

The study examined the impact of the proposed project on public services, incident planning and emergency response during construction and operations.

## What was the study area?

- Proposed project site
- Proposed wetland mitigation site
- Rail corridor (Anacortes and Bellingham subdivisions) within Skagit County (see Figure 3.17-1 in the draft EIS)
- An extended study area, evaluated for potential impacts along the proposed crude-by-rail transport route through Washington State beginning at Sandpoint Junction, Idaho

See the Proposed Project Fact Sheet for a map of the site.

## How were impacts analyzed?

The study identified, described, and evaluated existing public services, emergency responders, and incident response plans in the study area. It also assessed the potential demands on services that would be caused by the proposed project.



Skagit County Sheriff's Office

## What are the potential impacts?

### Construction Impacts

Construction of the proposed project and wetland mitigation sites would increase the potential for injuries or accidents that may require public services. Increased worker and truck traffic during construction would cause delays on access roads, including SR 20, which could affect the response times of fire, police, or emergency medical response teams. However, this impact would be temporary and would subside following construction.

### Operation Impacts

Operation of the proposed project and wetland mitigation sites would not create a substantial new demand for public services locally. During operation, the transport of crude oil by rail to the proposed project site could have impacts on police, fire, and emergency medical response times. Service response times could increase because of additional delays at at-grade railroad crossings on the BNSF Railway main line throughout Washington due to passing unit trains going to and from the project site. There is also the potential for increased demand for emergency services due to a rail accident.

### Cumulative Impacts

On the rail corridor (Anacortes Subdivision), there are no other reasonably foreseeable projects that would increase rail traffic. Therefore, the potential for cumulative impacts is the same as direct impacts identified for the proposed project. On the rail corridor (Bellingham Subdivision), the proposed project, when considered with other reasonably foreseeable future projects, would increase delays at at-grade crossings, which could lead to increased police, fire, and emergency medical response times.

## What mitigation measures are proposed?

### Avoidance and Minimization

Minimizing potential impacts that could result from an accident associated with crude-by-rail trains begins with prevention measures. Shell, BNSF Railway, emergency responders, and federal, state, and local governments would work together to coordinate personnel and resources in the case of an accident. The unloading facility would be added to BNSF Railway's, Shell's, and local providers' emergency response procedures, which would enhance the response to an accident.

In addition, Shell has incorporated operational measures into the design of the proposed project to avoid and minimize impacts to emergency response time including:

- To the extent feasible with train schedules, Shell would request that BNSF Railway schedule trains to arrive and depart during non-peak traffic hours.

## Mitigation

No significant adverse impacts on public services or incident planning would result from the proposed project. However, there could be adverse impacts to emergency response due to increased train traffic through at-grade railroad crossings.

These impacts would be minimized by:

- Shell funding a study to evaluate the feasibility of implementing signal timing revisions at at-grade crossings along the rail corridor (Bellingham and Anacortes subdivisions in Skagit County), as described in Chapter 3.16 - Vehicle Traffic and Transportation of the draft EIS.



Example of an at-grade crossing

In addition, Shell would support measures to enhance incident planning and response and mitigate the potential risks associated with a release of oil in Skagit County and along the rail transport route throughout Washington State. The measures include:

- Shell would provide funding to create or augment existing oil and hazardous spill response equipment caches along the proposed project rail transport route throughout the state. The caches would contain oil spill response equipment specifically to help respond to spills on land. The co-lead agencies would determine the number and location of caches to be provided.
- Shell would coordinate and fund a deployment drill for a crude-by-rail spill scenario with BNSF Railway and invite the local emergency responders and the tribes to participate.
- Shell would update its existing Puget Sound Refinery oil spill contingency plan to reflect operations of the new crude by rail unloading facility. The updated plan would demonstrate financial responsibility for the potential costs of response and cleanup of oil spills, natural resource damages, and costs to state and affected jurisdictions for response actions to reduce the risks and impacts from an oil spill at the facility.

## Are there unavoidable significant adverse impacts?

Implementation of signal timing revisions would not completely eliminate delays for emergency vehicles at at-grade crossings. However, this is not considered an unavoidable significant adverse impact from the proposed project as Shell unit trains would only represent a small portion of the existing and projected rail traffic that would lead to the additional traffic delays.

### WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS TOPIC?

Chapter 3.17 – Public Services and Incident Response of the draft EIS

The information in this fact sheet summarizes content from the draft Environmental Impact Statement; please review the full document for more detailed and complete information.

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