



Whatcom County
Determination of Significance & Request for Comments on Scope of EIS for
Gateway Pacific Terminal / Custer Spur

Description of Proposal: A deepwater, multimodal terminal for the export and import of dry bulk commodities between rail and oceangoing vessels has been proposed within the Cherry Point Industrial Urban Growth Area (UGA). The project area would encompass approximately 1,500 acres with development occurring on approximately 334 acres. If approved, the proposal would include two materials handling and storage areas and a wharf and trestle. Associated development would include a rail connection and improvements with BNSF Railway's Custer Spur Industrial rail line. At full operation, the facility would have the capacity to export and import 54 million metric tons per annum (Mtpa) of dry bulk commodities including, but not limited to coal, grain products, potash, and calcined petroleum coke.

Proponent: Pacific International Terminals, Inc.

Location of Proposal: The proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal site is located at Cherry Point at and near 4750 Gulf Road, Ferndale, WA. The area is located with Sections 17, 18, and 19; Township 39 North; Range 01 East. Parcel numbers include:

390117065466, 390117205467, 390117067334, 395124546546, 390119092500,
390119172456, 390119424335, 390119198377, 390119214451, 390119327425,
390119349425, 390119469346, 390118117050, 390119388424, 390119199451,
390119438360, 390119246354, 390117473110, 390119298423, 390119252449,
390119454299, 390117278062, 390119440480, 390119502484, 390119512341,
390120095477, 390120135359, 390120151212, 390120337323, 390120340476,
390119505246

Lead Agency: Whatcom County Planning and Development Services and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) will be co-lead agencies under State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) will be the lead agency under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Whatcom County, Ecology, and the Corps will be considered lead agencies.

EIS Required: The lead agencies have determined that the proposal is likely to result in significant adverse impacts to the environment and, pursuant to 42 U.S. Code (U.S.C.) 4332(C) (NEPA) and Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 43.21C

(SEPA), an environmental impact statement (EIS) is required. The lead agencies have determined that a combined NEPA/SEPA EIS will be prepared. A separate Notice of Intent (NOI) will be posted in the Federal Register by the Corps to initiate the NEPA process.

The SEPA lead agencies have preliminarily identified the following for discussion in the EIS: Under SEPA, the EIS will examine the environmental impacts of the Gateway Pacific Terminal proposal on the proposed site within the Cherry Point Industrial UGA and the related Custer Spur project. Elements of the environment (WAC 197-11-444) that have been identified for discussion are listed below. Issues and elements to be discussed under NEPA are included in the NOI.

Natural Environment

Earth

- Geology
- Soils
- Topography
- Unique physical features
- Erosion/enlargement of land area (accretion)

Air

- Air quality
- Odor
- Climate

Water

- Surface water movement/quantity/quality
- Runoff/absorption
- Floods
- Groundwater movement/quantity/quality
- Public water supplies

Plants and animals

- Habitat for and numbers or diversity of species of plants, fish, or other wildlife
- Unique species
- Fish or wildlife migration routes

Energy and natural resources

- Amount required/rate of use/efficiency
- Source/availability
- Nonrenewable resources
- Conservation and renewable resources
- Scenic resources

Built Environment

Environmental health

- Noise
- Risk of explosion
- Releases or potential releases to the environment affecting public health, such as toxic or hazardous materials

Land and shoreline use

- Relationship to existing land use plans and to estimated population
- Light and glare
- Aesthetics
- Recreation
- Historic and cultural preservation

Transportation

- Transportation systems
- Vehicular traffic
- Waterborne and rail traffic
- Movement/circulation of people or goods
- Traffic hazards

Public services and utilities

- Fire
- Police
- Parks or other recreational facilities
- Maintenance
- Communications
- Water/storm water
- Other governmental services or utilities.

Alternatives: Alternatives to the Gateway Pacific Terminal proposal will be determined through the scoping process according to WAC 197-11-440(5)(b). Reasonable alternatives shall include actions that could feasibly attain or approximate the proposal's objectives, but at a lower environmental cost or

decreased level of environmental degradation. The No Action Alternative will also be evaluated.

Scoping: Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of the EIS within a 120-day expanded scoping comment period beginning on September 24, 2012 and closing January 21, 2013. You may comment on alternatives, probable significant adverse impacts, mitigation measures, and licenses or other approvals that may be required.

Public scoping meetings will be held within Washington State in the following cities in order of occurrence:

Bellingham: 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., October 27, Squalicum High School, 3773 E McLeod Road, Bellingham, WA;

Friday Harbor: 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., November 3, Friday Harbor High School, 45 Blair Avenue, Friday Harbor, WA;

Mount Vernon: 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.; November 5, McIntyre Hall, 2501 E College Way, Mount Vernon, WA;

Seattle: 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., November 13, North Seattle Community College Wellness Center Gym, 9600 College Way N, Seattle WA;

Ferndale: 3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., November 29, Ferndale Events Center 5715 Barrett Road, Ferndale, WA;

Spokane: 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., December 4, Spokane County Fairgrounds Plaza, 404 N Havana Street, Spokane Valley, WA;

Vancouver: 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., December 12, Clark College Gaiser Student Center, 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver, WA.

Written Comments: Provide comments via the web at www.eisgatewaypacificwa.gov or to the Lead Agency Contact Person (see below) through January 21, 2013. Notifications about the Draft EIS publication and public meetings and hearings will be made in accordance with adopted County, State, and Federal procedures. Interested parties who sign up on mailing lists or contact the agencies with a request to receive notices will also receive notices.

Documents Available: Environmental background documents and other materials indicating likely environmental impacts can be reviewed at our offices and on our website at: <http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/pds/index.jsp>

Responsible Official: Tyler R. Schroeder

Position/Title: Designated SEPA Official

Address: GPT/BNSF Custer Spur EIS Co-Lead Agencies
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Telephone: (360) 676-6907

Date: September 24, 2012

Signature: _____

A handwritten signature in blue ink is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and appears to be 'T. Schroed'.