

Fischer, Steven M CIV USCG D13 (USA)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 19, 2022 2:53 PM
To: D13-SMB-D13-BRIDGES
Subject: [URL Verdict: Neutral][Non-DoD Source] Interstate Bridge replacement public comment #02-22

Commander Harris:

I would like to offer my input regarding the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) proposal to replace the current bridge. As you stated, they desire to reduce river clearance by 32 percent, to just 116 feet. That is truly outrageous.

My remarks are in response to your request #02-22, published in March.

https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/pdf/bridges/publicNotices/D13-PN02-22_I5TwinBridges_ColumbiaRiverPortlandtoVancouver.pdf

In the previous Columbia River Crossing (CRC) effort, they sought clearances even lower and were rejected two times. Ultimately, the CRC received approval (wrongly so) for 116 feet. But that required payment of \$86.4 million in "mitigation" to three up river firms. Adjusted for inflation, that is more than \$106 million today.

Thompson Metal Fab, Greenberry Industrial, and Oregon Iron Works deserve much better consideration. All three firms build large industrial products, sometimes as tall as 165 feet according to John Rudi of Thompson Metal Fab.

<https://www.clarkcountytoday.com/news/will-the-interstate-bridge-replacement-become-another-bridge-too-low/>

Transportation architect Kevin Peterson (Washington resident) has designed transportation project around the world, including bridges, transit systems and much more. He was intimately involved in evaluating the former CRC data, including traffic projections, transit capacity, and more. Kevin recently shared the following:

"A river navigation clearance of between 125 and 145 feet (dependent on Coast Guard desires) while respecting airspace requirements."

That is at the core of your decision. How high a bridge is possible, while meeting requirements for PDX air traffic as well as aircraft departing Pearson Airport in Vancouver. By the way, Kevin is also a private pilot and understand FAR airspace requirements as well.

Overwhelmingly, marine traffic should receive primary consideration in this replacement bridge.

Both the Oregon and Washington Governors have talked about the current Interstate Bridge and the traffic congestion it creates as being a "stop light". The REAL problem isn't the bridge. It is the fact that FHWA have allowed highway regulations to be ignored, as there are 4 interchanges within a 2.5 mile section of the I-5 bridge, and 7 within the 5-mile "bridge influence area". It is these closely spaced interchanges that truly "cause" the traffic congestion, not the occasional bridge lift.

The current effort desires to spend \$3.2 billion to \$4.8 billion, while offering NO improvement in the travel time for freight, or for people using their private vehicles. There is absolutely no reason to penalize marine traffic on the Columbia River by allowing a "bridge too low".

You should demand a bridge that matches the height of the I-205 Glenn Jackson Bridge, which is 144 feet. That way a replacement Interstate Bridge does NOT become a "stop light" for marine traffic on the Columbia River.

A proper decision, demanding higher clearance for marine traffic on the Columbia River can also save the taxpayers \$100 million or more in "mitigation" costs. If the bridge is the proper height, then no mitigation will be needed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

John Ley

