



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Portland District

Columbia River Channel Improvement Project

Final Supplemental Integrated Feasibility Report
and Environmental Impact Statement

Volume 5

Public Testimony

January 2003

PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY

DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL INTEGRATED FEASIBILITY REPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT COLUMBIA RIVER CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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Corps of Engineers Responses to Public Hearing Testimony

This section includes the Corps of Engineers responses to the oral testimony taken for this project at public hearings conducted in July 31, 2002 at Vancouver WA (afternoon and evening sessions); September 5, 2002 at Longview, WA; and September 10, 2002 at Astoria, OR. All testimony received on the project has been considered in revising the proposed project as presented in the Final SEIS. Those individuals that provided both written and oral testimony will find detailed responses to the written testimony in the *Comment Letters* section in this volume. For individuals who only provided oral testimony, responses are provided below (references to responses numbered S, I, and SS refer to the *Comment Letters* section). The format for responses is as follows: date and location of meeting; commenter's name; page number; and line number of the transcript.

July 31, 2002, Vancouver, WA (afternoon session)

Ted Farnsworth

Page 37 (Vancouver afternoon), Lines 17-23. Historically, the Corps of Engineers placed material on hundreds of shoreline disposal sites throughout the river system. This number was drastically reduced in 1994 when the Columbia River was listed as critical habitat for ESA salmonids. The proposed project has only three shoreline locations and does not include the area you are commenting on. The mission of the Corps is to maintain the navigation within the Federal navigation channel on the Columbia River. At this time, there is no plan to remove material from areas used in the past.

July 31, 2002 - Vancouver, WA (evening session)

Larry Snyder, President, Vancouver Wildlife League

Page 27 (Vancouver evening), Lines 14-19. With regard to fishing and hunting opportunity, the proposed project as revised includes ecosystem restoration features that restore habitat for fish and wildlife. At Shillapoo Lake near Vancouver, Washington, approximately 470 to 839 acres of emergent wetlands will be restored. Restoration of 191 acres of tidal marsh-intertidal flat at Lois Island embayment, 235 acres of tidal marsh-intertidal flat at Miller-Pillar and 1,778 acres of intertidal marsh (Tenasillahe Island long-term) also are proposed. The project proposes to maintain natural tidal marsh communities through implementation of a 5-year control program for purple loosestrife from CRM 18-52. As noted in response to S-111-115, the project, including its restoration components, adds productive habitat capacity for salmonids. Expanded habitat availability for listed Columbian white-tailed deer and other aquatic and terrestrial species is provided as well. See Chapter 4, Final SEIS.

Page 28, Lines 1-18. The impacts of dredge material disposal and sponsor use of dredge material, the transfer of dredge material to disposal site W-101.0 (a 40-acre disposal site within the boundary of the approximately 1,100-acre Port of Vancouver Columbia Gateway project) and the impacts of the channel improvement project on wetlands and wildlife are

fully considered and evaluated in the 1999 Final IFR/EIS, 2002 Draft SEIS, and presented in the Final SEIS. See the 1999 Final IFR/EIS §2.4 (channel maintenance), §4 (alternatives), §5 (affected environment), §6 (project impacts); Draft SEIS (same); Final SEIS (same). Gateway is an approximately 600 acre proposed industrial development and 500 acre mitigation effort that is being separately planned, evaluated and permitted by the Port of Vancouver. See the 1999 Final IFR/EIS §3.4; Final SEIS §3.4. Because the Port of Vancouver's Gateway development is a reasonably foreseeable future action, its potential effects are analyzed in the Final Supplemental IFR/EIS cumulative effects discussion. See Section 6.12.

July 31, 2002 - Vancouver, WA (evening session)
Cyndy de Bruler, Columbia RiverKeeper

Page 29 (Vancouver evening), Lines 1-14. Information regarding the project and its schedule has been provided to the public through the Corps' website, public notices, press releases, and notice in the Federal Register for the public review of the Draft SEIS. Adequate notice was provided for the public hearing on July 31, 2002. The public review schedule for the Draft SEIS included additional public hearings through September 10, 2002 and extended opportunity for public comment through September 16, 2002.

Page 29, Lines 15-18. Comments regarding the economic analysis misstate the Corps' analysis. Congress has directed the Corps of Engineers to provide an analysis that displays the benefits of a project compared to the costs required to achieve those benefits. The analysis is consistent with the principles and guidelines that govern water resource development analyses. The Corps has undertaken a thorough analysis of the costs and benefits associated with this project, and that analysis has been reviewed thoroughly by an external expert panel. The Corps has reviewed and responded to each of the panel's comments.

Page 29, Line 18, through Page 30, Line 5. The Corps considered comments from the public, stakeholder groups and state and federal agencies and revised the proposed project in the Final SEIS. The Lois Island Embayment and Miller-Pillar ecosystem restoration features in the lower Columbia River estuary as revised are presented in the Final SEIS. The Corps believes that these features advance the goals of LCREP, a bi-state effort to restore the lower Columbia River estuary, which calls for an ecosystem based approach to protecting and enhancing the lower Columbia River and estuary. Ecosystem restoration features are voluntary actions by the Corps utilizing existing authorities to implement actions for the betterment of listed species as provided under Section 7(a)(1) of ESA. See response to state comments S-6-S-9, and S-32.

Page 30, Lines 6-16. Impacts to ESA listed stocks were thoroughly evaluated in the 1999 Final IFR/EIS, Biological Assessment and Biological Opinions issued by NOAA Fisheries and USFWS in 2002. The EFH consultation for the project is underway with NOAA Fisheries. The consultation will be coordinated with the Pacific Fisheries Management Council. The consultation will be included in the Final SEIS.

Page 30, Lines 17-23. With regard to ocean disposal, the Corps' preferred option eliminates the project's use of the ocean disposal site. See response to state comments S-13 to S-16, S-19, and S-133.

Page 30 Line 24, through Page 31, Line 12. The 1999 Final IFR/EIS and the Final SEIS evaluate the potential cumulative effects of past and present actions affecting the project area, as well as reasonably foreseeable future actions. The Final SEIS also describes extensive new analysis of sediment chemistry throughout the project area and the potential effect of future cleanup of contaminated areas of the Willamette River. Based on concerns expressed by NOAA Fisheries and others in 1999 about the potential effects of contaminants on the River and estuary, substantial effort was devoted to re-analyzing the issue, including evaluation of thousands of sediment chemistry samples from throughout the project area. The new analysis confirms the Corps' initial conclusion that project activities do not pose a significant risk of adverse effects from contaminants. This conclusion is supported by the NOAA Fisheries and USFWS Biological Opinions. The database of sediment quality in the Columbia River is much larger than the 89 samples mentioned. The Corps has identified over 100 separate studies it has conducted in the last 22 years in the Columbia River for various purposes. Over 4,000 samples on the Columbia River have been identified. This information continues to be updated. The Corps is actively populating the SEDQUAL database to include these identified Corps' studies. The Corps, USFWS and NOAA Fisheries have committed to annually review the Columbia River sediment quality database including new sediment data and determine if conditions trigger the need for additional testing. Also see response to stakeholders comments SS-13, SS-20, SS-106, SS-111 and SS-192, 1.

Page 31, Lines 13-22. The Corps convened a Technical Panel to review Benefits and Costs the week of August 5 through August 9, 2002. The expert panel's meetings were open and transparent and the public was invited to attend. All information provided to the panel was posted on the Corps' website prior to the meeting. All presentations made by the Corps' facilitator, the Corps, Port of Portland and consultants were posted to the Corps' website after the event. The panel's findings were also posted to the Corps' website prior to the close of the public comment period. The public has had approximately five months to digest the outcomes of the panel meeting and will have 30 days to comment on the Corps' Final SEIS and how the Corps has considered the panel's work.

July 31, 2002 - Vancouver, WA (evening session)

Tom Barton

Page 42 (Vancouver evening), Lines 4-15. The commenter's suggestion to filling wetlands to help control mosquito infestations is contrary to Federal law establishing a goal of no net loss of wetlands. The Corps has identified and will continue to look for beneficial uses for dredged materials.

September 5, 2002 - Longview, WA
Jack Keulker, City of Kelso Council

Page 26 (Longview), Lines 15-22. Puget Island was used as a shoreline disposal site for many years on an intermittent frequency. As a result, shoreline was created by the placement of dredged material. This created beach is actively eroding because material is not currently being placed along the shoreline. In 1994 when the Columbia River was listed as Critical Habitat for ESA salmonids, use of the Puget Island shoreline was prohibited by NOAA Fisheries. Erosion of the Puget Island shoreline is not a function of dredging the channel but a function of not continuing to use the shoreline as a disposal location. The beaches that were created along the shoreline are not as stable a feature as the natural bank of Puget Island and will continue to erode over time due to natural processes. See also response to individuals comment I-15.

September 5, 2002 - Longview, WA
Kent Martin

Page 42 (Longview), Lines 3-14. Page 6-34 cited by the commenter refers to juvenile salmonids. See response to stakeholders comment SS-116.

Page 42, Lines 15-21. See response to stakeholders comment SS-9.

Page 42, Line 22, through Page 43, Line 19. The Corps of Engineers does not disagree with the commenter's assertion that the lower Columbia River communities are economically depressed and that they have relied on the fishing industry for their income in the past. However, as is evident with the two "no jeopardy" opinions by NOAA Fisheries and USFWS, this project should not jeopardize existence of the species nor shall it further reduce commercial fishing. See response to individuals comment I-49.

September 10, 2002 - Astoria, OR
Jon Westerholm

Page 32 (Astoria), Line 22 through Page 33, Line 15. The Corps of Engineers does not disagree with the commenter's assertion that the lower Columbia River communities are economically depressed and that they have relied on the fishing industry for their income in the past. However, as is evident with the two "no jeopardy" opinions by NOAA Fisheries and USFWS, this project should not jeopardize existence of the species nor shall it further reduce commercial fishing. See response to individuals comment I-49.

September 10, 2002 - Astoria, OR
Ms. Manarino

Page 40 (Astoria), Line 20 to Page 41, Line 18. The Corps of Engineers disagrees with the commenter that this project has overstated project benefits. As stated several times, the Corps has requested the information the Oregonian used to produce their analysis and it has

never been furnished. Further, the Corps has conducted a technical review of the economics of the project with four experts in disciplines related to maritime industry and economics, to review the underlying information and assumptions used in the Corps' analysis. Please see response to stakeholders comment SS-192.

Page 41, Line 19 to Page 42, Line 7. The 1999 Final IFR/EIS and the Final SEIS evaluate the potential cumulative effects of past and present actions affecting the project area, as well as reasonably foreseeable future actions. The Final SEIS also describes extensive new analysis of sediment chemistry throughout the project area and the potential effect of future cleanup of contaminated areas of the Willamette River. Based on concerns expressed by NOAA Fisheries and others in 1999 about the potential effects of contaminants on the River and estuary, substantial effort was devoted to re-analyzing the issue, including evaluation of thousands of sediment chemistry samples from throughout the project area. The new analysis confirms the Corps' initial conclusion that project activities do not pose a significant risk of adverse effects from contaminants. This conclusion is supported by the NOAA Fisheries and USFWS Biological Opinions. The database of sediment quality in the Columbia River is much larger than the 89 samples mentioned. The Corps has identified over 100 separate studies it has conducted in the last 22 years in the Columbia River for various purposes. Over 4,000 samples on the Columbia River have been identified. This information continues to be updated. The Corps is actively populating the SEDQUAL database to include these identified Corps' studies. The Corps, USFWS and NOAA Fisheries have committed to annually review the Columbia River sediment quality database including new sediment data and determine if conditions trigger the need for additional testing. Also see response to stakeholders comments SS-13, SS-20, SS-106, SS-111 and SS-192, 1.

September 10, 2002 - Astoria, OR
B.J. Foley

Page 46 (Astoria), Line 20, to Page 47, Line 6. Puget Island was used as a shoreline disposal site for many years on an intermittent frequency. As a result, shoreline was created by the placement of dredged material. This created beach is actively eroding because material is not currently being placed along the shoreline. In 1994 when the Columbia River was listed as Critical Habitat for ESA salmonids, use of the Puget Island shoreline was prohibited by NOAA Fisheries. Erosion of the Puget Island shoreline is not a function of dredging the channel but a function of not continuing to use the shoreline as a disposal location. The beaches that were created along the shoreline are not as stable a feature as the natural bank of Puget Island and will continue to erode over time due to natural processes. See also response to individuals comment I-15. Further, the Corps of Engineers does not regulate speed limits on the Columbia River. This is the responsibility of the U.S. Coast Guard and the Columbia River pilots who navigate vessels as appropriate to maintain safety.

September 10, 2002 - Astoria, OR
Robert Warren

Page 73 (Astoria), Line 16, to Page 74, Line 18. The Corps considered comments from the public, stakeholder groups and state and federal agencies and revised the proposed project in the Final SEIS. The Lois Island Embayment and Miller-Pillar ecosystem restoration features in the lower Columbia River estuary as revised are presented in the Final SEIS. The Corps believes that these features advance the goals of LCREP, a bi-state effort to restore the lower Columbia River estuary, which calls for an ecosystem based approach to protecting and enhancing the lower Columbia River and estuary. Ecosystem restoration features are voluntary actions by the Corps utilizing existing authorities to implement actions for the betterment of listed species as provided under Section 7(a)(1) of ESA. See response to state comments S-6-S-9, and S-32.

Page 74, Line 19 to Page 75, Line 5. See response to stakeholder comments SS-113, SS-165, SS-170, SS-178, and SS-229.

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-- REVISED --

COLUMBIA RIVER CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, July 31, 2002

- - -

(AFTERNOON SESSION)



BE IT REMEMBERED THAT, pursuant to the Washington Rules of Civil Procedure, the Columbia River Channel Improvement Project Public Hearing (Afternoon Session) was taken before Tamara Ross, Certified Shorthand Reporter in the State of Washington and Licensed Notary in the State of Washington, on Wednesday, July 31, 2002, commencing at 3:22 p.m. at the Water Resource Education Center: 4600 S.E. Columbia Way, Vancouver, Washington.

1 VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON;
2 WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2002
3 3:22 P.M.

4 .

5 COL. HOBERNICHT: Thank you for
6 coming today. My name's Richard Hobernicht.
7 I'm the Engineer for Portland District of United
8 States Army Corps of Engineers. Most of you
9 probably knew my predecessor, Colonel David
10 Butler. He moved on to Fort Hood, Texas. I
11 look forward to getting out into the community
12 and meeting all of you. If you get a chance,
13 come up and introduce yourself. I'd like to
14 talk to you.

15 Tonight, we're here to exchange
16 information with you about the Columbia River
17 channel improvement project and take your
18 testimony on the project. As you're probably
19 aware, the Corps just completed revising the
20 economic analysis for the project, adding several
21 new environmental restoration components. This
22 was contained in the supplemental project report
23 released earlier this month. I'd like to point
24 out that this is a draft report. Over the next
25 45 to 60 days, we want to hear your thoughts

1 about this report. Your comments are important
2 to us, and we'll be reviewing all of them.
3 If you have information you feel we have missed,
4 please let us know before September 15th so we
5 can consider it before we make this report
6 final.

7 Around the room in the hallway
8 as you walked in today, you'll find
9 representatives from the States of Oregon,
10 Washington, NOAA-Fisheries and the U.S. Fish &
11 Wildlife Service, port sponsors and Corps of
12 Engineers. Please talk to the agency
13 representatives here tonight to understand how we
14 got to where we are today and where we still
15 need to go in the weeks and months ahead.

16 In addition to the oral
17 testimony that will be captured by the court
18 reporter tonight, we will accept your written
19 comments if you prepared any. There's a box in
20 the -- over here. Matt's holding it up for you
21 to place -- some people -- place written
22 testimony.

23 Several things will be happening
24 over the next 45 days. In addition to this
25 session, two more public hearings will take place

1 along the river. The second public hearing will
2 be in Longview on September 5. The third will
3 be in Astoria on September 10th.

4 The other activity taking place
5 is the expert panel's technical review of the
6 Corps' economic analysis. That will take place
7 next week at the 5th Avenue Suite in Portland.
8 The public is invited to attend the Monday and
9 Friday sessions; participate in this. There is
10 more information about this in the Corps' table.

11 With that, I'd like to again --
12 Thanks for coming. I know each of you are very
13 busy. I appreciate you taking time to
14 participate in the process. I'll be here until
15 9 o'clock tonight; the entire session. So
16 please feel free to come up and talk to me.
17 I'd like to get to know you personally.

18 Before we start, I'd like to
19 introduce Laura Hicks. Laura's a member of my
20 staff and Project Manager for the Columbia River
21 Improvement Project. She has a short
22 presentation to get us started, so --

23 MS. HICKS: Let me know if you
24 think I need the mike. Can you guys all hear
25 me? I also would like to thank you all for

1 taking your time to come today. This won't take
2 too long. Basically, our project starts at the
3 river mouth on the Columbia River and goes to
4 106.5 in the Portland/Vancouver area and also
5 includes the Willamette River for its 12 miles.
6 The Willamette portion has been deferred, and it
7 would be sometime in the future after the
8 cleanup efforts on the Willamette are taken care
9 of and we know what's regionally acceptable for
10 the contamination that exists there.

11 So the updates that's in our
12 report is basically Columbia River only. And
13 all of the information that I'm going to show
14 you today basically remains to that part. This
15 project has a long history. Any Corps' project
16 that we do starts with a study resolution by
17 Congress. Ours was received in August of 1989.
18 From there, we went to reconnaissance study,
19 where the Corps chose whether or not there's
20 interest to move to the next phase. There was.

21 We moved into what was called
22 the Cost Share Feasibility Study, where the Lower
23 Columbia River Port paid half of the study
24 costs. We produced a draft feasibility report
25 in October of 1998. We went out for public

1 comment. We finalized the report in August of
2 1999.

3 At that point, we applied for
4 Oregon coastal zone management consistency, and
5 we received U.S. Fish & Wildlife and National
6 Marine Fisheries' no jeopardy opinion. At that
7 point, Congress authorized the construction of
8 this project. You can see their authorization
9 in December of 1999.

10 In August of 2000, National
11 Marine Fisheries Service had new information
12 relating to contaminants in fish -- the
13 bathemetry and velocity that they asked us to
14 look at -- and as a result, withdrew their
15 biological opinion. When the biological opinion
16 was withdrawn, it kind of led to denial for
17 water quality certificates from both Washington
18 and Oregon.

19 So in September of 2000, we
20 received our letters from the governors, denying
21 water quality certification for this project. In
22 September then, the Corps decided to reinitiate
23 consultation with National Marine Fisheries. We
24 added U.S. Fish & Wildlife into that
25 consultation.

1 And in January of 2002, we then
2 decided to supplement the integrated feasibility
3 report -- an EIS -- The document you have today.
4 We also decided to include in that document
5 enough information to satisfy the Washington
6 State Environmental Policy Act; SEPA. And the
7 Port of Longview is the lead agency for that.
8 And they're out in the hall if you want to talk
9 to them if you're from Washington.

10 In May 2002, National Marine
11 Fisheries and U.S. Fish issued a new opinion on
12 the project, and both agencies again issued a
13 jeopardy opinion. We've had numerous public
14 meetings as a result of beginning initiation of
15 this project. We started in November of 1999,
16 where we went to the Portland/Vancouver area, the
17 Longview area, and Astoria. We asked for
18 scoping information on what our environmental
19 documentation should include.

20 We then went back out again in
21 January of 1997; again in the Portland area, the
22 Longview area, and Astoria for public comment and
23 involvement; went back out in November of 1998;
24 same three areas. And between July and
25 September of this year, we reviewed the same

1 thing. That's what we're doing here tonight:

2 We're listening to comments.

3 We've had 17 environmental round
4 table meetings, where we were asking members and
5 stakeholders from the public to come talk to us
6 during our study phase and tell us what their
7 concerns were so we could help design and adapt
8 the project to different concerns. We've had
9 resource agency meetings that revolved around
10 salinity workshops, and where saltwater
11 distribution would go as a result of the
12 deepening.

13 We've had modeling done by the
14 Waterway Experiment Station, which is an arm of
15 the Corps of Engineers. We repeated that when
16 we reconsulted with the National Marine Fisheries
17 Service, and we asked the Oregon Graduate
18 Institute to do numerical modeling for us as
19 well. We've had numerous resource agency
20 meetings pertaining to wildlife mitigation and
21 many that revolve around ocean dredge materials
22 and disposal locations.

23 So as the Colonel has mentioned,
24 we had an information meeting this Monday in
25 Astoria. Today, we're here asking for testimony

1 for the Portland/Vancouver area. On Monday of
2 next week, we'll start a panel that will look at
3 both benefits and costs of this project. It
4 will be a week-long process with the panel. The
5 public is invited to observe that. And then
6 we'll be back, taking public testimony in
7 Longview on September 5th, Astoria on the 10th.
8 And our public comment period will end on
9 September 12th. The Colonel said on Monday the
10 15th, so we'll accept that as well.

11 It's important for our people to
12 understand that this is kind of a multipurpose
13 project, if you will. We have both a navigation
14 component and ecosystem restoration component.
15 The Corps, by regulation, used those two specific
16 authorities with different cost sharing for our
17 sponsors and different ways that we examined
18 them.

19 So since 1999, what have we
20 been doing? The Corps has worked three years on
21 getting smelt data on the Columbia. One of the
22 things that we heard from agency and stakeholder
23 groups was with nonrestricted dredging in the
24 river for construction, there was a concern that
25 smelt may be affected. And so we've asked you

1 -- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife and
2 Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife to help
3 evaluate smelt distribution and abundance, how
4 they spawn where they are in the river, and help
5 to look at whether or not dredging year round
6 would be impacted to them.

7 We've also funded three years of
8 data collection for sturgeon -- white sturgeon in
9 deep water areas; again distribution, abundance,
10 and their behavior. We've had extensive rock
11 explorations in the channel and have confirmed
12 where basalt would be that would need to be
13 blasted out of the channel. And at this point,
14 it's only at Warrior Rock, which is a pretty
15 substantial reduction from where we were in 1999.

16 We have rerun all of the
17 quantities for dredging. And currently, there's
18 a reduction in dredging volumes as well in the
19 river. We've done additional work for Dungeness
20 Crab; the ESA consultation that I told you
21 about.

22 As a result of the consultation,
23 we've added six new ecosystem restoration
24 components to the project and researched actions
25 -- monitoring actions, and adaptive management.

1 We revised the cost because of the added
2 components to the project and also decided to
3 then update the economics for the project.

4 So this kind of illustrates then
5 the biggest changes that I thought were
6 important. Basically, the dredging volumes have
7 gone from 18.4 million in 1999 to 14.5. And
8 our hydraulic engineer -- when he looks at it,
9 he sees this downward trend. He has -- the
10 1999 report was based on 1995 surveys. We
11 looked at the river in '95 in detail; 1999 in
12 detail; 2001; 2002. We see this downward trend
13 in material available to the river.

14 The basalt has gone down
15 substantially. Utility relocations that we thought
16 were -- might need relocating in 1999 have all
17 been confirmed by the utility owners that none
18 would need to be replaced or relocated. They're
19 all below where we would be dredging.

20 So then the Corps looks at very
21 specifically what we call "national economic
22 development cost" and "national economic
23 development benefits" and marries those up with
24 the benefits to cost ratio. For the Columbia
25 River portion of the project, last time those

1 navigation costs, aside -- when we look at the
2 benefit to cost ratio was a hundred and
3 fifty-four million dollars. Today, that's down
4 to a hundred and thirty-two million.

5 Okay. So the benefits also
6 went down. In 1999, we were projecting
7 twenty-eight million dollars of average benefits
8 every year accruing to the nation. And now,
9 based on current information -- shipping that's
10 here in Portland today -- those are down to 18.3
11 million. So when you look at them, comparing
12 those costs to the benefits, it's reduced from
13 1.9 on the Columbia River from 1999 to the 1.5
14 today.

15 Okay. So we also have the
16 ecosystems restoration component. The Corps'
17 views those as nonmonetary benefits. They're not
18 included in the benefit to cost ratio. They're
19 something that the sponsors will have to cost
20 share on. So the total project costs on the
21 Columbia River were at one hundred and sixty
22 million. Now they're at one fifty-six.

23 So for the NEPA document that
24 you all have, basically, the biggest change from
25 an environmental standpoint were these additions

1 to the ecosystem components that we added. The
2 ones in yellow on your left are the ones that
3 were authorized in the project and included in
4 1999. As a result of the complications, the
5 Corps' changed the proposed plan to add all of
6 the other ones listed on the screen.

7 And so working with the Federal
8 agencies during the consultation, we decided that
9 this time, we were going to take an ecosystem
10 approach that related to juvenile spawns that are
11 listed; that we were looking for things that
12 would help with function, form, and value based
13 on this conceptual model that we developed.
14 What do salmon need? We were trying to be as
15 site-specific as possible. Last go-around, we
16 had a blanket statement in our assessment and in
17 the opinion that said that the Corps' will go
18 out and try to restore up to 4,500 acres in the
19 lower river unrelated to channel deepening using
20 your other authorities. And we were criticized
21 pretty heavily on not knowing where those were,
22 how they were going to be helpful, who was going
23 to do them, when we were going to do them.

24 So this go-around, we said we're
25 going to be as specific as possible. Show

1 people where they are. Identify the benefits to
2 them. And now we're taking comments on those
3 proposals. And then we also tried to make sure
4 that there was assurance that these actions could
5 actually take place. So there was an emphasis
6 to place these on Federally owned property and
7 not work with private land owners.

8 The last go around -- this map
9 illustrates then the lower river from river mile
10 three -- This is our project area here; that
11 line. And river mile 30, which is the kind of
12 the biggest part of the estuary. All the red
13 areas in there are places that we have shoals
14 that we would remove through dredging. The last
15 go-around, we were going to hopper dredge that
16 material and place it offshore in the deep water
17 disposal site.

18 The proposal now includes
19 beneficial use of dredge material. We would
20 still be offering the material from those red
21 shoaled areas now into a temporary sump -- that
22 orangeish colored number one adjacent to the
23 channel that's one river mile long; almost 600
24 feet wide. Material would be about ten feet
25 high. And then we would pipeline from that

1 temporary sump into the lower half of the
2 embankment and -- with the goal of trying to
3 create almost 400 acres of intertidal movement.

4 This is what that area looks
5 like today. That's aerial photography of the
6 area. The area was basically constructed for
7 liberty vessels back in World War II. You can
8 see on your right that some of the bathymetry
9 from 1935, where there is elevations of shallow
10 minus 60912. What it looked like in 1982 after
11 the liberty vessels' construction was done in
12 this mooring basin is minus 18 and deep as minus
13 24.

14 In the report, you'll find we
15 went out last month and got the bathymetry of
16 the area; recent bathymetry. And our goal is to
17 just restore it to what it was back in the
18 '30s. So all the construction material right
19 now is planned to go in the Lois Island
20 embayment for beneficial use of dredge material
21 to create shallow water habitat.

22 Maintenance material for this
23 region is proposed to go to Miller Pillar Pile
24 Dikes. And this is five pile dikes between
25 Miller Sands Island and Pillar Rock. And then

1 through time we would fill between pile dike one
2 and two. And it would probably take three years
3 of maintenance to bring that up to historical
4 levels. Then we'd go between two and three, and
5 so on to try to create 461 acres of shallow
6 water.

7 This area, as you can see in
8 1935, was very shallow. In 1982, CRDDP Atlas --
9 This is an active erosion area. It deepens.
10 And so that's why the pile dikes need to be
11 placed, and the material to bring it back up to
12 historic levels.

13 The last ones that we added
14 don't include beneficial use of dredge material.
15 So those first two -- because they use dredge
16 material -- are included in the our benefits to
17 cost ratio. These ones that I'm going to talk
18 to you now are not because they're nonmonetary
19 benefits and per regulation that -- that's not
20 included in any benefits to cost ratio. So we
21 worked with the services and identified --
22 basically trying to translocate Columbia Whitetail
23 Deer from Butler Hanson (phonetic) to Howard
24 (phonetic) and Cottonwood Island to try to delist
25 Columbia Whitetail Deer.

1 So if there's three distinct
2 populations with certain numbers within their
3 stock, then those species can be delisted. So
4 if it was delisted, the ultimate goal would be
5 to come back to the facility to Julia Butler
6 Hanson Refuge and breach the flood control levels
7 and let this be more of a fish-friendly type of
8 refuge.

9 In the interim, we're going to
10 go and look at doing hydraulic studies next year
11 and provide fish passage to the island. So the
12 first step's to see how much water we would let
13 into the island, whether it would interfere with
14 the Columbia Whitetail Deer. And then if it
15 doesn't, we would allow fish passage through the
16 island, wait to see if Columbia Whitetail Deer
17 were delisted, and then come back to breach
18 these flood control ballasts.

19 Another restoration feature that
20 we've added to the project includes Bachelor
21 Slough, which is on the Ridgefield Wildlife
22 Refuge. And the plan is to dredge the slough
23 and take some of the more silty material and
24 create riparian habitat. This one is contingent
25 upon testing the material within the slough.

1 And if it's cleaned, then we'll continue on with
2 the restoration.

3 Okay. So what we're doing here
4 tonight is taking your public testimony. And
5 you saw that we would be taking them also in
6 September in Longview and Astoria. The Corps
7 then will take that testimony and respond to it
8 in our formal final report. We won't be
9 responding tonight to comments, but we will
10 respond in the final report to comments that we
11 receive. Then we'll circulate that final
12 supplemental document back out to the public so
13 you'll all have a chance to see what we did
14 with your comments. And we'll be applying for
15 water quality certificates again from the states
16 of Washington and Oregon.

17 We'll again apply for management
18 consistency between Oregon and Washington. And
19 if we receive those pieces of information, then
20 the Corps will have a record of decision that
21 we'll file. So that's basically what we're
22 doing tonight. I'm going to turn it over to
23 our facilitator. And she'll explain how we'll
24 do the testimony. Thank you.

25 MS. BROOKS: Good afternoon. I

1 have been asked by the Corps to go over just a
2 few ground rules for testimony before we get
3 started. First off, we would just like to go
4 over kind of -- Speakers will be recognized in
5 the order that they signed up. And I encourage
6 all of you, if you intended on giving testimony
7 today, there were actually two sign-ups: One as
8 you came up the stairs just to let us know that
9 you were here. But over at that table was the
10 actual sign-up to be a speaker or to testify
11 today. So make sure you're on that list if you
12 intend to testify.

13 We would like to ask that
14 everyone is respectful to one another. There
15 may be times when you strongly agree or disagree
16 with the speaker. I'd just ask that you
17 withhold comments or clapping or whatever you
18 feel the need to do until after the speaking is
19 finished. And if you keep it to a minimum so
20 we can get everybody through, we'd like to get
21 folks as many folks up to the microphone as want
22 to today.

23 Let's see. If you can please
24 keep conversation to a minimum on the side so we
25 can clearly hear the speaker. We have a

1 reporter here who's going to be taking verbatim
2 testimony. Be courteous to others, and please
3 stop speaking when your time is up. I'll have
4 cards up here that will give you a one-minute
5 warning. In fact, I'll show you what they look
6 like. So everyone has five minutes. When
7 you're down to your last one, I'll quickly show
8 you a card just to let you know that you might
9 want to start winding it up. And then when
10 your full five minutes have been exhausted, I'll
11 hold this card up, which you won't be able to
12 read. But it has lots of words and letters on
13 it. So you'll know that's what it means.

14 Remember that today's meeting
15 isn't any attempt to get consensus or any sort
16 of vote. It's simply an opportunity for the
17 Corps to hear your testimony. If you cannot get
18 all of your testimony in five minutes, they ask
19 that you give the rest of your testimony in
20 written form. Let's see. Have I got
21 everything?

22 To make sure we end on time, as
23 I said, speakers are five minutes. And your
24 time is your own. In the interest of hearing
25 as many of you as possible, your time cannot be

1 assigned to others. If you are representing an
2 association, not yourself, you still just get one
3 opportunity to speak to make sure we give
4 everyone equal chance. And all of these rules
5 that I'm going over with you will be repeated in
6 each of the public hearings; all three of them,
7 identically.

8 We intend to end this hearing
9 hopefully around fiveish. We got started late,
10 so we might want to go later. We'll take a
11 break, and then we'll again have more testimony
12 this evening which will go up until 9 o'clock.
13 And I think I have covered everything. Are
14 there any questions? I'll leave these up.

15 One last thing: If you could
16 please identify yourself and who you are
17 representing when you come up to the microphone
18 just before you speak, that'd be great. Okay.
19 Let's see. Tom Bradley.

20 MR. BRADLEY: Tom Bradley. Thank
21 you for providing me the opportunity to make a
22 public comment on the Columbia River Channel
23 Deepening Project. My name is Captain Tom
24 Bradley. I'm Commissioner of Port of Vancouver.
25 As a former Ships Master, I know firsthand how

1 important the channel deepening project is for
2 our economy. The state of Washington is more
3 trade dependent than any other state in our
4 nation. There's one in three jobs dependent on
5 trade.

6 At the Port of Vancouver USA,
7 nearly 5500 jobs are directly tied to maritime
8 and industrial activities; two hundred and
9 forty-two million dollar in wages and salaries
10 annually. Their purchases add another hundred
11 and twenty-four million to our local economy.
12 The goods and services they buy help to support
13 other jobs in our community. Overall, Columbia
14 River maritime commerce produces family wage jobs
15 for over 40,000 people and influences another
16 59,000 jobs in the northwest. Last year, marine
17 activity in the lower Columbia River created 1.8
18 billion in personal income. Jobs and businesses
19 in our region require access to cost-effective
20 maritime navigation.

21 The future of the Columbia River
22 navigation directly depends on deepening the
23 channel an additional three feet. This will not
24 only maintain our shipping transportation routes,
25 but will ensure our region's land-based --

1 trade-based economy. This project will also
2 ensure the Columbia River can accommodate the
3 larger fuel-efficient ships that increasingly
4 dominate world trade.

5 In closing, I'd like to
6 reinforce the message that this project has
7 broad-based support from communities across the
8 northwest. There are thousands or more
9 businesses relying on the Columbia River to
10 transport their products around the world. Thank
11 you.

12 MS. BROOKS: Thank you. Mayor
13 Royce Pollard, please.

14 MR. POLLARD: My name's Royce
15 Pollard. I'm honored to serve as Mayor of
16 Vancouver. We want to welcome all of you to
17 our community for this important hearing today.
18 America's Vancouver is proud of our role in
19 international trade, and we're proud of the port,
20 businesses, unions, farms and communities
21 successfully manufacturing, growing, and
22 transporting cargo around the world.

23 But as good and successful as
24 the organization and people in Vancouver are, we
25 cannot be successful in international trade

1 without the necessary infrastructure. And no
2 infrastructure initiative is more important and
3 necessary than the Columbia River Improvement
4 Project that is before us.

5 Without channel deepening,
6 Vancouver ability as an international port will
7 be diminished. Many companies in Vancouver are
8 based here because of easy access to effective
9 maritime transportation. Without channel deepening,
10 approximately 5,500 jobs in Vancouver that are
11 dependent on maritime commerce would be damaged
12 and new jobs potentially lost. Without channel
13 deepening, Vancouver cannot be Vancouver.

14 As the draft supplemental
15 feasibility report and EIS demonstrate, effective
16 maritime transportation is vital to sustaining
17 and strengthening our regional trade-based
18 economy. Deepening the Columbia River navigation
19 channel is critical to maintaining maritime
20 commerce and sustaining businesses, farms, and
21 jobs in Vancouver and throughout our region.
22 This project will ensure that the Columbia River
23 can accommodate the larger fuel-efficient ships
24 that increasingly dominate the world trade fleet.

25 Although it cannot be counted in

1 the Corps of Engineers' formal benefit to cost
2 analysis, it's important to note that our state
3 and local government receive two hundred and
4 eight million each year in revenues generated
5 from Columbia River commerce. These resources
6 enable local governments like Vancouver to
7 provide effective service to all of our
8 residents. I'm not an environmental scientist,
9 but I do know the project has undergone public
10 and private scientific analysis to ensure the
11 channel deepening is conducted in an
12 environmentally sensitive manner that actually
13 leaves the river better off than it was before
14 the project.

15 One of the very positive
16 environmental benefits of this project will be
17 the creation of hundreds of acres of restores
18 wetlands. I'm not an expert -- I am an expert,
19 however, in the needs of America's Vancouver.
20 And we need this channel deepened 40 to 43 feet
21 to remain competitive with that other Vancouver
22 in British Columbia and with communities and
23 countries around the world. That's why the
24 Vancouver City Council and I are on record as
25 unanimous support and strong support for this

1 project. Thank you for bringing this important
2 public hearing to Vancouver. Thank you for
3 listening and considering my comments. And
4 thank you in advance for doing everything within
5 your power to ensure that the Columbia River
6 Channeling Deepening Project moves forward in an
7 expeditious and effective manner. Thank you very
8 much.

9 MS. BROOKS: Representative Bill
10 Fromhold.

11 MR. FROMHOLD: I'm Bill Fromhold,
12 the State Representative here in 49th legislative
13 district. And I also would like to express my
14 appreciation for having the opportunity to make
15 public comment on this draft supplemental
16 feasibility report. This project is extremely
17 important, as has been noted, to our economy and
18 the environmental health of our region.

19 With the completion of the
20 biological opinions and the completion of these
21 drafts supplemental reports, it seems clear this
22 project and must move forward in an economically
23 and environmentally responsible manner. Deepening
24 the Columbia River navigation channel is critical
25 to maintaining our commerce. As has been noted,

1 it has broad-based support of business -- excuse
2 me -- labor, farms, ports and the communities
3 throughout the northwest. Some estimated 40,000
4 family wage jobs are dependent on this project.
5 And in addition to that, there are more than a
6 thousand businesses along the Columbia River
7 that rely on the river to transport their
8 products to the world market. This really, to
9 me, emphasizes the importance of this project to
10 the region's economic health. And as a
11 representative of the 49th Southern District, I
12 would encourage that it be done quickly as
13 possible. And again, thank you for the
14 opportunity.

15 MS. BROOKS: Steve Frasher.

16 MR. FRASHER: My name is Steve
17 Frasher. I'm President of Tidewater Barge Lines.
18 For those of you who might not familiar with
19 Tidewater, we operate towboats and barges in the
20 full 4,065 (phonetic) mile of the Columbia Snake
21 River system. We've been in continuous operation
22 since 1932.

23 And I have actually a very
24 simple view of what otherwise is going to be a
25 complex project. And I'm sure there are many

1 here qualified to talk to the Colonel and the
2 Corps about the complexity. But basically, our
3 view is that cheap reliable transportation
4 provides the very foundation for the creation of
5 a prosperous and healthy economy. Oftentimes, in
6 the fray of the battle over the competing uses
7 of our waterways, we tend to overlook one simple
8 awe inspiring fact: That the Pacific Northwest
9 provides products to the world at a price the
10 world can afford. In return, the Pacific
11 Northwest also gets to consume products from
12 other world markets.

13 The various channel deepening
14 projects undertaken over the years have been a
15 significant response to the persistent global
16 demand for better products at a lower cost.
17 That challenge will always be before us, and we
18 should not waiver in our efforts to meet it.

19 I appreciate the fact that there
20 is a concern over the environmental impact of
21 this project. But let us not lose sight of the
22 fact that the prosperity we have enjoyed as a
23 result of efficiencies gained from channel
24 deepening projects of the past give us the
25 resources to evaluate and improve the environment

1 for the future.

2 The Pacific Northwest provides
3 food and products to the world at a price the
4 world can afford. Let us go forward with this
5 project so we can continue to fulfill that role.
6 Thank you.

7 MS. BROOKS: Keith Jessup.

8 MR. JESSUP: I'm Keith Jessup
9 with Advanced American Diving Service, Inc. I'm
10 the Purchasing Manager and IT person, and I take
11 care of our special project for our properties.
12 I entered the marine industry in January of
13 1966 here in Portland at Northwest Marine
14 Ironworks. It's been a pleasure to see through
15 the years the advancements that's taken place
16 throughout the community along with seeing the
17 impact economically. And I'm also pleased to
18 see the environmental level that is continuing to
19 go forward.

20 Advanced American Diving is very
21 supportive of this project and is excited to see
22 it go forward. And our main critical mistake to
23 lose any ground that we have earned up to this
24 point, as far as what our future holds for us.
25 It would be just a traumatic mistake to be able

1 to lose that. But now is the time to go
2 forward; not five years from now or ten years
3 from now. It would be way too expensive to
4 accomplish the same thing. Thank you.

5 MS. BROOKS: Jim Townley.

6 MR. TOWNLEY: I too want to
7 thank you for giving us the opportunity to
8 comment. I didn't come with prepared remarks.
9 I'm going to basically talk about the people
10 that provide services on the river and those who
11 receive services from the maritime industry.

12 I represent the Columbia River
13 Steamship Operators Association. And as such,
14 those are the individuals that are bringing big
15 ships into the river. Those are the people that
16 operate tugs and barges from Lewiston, Idaho,
17 down the coast to Coos Bay, up the coast to\
18 Gray's Harbor, and beyond. And these folks have
19 a major stake -- especially during these
20 recessionary times -- in the jobs that have been
21 lost and the jobs that I've witnessed being lost
22 just in the last couple of years. This channel
23 deepening is one of the bright lights that
24 offers us hope to continue to stay in the game.

25 I want to talk a little bit

1 about the CRSA because it's in its 80th year
2 right now. During that 80 years, it has
3 participated in healthy debates such as these to
4 help determine the direction of our region and
5 the capital improvements that it needs to stay
6 cost competitive.

7 We've had a hand in guiding
8 these objectives and in furthering our own
9 objectives, which is to try and draw increasingly
10 more trade in the region and the revenues and
11 jobs that go with that. The people of the
12 Pacific Northwest who enjoy the benefits brought
13 to them by international maritime trade have a
14 reputation for being very practical and
15 hard-working. And evidence of that is often --
16 can be found in the earliest seals that they
17 used and their symbols to show it was important
18 to them now, and it was important to their
19 future.

20 The first seal for the Pacific
21 Northwest was in essence a shock of wheat and a
22 salmon. There were other -- other things on it,
23 but that commanded attention. The first
24 territorial seal had those same symbols, plus at
25 the center a sailing ship, indicating that the

1 people recognized the importance of trade even
2 then. This is the 1850s.

3 When the State seal for Oregon
4 alone was formed, slight change: The sailing
5 ship is still there, but it's sailing off to the
6 left. In the center of the seal for the state
7 of Oregon, there's a newfangled invention called
8 the steamship. If you were redesigning a seal
9 today for the Pacific Northwest, I would suggest
10 that at the center, the practical hard-working
11 people of Oregon would put a deep draft ocean
12 ship; probably with a container of grain or some
13 other type of port-indicating symbol right
14 alongside. It's always been important to us. It
15 continues to be important to us.

16 A deeper channel, I want to
17 point out, is a safer channel. I haven't heard
18 that mentioned yet. There's more water under the
19 keel. And even though it allows ships to come
20 with deeper drafts, you've got to keep in mind
21 that the Panama Canal is still a limiting
22 feature. And that means that we'll be able to
23 handle the deeper draft ships. But by and
24 large, most of the ships that come here are
25 going to have more water under the keel. That's

1 an environmental -- that's a safety feature as
2 well as a navigational safety feature.

3 And I'll just finish by pointing
4 out that the cost competitive issue is the
5 bottom line. Cost competitiveness here gives our
6 farmers in eastern Oregon, eastern Washington,
7 and Idaho and even further east and up to as
8 many as 40 states benefit -- in the United
9 States benefit by the use of our railroad
10 system. Market access that is far cheaper than
11 would be otherwise if our system was not here to
12 compete with the Mississippi and other coasts on
13 the -- ports on the west coast.

14 It also gives us continued jobs
15 we've heard about, the revenues we enjoy, and
16 other benefits. We shouldn't forget that the
17 whole lock and dam system we enjoy right now is
18 a result of navigation servitude that led to the
19 ancillary bend at the time, the electrification
20 of the region, hydro power, and flood protection.
21 If we want to continue to be players in the
22 international game and we want to continue to
23 enjoy the capital benefits that maritime trade
24 brings along with the ancillary ones, we cannot
25 afford not to deepen this channel. Thank you.

1 MS. BROOKS: Brad Clark.

2 MR. CLARK: Good afternoon. My
3 name's Brad Clark, and I serve as President of
4 Local 4 of the International Longshore Warehouse
5 Union.

6 First, I'd like to stress the
7 importance of this project to the rank and file
8 members that I've been elected to represent.
9 The Port of Vancouver employees 153 full-time and
10 70 part-time longshore workers. These jobs are
11 desirable family wage jobs. These jobs allow many
12 of our workers to support their families the
13 old-fashioned way: With one income. Due to our
14 ability to make a living wage, many of our
15 members and their spouses take advantage of the
16 opportunity by playing active roles in our
17 churches, school systems, and little leagues.

18 I'd first like to stress that
19 statistics on an issue like this mean very
20 little to me. I have no concept of the
21 millions of dollars that this costs; no concept
22 of the millions of dollars that this generates,
23 nor do I -- do I have a concept of how those
24 millions of dollars would positively affect or
25 hinder our state's economy. The one statistic

1 that I would like to speak about though is the
2 statistic of the 40,000 local jobs and 59,000
3 northwest jobs that will be affected by this
4 project. The reason I'm going to address that
5 statistic is that I don't believe it. I believe
6 waterborne trade on the Columbia River affects
7 many more jobs than these. Yes, there's the
8 obvious ones like my job, river pilots, deck
9 hands on tugs, Port Authority employees. Then
10 there's jobs that were recognized with a little
11 more thought, like the wheat farmers, truck
12 drivers, importers and local manufacturers. Jobs
13 such as these are the ones that I assume make
14 up that statistic. But if we all look a little
15 closer, we're going to see that there's many
16 more jobs that are influenced by the Columbia
17 River.

18 Our jobs allow people to shop,
19 eat in restaurants, vacation, and spend money in
20 other parts of our state. Take away those jobs,
21 and you will see an impact on businesses, both
22 large and small, throughout our communities.
23 Without these jobs, workers will be forced to
24 relocate to larger communities.

25 I want everyone to look at

1 towns in Oregon such as Newport, Astoria, and
2 Coos Bay. I'd like everyone to look at towns
3 in Washington such as Port Campbell and Port
4 Angeles. For many years, the waterborne trade
5 of logs in these communities ran those
6 communities. When that waterborne trade
7 dwindled, it affected everyone in the
8 communities. As people moved away, there became
9 -- became less of a demand for everything from
10 gas stations to grocery stores. Small businesses
11 that could not survive on the tourism that our
12 beautiful states attracts had no choice but to
13 close their doors.

14 Families moving away created
15 less of a demand for teachers, doctors, and
16 construction workers. These jobs also show the
17 affect that waterborne trade has on a community
18 such as ours that is driven by the health and
19 competitiveness of the Columbia River.

20 I would like to offer the
21 Columbia River as a -- as vital to the cities
22 of Vancouver and Longview that gambling is to
23 Las Vegas, the entertainment industry is to Los
24 Angeles, and the automobiles are to Detroit.
25 Importers and exporters will forever take

1 advantage of new technologies that shipping
2 companies come up with to move cargo faster,
3 cheaper, more efficiently, and in greater
4 volumes. These technologies mandate that the
5 shipping companies build oceangoing vessels that
6 require deeper drafts in order for those
7 companies to remain competitive.

8 Soon, all of the smaller ships
9 will be decommissioned and replaced by deep draft
10 vessels. It's paramount for the communities that
11 depend on international trade to do everything in
12 their power to keep base. So on behalf of
13 Local 4 and as a personal voice of many workers
14 throughout our state, I urge you to support this
15 project. Thank you.

16 MS. BROOKS: Ted Farnsworth.

17 MR. FARNSWORTH: I'm Ted
18 Farnsworth. I've worked on the Columbia River
19 ever since 1942, and I've seen changes that most
20 of you can't imagine. I wish the Corps of
21 Engineers would take the sand and move it off
22 the front of my property that they put in there
23 over a period of the last 50 years. I am the
24 only one that's speaking on the part of the
25 ecology of the river. Most of the people are

1 involved in money. Money is fine. But what
2 does it do for the river?

3 This brochure with a nice clean
4 packet of sand is a good example of what the
5 Corps of Engineers has done to the Columbia
6 River over the last 70 years. Sand doesn't grow
7 one thing. It takes fine silt and mud to
8 replenish the fields and the bottom lands to
9 raise the ecological chain -- the grasses, the
10 algae, the plankton that feeds all of our
11 system. As the Corps of Engineers has pumped
12 sand in on the different areas, they've covered
13 up all of the ecological chain. There's no
14 longer an ecological chain. Take Frenchman's
15 Bar, which many of you are familiar with.
16 Frenchman's Bar was comprised of three islands
17 many years ago: Caterpillar Island, Hayes
18 Island, Hulette Island (phonetic). You could run
19 inland behind that -- those three islands, all
20 the way to Blue Rock Landing, which is the base
21 of the Flushing Channel that goes into Vancouver
22 Lake now. All of that area grew grass in the
23 threshes that was 12 and 15 feet high. As the
24 water went down, the nutrients that went into
25 the river were magnified. And they fed our

1 whole ecological chain for the river. This sand
2 doesn't grow anything except a few cottonwood
3 trees.

4 Another good example is Ive's
5 Island (phonetic). The Corps of Engineers has
6 pumped that up there. It doesn't grow anything,
7 except it makes a tremendous nesting place for a
8 nonnative species that normally would be out on
9 the coast. But they've moved inland. And now
10 they take tremendous amounts of our downstream
11 smolts. I would like to see that island pumped
12 back into the river where it belongs, and the
13 sand that is covering places like Frenchman's Bar
14 removed and put in places.

15 And right now, the Corps of
16 Engineers is spending billions of dollars to
17 restore the Missouri to what it once was.
18 They're trying to do the same thing on the
19 Columbia River that they've done on the Missouri
20 River. There's billions of dollars being spent
21 to restore what the Corps of Engineers has
22 destroyed. Ladies and gentlemen, this is -- If
23 they would pump good stuff in there instead of
24 bare sand that doesn't grow anything, it would
25 be fine. But that silt is all trapped above

1 the settling ponds; these dams up above. And it
2 has no way of getting down here.

3 The farmland -- take the Nile
4 River Delta. The Nile River Delta is the richest
5 land in the world, and it used to produce 18
6 and-a-half cuttings of alfalfa per year. Without
7 the floods that feed it because of the building
8 of the dams, they're now down to 14 cuttings a
9 year. And that would -- trend will continue.
10 Much of the Nile Delta has disappeared because
11 the erosion -- the sand is -- It doesn't hold.
12 It takes the mud and the silt to hold that sand
13 in place. The dredging off of the end of the
14 North Jetty has created a terrible hazard down
15 there for boaters and so forth. These are all
16 things that need to be addressed. Thank you.

17 MS. BROOKS: Paul Riggs.

18 MR. RIGGS: Paul Riggs. I
19 represent the International Brotherhood of
20 Electrical Workers. We support the channel
21 deepening project as an important element of the
22 regional transportation infrastructure. If we
23 fail to keep up with the times and shipping,
24 we'll put the areas of commerce at a
25 disadvantage, and the economy and job growth of

1 the entire area will suffer. Thank you.

2 MS. BROOKS: J. Michael Zachary.

3 MR. ZACHARY: Good afternoon. My
4 name's Mike Zachary. I stand before you as a
5 citizen of southwest Washington and the greater
6 northwest. Also standing before you as a Port
7 expert in the maritime industry. I've personally
8 been involved with over 62 strategic master plans
9 throughout the world involving more than 300
10 separate marine and internodal facilities. The
11 largest project I was responsible for was the
12 Port of Los Angeles/Port of Longbeach 20/20 plan.
13 That resulted in 2500 acres of fill being put in
14 the San Pedro Bay and more than 10 billion
15 dollars worth of infrastructure improvements in
16 the San Pedro area to do nothing more than
17 improve the capacity of those two ports.

18 Each of the 62 deep water ports
19 and the 300 marine facilities had three major
20 components for port through-play: One was roads
21 and highways. The other was rail access, and
22 third and probably most important is waterway
23 access. Every one of those ports had one or
24 more of the above impacted either by nature or
25 by the congestion of the area that was in.

1 The Pacific Rim Cargo -- that's
2 containerized cargo -- has been increasing by 7
3 percent per year for the last 15 years. This
4 is a growth rate that will result in the
5 doubling of cargo every ten years.

6 While the regional ports will
7 not see the 6,000 TEU mega vessels that are
8 currently calling on the ports in Los Angeles
9 and Long Beach and Seattle, there is a cascading
10 effect that all vessels will eventually come to
11 the ports of the lower Columbia. These ports
12 must remain competitive with every other west
13 coast port. Because every port of the lower
14 Columbia is, in fact, in competition with every
15 west coast port, including the port of Vancouver
16 British Columbia. It is imperative that in
17 order for the ports of the lower Columbia to
18 remain viable and competitive, the deepening
19 project must be completed in a timely fashion.

20 This is not only a regional
21 project. There are several studies that indicate
22 very clearly that the capacity issues of every
23 west coast port will be put to the test and put
24 to the limit by the amount of cargo they can --
25 they can carry across their docks in the near

1 future -- beginning within the next 20 years.

2 The major projects that are
3 currently occurring on the west coast by other
4 ports -- not only the 20/20 plan previously
5 mentioned, but the Alameda Corps, which is rail
6 access to Los Angeles/Longbeach -- the dredging
7 and rail access in the Bay area for ports of
8 Oakland and San Francisco and the completely new
9 deep water berths in Vancouver, British Columbia.
10 We need this project. Not only to remain
11 competitive, but to ensure that all the lower
12 Columbia ports remain viable for both commerce
13 and national defense. Thank you.

14 MS. BROOKS: Edward Barnes.

15 MR. BARNES: My name is Edward
16 Barnes. I'm a member of the Washington State
17 Transportation Commission. I want to thank the
18 Corps for coming here today to have public
19 testimony to make sure that this project does
20 what it's supposed to do; that it's done right.
21 On behalf of Aubrey Davis, the Chairman of the
22 Commission, all seven members are very supportive
23 of this project. We worked extremely hard in
24 order to make sure that the money necessary for
25 the match for the state of Washington passes

1 through the legislature the same as the state of
2 Oregon did.

3 This is a vital transportation
4 service for not just the state of Washington,
5 but Oregon, Idaho, all the way back to the
6 midwest. So as a Commissioner, our job is to
7 make sure that we provide the best transportation
8 system possible for the people, whether it's
9 rail, air, highways and that. And so we're very
10 supportive for what the Corps is doing. We hope
11 that -- that this project will go forward just
12 as quick as it can. And thank you very much
13 for the time today.

14 MS. BROOKS: Larry Paulson.

15 MR. PAULSON: Thank you. I
16 would like to add my thanks and good afternoon
17 for your coming to the city of Vancouver and
18 state of Washington for this hearing. I'm Larry
19 Paulson. I have the privilege of being the
20 Executive Director of the Port of Vancouver. I
21 would like, if I have time, to speak and add to
22 the thoughts relating to the economic and
23 personal people aspects, if you will, of this
24 project. But I would like to speak instead --
25 at least from my perspective -- to the

1 environmental issues, the process, and the
2 results that have come about during this -- the
3 process that brings us to the supplemental
4 Environmental Impact Statement.

5 I have the privilege to serve
6 on the reconsultation team for the past, oh,
7 year and-a-half two years now serving with
8 representatives of the U.S. Army Corps of
9 Engineers, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and
10 National Marine Fisheries Service. I represent
11 interests of six ports that have been the local
12 sponsors with their respective states in working
13 through questions, answers, and ultimately the
14 biological opinions that eventually came out from
15 those process.

16 Let me remind everyone that the
17 ports in the states have a significant interest
18 in this economically; not just for the jobs, for
19 the benefit to our economy, for the increase we
20 believe that will result in the deepening of the
21 channel, but that we have a cost factor. We
22 have a responsibility for 35 percent of the cost
23 of this project. So we have an interest in
24 seeing it done efficiently, but also seeing it
25 done well.

1 The purpose of the
2 reconsultation process was to collectively
3 understand what the questions -- the right
4 questions were to be asked -- and hopefully, to
5 arrive at answers collectively that would
6 determine what if any impacts would result from
7 the deepening of this channel, which is only 600
8 feet wide and only about 54 percent of which
9 needs to be deepened. And only about 3.5
10 percent of the river affected it if you take it
11 on a vertical straight up element.

12 How it would affect the
13 environment: Through that process, we looked at
14 it and brought in an independent scientific
15 group. We had an open positive evaluation by
16 them and by others. Laura was kind enough to
17 summarize some of the processes and some of the
18 studies that we've gone through to take a look
19 at and make sure we have those -- not only
20 right questions, but the right answers for this
21 -- for this to come about for the biological
22 opinions to be accomplished.

23 And I will add personally that
24 when we started that process, there were
25 disagreements among the Federal agencies and the

1 ports. And there were concerns, and there were
2 different issues that needed to be addressed.
3 But as we proceeded through this process, it
4 became clear that the right questions could be
5 asked. The right answers could be obtained.
6 And these biological opinions could be issued,
7 which eventually occurred after a year and-a-half
8 of extensive effort. And not only were they
9 issued. But they are, I believe, significantly
10 credible, straightforward, and show that this
11 deepening -- This project can be accomplished in
12 an environmentally appropriate way.

13 Laura again went on and
14 explained some of the mitigation restoration
15 issues that will be taken care of. But I think
16 some of the points that need to be emphasized
17 include the fact of restoration. The ecosystem
18 restoration projects which we believe will result
19 not only in not injuring the river, if you will,
20 but making it better; providing a better
21 ecosystem and environment now and for the future.

22 The adaptive management aspect.
23 The monitoring, if you will, I think is a
24 significant part of this process. The agreement
25 by the parties, including the ports and the

1 Federal agencies, to make sure that we continue
2 to monitor what happens in the river. The
3 Benson Beach project, which we've begun just
4 recently to help deal with the erosion issues on
5 the Washington side of the river.

6 We believe, again, that the
7 biological opinions are credible, defensible, and
8 appropriate for this project to be done. And
9 we encourage you to go forward with the
10 finalization and the issuing necessary approvals
11 and permits for this process. I may add we
12 will be adding additional written comments later.
13 Thank you.

14 MS. BROOKS: John White.

15 MR. WHITE: Good afternoon. My
16 name's John White. I don't have any prepared
17 remarks, but I wanted to come down and offer
18 some observations kind of along Larry's line of
19 the process that's gone on here. But I want to
20 do it -- I guess more from a 10,000 foot level.
21 I've watched this process with really kind of a
22 split personality.

23 On one hand, I own a consulting
24 firm that specializes in natural resources
25 consulting, the J.D. White Company, among other

1 service lines. So we have watched the evolution
2 of the ecological side of this with great
3 interest; and frankly, with a critical eye.

4 On the other hand, I have
5 served as Chair of the Board of the Greater
6 Vancouver Chamber of Commerce for two terms,
7 which is really when I first became fully aware
8 and involved in the project. So I -- My first
9 immersion in it was really from the economic
10 side.

11 What's of interest to me is
12 that as you've gone down the path, the
13 environmental and economic interests, in my view
14 anyway, have really become a line. There has
15 been a melding of interests here that I think
16 has resulted in a project that is far better
17 than it was two years ago and certainly better
18 than it was five years ago. And I commend you,
19 and I commend, frankly, the process for that.
20 Because I think that's successful.

21 I heard an interview with
22 someone on the radio this morning. I didn't
23 catch her name. But she was asked, "What are
24 you going to do if they move ahead?" She said,
25 "We're going to sue." That's an unfortunate

1 position to be taking, in my view, during the
2 comment period. I would hope the emphasis would
3 be on providing constructive remarks so the
4 project gets -- a good project gets even better
5 before we get to the finish line.

6 But I commend you, and I
7 commend this community and the communities of the
8 lower Columbia for involving themselves in a
9 process that I think frankly worked right, and
10 worked just like it was supposed to. Thank you.

11 MS. BROOKS: Brad Shah.

12 MR. SHAH: Good afternoon. My
13 name's Brad Shah. I represent SD Services at
14 Port of Vancouver. The perspective I'm going to
15 give you -- I have been in chemical business for
16 the last thirty some years. I've worked in the
17 northwest; first on other side of the river; now
18 here. And how much impact my job having access
19 to the water for commercial purpose. My previous
20 job, we got all of the raw material by ship.
21 So it was very important we get basalt. Because
22 there were two normalities: Electricity and
23 salt. And two years ago, on the ship for
24 quality purpose, and Captain says, "You know,
25 these bumps are -- It's getting pretty hard to

1 come here." And it was even harder to come
2 before. Because those large ships would not
3 come to Portland with full loads. They had to go
4 first on the north, empty the load, then come to
5 Portland to do the job.

6 And we -- It was also in
7 Portland when we had downtime in the business.
8 We had to export. And we had a lot of the
9 ships dump off the load we cannot manage on our
10 docks. There were so much -- it was a cruise
11 ship. So here is the point: That medium-sized
12 or small-sized business does depend on barging to
13 survive and sustain their business; to have good
14 CS's.

15 In my new job, again, I worked
16 on the river; by the river. I'm -- My trade
17 is chemistry. I care for quality. I used to
18 check environmental sample of river water to see
19 how good it is. I appreciate the beauty. I
20 appreciate the beauty from Port of Vancouver when
21 I leave my building and -- So we do want a
22 sound management of our ecosystem. But I also
23 see here people want to do business with us.
24 They want to bring their license and their
25 chemicals to this port. But they're also

1 wondering can they bring in the right quantity
2 in a decent manner?

3 Also, people want to build some
4 small businesses. But they also need -- They
5 see you. Because they have done business with
6 us. They want to extend. So they are looking
7 at you. So it does play a key role that -- to
8 see ocean channels when they make the decision
9 whether to come here or not. So this is a
10 firsthand -- that I can give you how it impacts.
11 So please keep in mind -- I do appreciate your
12 ecosystem with everyone else, and we do want --
13 But to sustain our economy, keep it -- maintain
14 the base we have. It's important we have a --
15 an up-to-date technology and more transportation
16 available here. Thank you.

17 MS. BROOKS: Jim De Stael. Did
18 I pronounce it correctly?

19 MR. DE STAEL: I'll follow the
20 first instruction. It's De Stael.

21 MS. BROOKS: De Stael. Thank
22 you.

23 MR. DE STAEL: Colonel, thank you
24 and the Corps of Engineers for giving me the
25 opportunity to speak today. I'm here as a

1 private citizen and registered voter for all you
2 politicians out there. I'm here to express my
3 support for the proposed Columbia River Channel
4 Improvement Project.

5 Indifference to remarks by
6 previous speakers, my view is also simple. I
7 also believe it is -- that this project is
8 essential to future commerce on the Columbia
9 River and the continued economic growth of all
10 the industries in the Columbia River Basin that
11 rely on that commercial artery. As many who
12 have testified before me can attest, the positive
13 affects of completing this project would reach
14 the Idaho border and -- And conversely, so would
15 the negative affects of failing to go forward
16 with this project. I recognize that the main
17 concern would probably be environmental. But I
18 believe that the risk is already being
19 satisfactorily mitigated. And I'm new to
20 familiarity with this project, and I'm pleased to
21 see the measures that are being taken and
22 outlined.

23 I also heard a previous speaker
24 make mention of the increased safety of the
25 deeper draft. And let me make a note here that

1 I certainly would concur with that. Having
2 served in the Navy for more than 25 years,
3 there's nothing I like better than more water
4 under the keel. So in conclusion, I'd just like
5 to register my support for your project. Thank
6 you.

7 MS. BROOKS: Philip Massey.

8 MR. MASSEY: Thank you for the
9 opportunity to testify today. I'm Captain Philip
10 Massey, and I'm a member of the Columbia River
11 Pilots Association. I've made a living on the
12 Columbia, Willamette, and Snake Rivers along the
13 Pacific Coast for 36 years. As an advocate of
14 the deeper, safer channel, I'd like to address
15 an irony that's been prevalent throughout the
16 years of channeling deepening study that's been
17 going on.

18 Over the past -- Excuse me.

19 Over the past 50 years, the general public has
20 developed a justifiable cynicism with dealing
21 with -- with their dealings with the government
22 and big business. They were mislead about
23 Vietnam, Watergate, Iran Contra, and so on.
24 They've been lied to by big tobacco and most
25 recently, Enron, Arthur Anderson, Worldcom, and

1 others. Many of us have come to believe that
2 government and big business lie, while
3 environmental groups tell the truth. The irony
4 is that during the years of study of channel
5 deepening, the opposite has been true. The
6 opponents have told the public that this is a
7 rush job.

8 For over 12 years, this project
9 has undergone study after study by government,
10 industry, environmental and media entities. I
11 shudder to think how many millions of dollars of
12 taxpayer dollars have been wasted on studies and
13 restudies. It made sense twelve years ago, and
14 it makes sense today. The opponents of Brandon
15 (phonetic) have polluted and toxic, and even
16 radioactive dredge spoils. While there are
17 contaminated areas along the banks of the
18 Portland harbor, the Columbia dredge materials
19 have a long history of being used for
20 construction projects, public parks, beaches and
21 even children's sandboxes.

22 Environmental extremists would
23 have us believe that the river is in a downward
24 spiral. That is just not true. City and town
25 discharges are the best they've ever been.

1 Tugs, ships, and recreational vessels now contain
2 all their waste stored and -- to be properly
3 disposed of ashore.

4 When I started on the river,
5 you could go months without seeing a bald eagle.
6 Today, the sightings are daily, along with
7 ospreys, herons, mallards, swans and dozens of
8 other birds that make their living on clean,
9 healthy river.

10 One might ask if all the fish
11 are gone, what are these birds eating?
12 Self-appointed shipping experts say that it is
13 ridiculous to have ships come from 100 miles
14 inland to deliver and receive cargo. I'd ask
15 those experts to take a look at a map. Find
16 out how many hours it takes to get ships to and
17 from larger ports like Houston, New Orleans,
18 Baton Rouge; even New York and Baltimore. Look
19 at how many miles Tacoma, Seattle, Vancouver B.C.
20 -- B.C. are from the ocean. The fact is our
21 -- The fact is our six to eight-hour transit
22 times for tankers and boats carrying tomato juice
23 is very competitive with the other west coast
24 ports.

25 Dreamers continue to tell us

1 that our effort should be dedicated for Astoria.
2 I was once an advocate of that myself. Twenty
3 years ago, there was an effort to locate a super
4 grain terminal in Astoria and supply it almost
5 entirely with up river barges. Turns out
6 shippers don't want to be obligated to just one
7 mode of transportation. They need to have the
8 option of rail and truck.

9 Today, grain terminals need to
10 be able to process 100 car unit trains and
11 having space for 300 and 600 railroads.
12 Container facilities need even more rail space,
13 along with space for hundreds of trucks and
14 thousands of containers. The impact and expense
15 of building a heavy-duty two-rail line and
16 four-lane modern highway to Astoria could be
17 many, many times that of developing and
18 maintaining a river channel.

19 On your next drive to Astoria,
20 take note of how many miles of sensitive
21 wetlands the highway and rail would pass through.
22 Try to imagine bridges, trestles, and the fill
23 that would be required. Millions of Oregon
24 lottery dollars went to dredging the Tongue Point
25 docks and turning basin. And to this day, the

1 only revenue that facility generates is storage
2 of a few barges.

3 I'm told the -- I'm told the
4 area has filled back in. Moving the region's
5 shipping needs to the mouth of the river is such
6 a ridiculous fantasy, it merits absolutely no
7 further comment or consideration.

8 Those who think that they know
9 a lot of about economics have said Portland and
10 Vancouver should abandon their pursuit of full
11 cargos and containers and go for niche cars. I
12 would like to point out it's the niche cargos
13 that have failed us. Fiber-optic cable docking
14 has quit. Aluminum oil (phonetic) blocks are
15 down, and logs and lumber are a fraction of the
16 past. We cannot support more than 40,000 family
17 wage jobs
18 and billions of tax dollar -- taxpayer-owned port
19 facilities with Pendleton shares and Intel
20 processors.

21 Even with all the misinformation
22 the public has been fed, its strong majority
23 still supports the safer, deeper channel. Our
24 area's suffering far more than the other west
25 coast ports. The world has heard of dam

1 breaching and drought problems and channeling
2 deepening opposition, and the message has been
3 Columbia ports are closing for business. It is
4 vital to make up for lost time and money and
5 move ahead with this project with all speed.
6 Thank you.

7 MS. BROOKS: Peter Huhtala.

8 MR. HUHTALA: Hi. My name is
9 Peter Huhtala. I'm the Executive Director of
10 Seadog, the Columbia Deepening Opposition Group.
11 I'm from Astoria. Thank you for the opportunity
12 to offer these initial comments. And welcome,
13 Colonel Hobernicht. I really hope that you have
14 an enjoyable and rewarding stay here commanding
15 this district, and that you come to love the
16 Pacific Northwest.

17 The Columbia River estuary is
18 critical habitat for every run of salmon in the
19 Columbia Basin. It is also critical to historic
20 waves of life and the vitality of long-standing
21 communities.

22 A recent newspaper report
23 described the people of the lower river as
24 "hostile to the deepening project." I suppose
25 we are hostile, in the sense that pioneering

1 Europeans encountered hostile native tribes.
2 When salmon, smelt, lamprey, sturgeon, crab and
3 rock fish that's eaten -- sustain us -- are
4 threatened, when our fragile economy faces
5 another thrashing, when the health of our
6 children is at stake, we tend to get a little
7 defensive.

8 The decision whether to deepen
9 the Columbia River shipping channel is -- in the
10 way proposed, is a major skirmish in the battle
11 for the Columbia River estuary. It is
12 unfortunately promoted in ways that mimic
13 warfare. If the plan proceeds, there will be
14 clear winners and losers. The winners will be
15 certain shipping companies; many foreign-based;
16 most multinational corporations. And with
17 nebulous advantage, but clearly engaged in the
18 axis are regional interests who fear a gradual
19 erosion of market access.

20 Obvious losers include the
21 commercial fishermen of the estuary and near
22 shore ocean, the families and communities of the
23 lower river, the Tribes of the Columbia Basin,
24 and all who depend on a relatively healthy
25 estuary ecosystem for existence, enjoyment, and

1 spiritual nourishment. Good people have made
2 poor choices about the design and timing of this
3 navigation improvement.

4 The most vexing problem is what
5 to do with the incredibly massive volumes to be
6 dredged. A reasonable and equitable solution may
7 not be forthcoming. The latest plan offers to
8 dump millions of tons of sediment in estuary
9 waters, destroying much of a rare, innovative,
10 low-impact fishery, diminishing opportunities for
11 aquatic development, killing endangered salmon,
12 and increasing -- yes -- the distribution of
13 toxic contaminants.

14 I guess that draws a battle
15 line in the sand. Although it's widely accepted
16 that this battle will extend to the court
17 system, the real struggle is -- is within the
18 hearts and minds of the people of the great
19 northwest.

20 I guess I should add guts.
21 Because I don't believe that this region can
22 stomach the inequity, the unfair trampling upon
23 the icons of salmon and historical life-styles.
24 We desperately need an about face, to borrow
25 another military trend. It should no longer be

1 acceptable to fight among ourselves, to set up
2 these public works projects so that relative
3 political power makes for winners and losers.
4 We need a new approach.

5 I envision the Corps as part of
6 the leadership in an ambitious plan to protect,
7 enhance, and restore the Columbia River estuary.
8 We can end the pollution, stop the destruction,
9 and build healthy habitats. Instead of tacking
10 on speculative and misnamed restoration to a
11 project that would further degrade the estuary,
12 we can approach the lower river system as -- as
13 a river -- as a system that cries for overall
14 improvement. Within this context, navigation
15 improvement could naturally emerge.

16 This is a way for the Corps to
17 rebuild credibility. It is also the springboard
18 to regional peace. With -- and -- and
19 encompassing conservation -- true conservation --
20 and a superior economy, we might just forget why
21 we're fighting. The first step is a courageous
22 withdrawal of this deepening project from further
23 consideration. I urge you, Colonel Hobernicht,
24 to make this recommendation. Thank you.

25 MS. BROOKS: Scott Patterson.

1 MR. PATTERSON: Good afternoon.
2 My name is Scott Patterson. I'm here today
3 representing the greater Vancouver Chamber of
4 Commerce. And like a few others, I do not have
5 prepared comments. But I do want to add a few
6 things, and echo the sentiments of many of the
7 individuals who have gotten up and spoken in
8 favor of the project.

9 I've had the great fortune,
10 actually, in a previous line of work as a
11 congressional staffer in the mid 1990s to begin
12 working and getting very familiar with this
13 project. And if you would have told me at that
14 time that I'd be standing here in a different
15 capacity in 2002 testifying in a similar public
16 hearing, I probably wouldn't have believed you.
17 But here I am.

18 The Chamber is a strong
19 supporter of this project -- has been for a
20 number of years -- and shares this support with
21 a number of other business organizations in the
22 Vancouver area. Columbia River Economic
23 Development Council is one of them. And I
24 believe you'll be hearing from another one here
25 shortly.

1 The benefits have been -- have
2 been stated very well by many of the proponents.
3 They're quite obvious, in terms of additional
4 river commerce, economy, jobs that impact people.
5 The studies that have been done and redone have
6 always focussed and not lost sight of those
7 jobs. But they've also enhanced the
8 environmental benefits that I believe are
9 numerous. And we commend the Corps on the
10 efforts; also on the sponsor ports for sticking
11 with this project and realizing it to the end.

12 So I'm just here to urge you to
13 continue to move forward; hopefully wrap this up
14 very soon. And we'll be there to be strong
15 supporters. And I'm very anxious to see this
16 actually happen. So thank you.

17 MS. BROOKS: Ginger Metcalf.

18 MS. METCALF: Good afternoon.

19 I'm Ginger Metcalf, the Executive Director of
20 Identity Clark County. We represent community
21 and economic developments in Clark County and 87
22 major corporate leaders within the Clark County
23 region.

24 My admiration too is extended to
25 the ports and the industries that have pursued

1 this effort and their compliance with the many
2 demands and requests that have been placed on
3 them because of this project. And to the rest
4 of us too who have stood in the sidelines
5 urging them on. It's demonstrative, if you
6 will, of the importance of the project to the
7 region.

8 One of the tools we have to
9 offer perspective employers is the basis for the
10 transportation of goods. One piece of that
11 basis is several challenged beyond our ability to
12 keep up with demand. And that is surface
13 transportation. Cost of quality of life-wise,
14 cost of getting goods to market-wise, we cannot
15 afford to have additional trucks on roads. We
16 need to get product transport -- transported in
17 the most cost effective, environmentally friendly
18 manner possible.

19 As with our forefathers, the
20 river with which we are blessed offers that
21 opportunity. In this fiercely competitive world
22 of recruitment of industries that provide jobs,
23 the entire Columbia River region affected by the
24 proposed channel dredging project will be
25 enhanced with the addition of that tool that

1 provide for the accommodation of deeper draft
2 vessels. Thank you for visiting our community,
3 and thank you for providing this opportunity to
4 share the vital nature of this project to our
5 region.

6 MS. BROOKS: Dave Ripp.

7 MR. RIPP: Hi. I'm Dave Ripp.

8 I'm the Executive Director for the Port of
9 Woodland. Thank you for providing the
10 opportunity for the Port of Woodland to comment
11 on the draft of the supplement feasibility report
12 and the EIS for the Columbia River Channel
13 Deepening Project.

14 Couple points I want to touch:
15 Deepening the Columbia River navigation channel
16 is critical to maintaining maritime commerce and
17 sustaining business, farms; especially during
18 these difficult economic times.

19 The project has broad-based
20 support from businesses, labor unions, farmers,
21 ports, and communities throughout the northwest.
22 Over 40,000 local family wage jobs are dependent
23 on, and another 59,000 northwest jobs are
24 influenced by the Columbia River maritime
25 commerce. More than a thousand businesses rely

1 on the Columbia River to transport products
2 around the world.

3 This project will require
4 dredging just 50 -- fifty-four percent of the
5 navigational channel; only three and-a-half
6 percent of the total Columbia River between the
7 mouth and Port of Vancouver. The remaining
8 areas of the channel are already naturally deeper
9 than 43 feet.

10 The supplemental report is a key
11 part of the project's sensitive environmental
12 review, which is important to both mitigating
13 both local and environmental impacts, and
14 insuring that this project leaves the river
15 better off than beforehand.

16 The estuary and ecosystem for
17 the Columbia River are important and can be
18 protected and enhanced while the channel
19 deepening project advances. The Columbia River
20 channel deepening project will benefit both the
21 economy and environment.

22 In closing, I urge you to
23 finalize the supplemental report and grant the
24 pending regulatory permits and approvals to move
25 this important project to completion. Thank you.

1 MS. BROOKS: Liz Wainwright.

2 MS. WAINWRIGHT: Good afternoon.

3 My name is Liz Wainwright. I'm the Executive
4 Director for the Merchant Exchange, the maritime
5 Fire Safety Association and Clean Rivers
6 Cooperative. On behalf of these organizations
7 and the other organizations that the Merchant
8 Exchange manages, thank you for the opportunity
9 to provide testimony today. The Merchant's
10 Exchange has been uniquely involved in commerce
11 and well-being of this community since its
12 establishment in 1879. In 1879, the Exchange
13 was organized to -- by local businessmen to
14 provide vessel and cargo information to the
15 community when a ship entered the Columbia River,
16 bringing with it commerce and trade to support
17 and foster the development of our
18 Columbia/Willamette River system.

19 These services continue today.

20 As the Executive Director of the Exchange, the
21 full impact of commerce and trade that enters
22 our region is well-known to me. Though we are
23 a small organization with only 16 employees, we
24 manage and provide support to eight
25 marine-related member associations, as well as

1 individual members who total upwards of 180
2 organizations, each with a broad spectrum of
3 membership, each with its employees, each
4 contributing to the economy of our area.

5 My 16 employees pay taxes,
6 purchase service, goods, and participate in the
7 viability of the community and are very concerned
8 and supportive of the channel deepening. The
9 Maritime Fire & Safety Association and Clean
10 Rivers Cooperative are two cooperative
11 organizations that provide emergency response in
12 -- to fire -- marine fires and oil spill
13 response to the community. They're both
14 committed to environmental stability in this
15 region and are supportive of this channel
16 deepening as well.

17 The importance of shipping to
18 the economic well-being of our region is -- if
19 not the most, one of the most significant. The
20 affect caused by any loss of trade resulting
21 from an inability to transverse our river system
22 would be incalculable.

23 To adequately assess the impact
24 of shipping, one must start with the independent
25 family and those -- the grain producers and

1 those business that rely on farming. That
2 farmer and farm family is the infrastructure that
3 has built our economic stability going back to
4 our days of pre-statehood.

5 Without an economic way to ship
6 grain and other products on -- from our
7 interior, it would become much more difficult and
8 less cost-competitive to support this region. It
9 would compound losses, and it would mean a loss
10 of jobs. This support -- this scenario
11 supported by the channel deepening, by the
12 businesses, the labor unions, the farmers, ports,
13 and the communities. As you've already heard,
14 there's close to 100,000 jobs either directly or
15 indirectly which are relying on maritime trade in
16 one form or another.

17 Deepening of the Columbia River
18 channel is critical to maintaining these
19 business, the jobs, and the communities and the
20 families that are supported by the river. With
21 channel deepening, our region will remain
22 competitive and viable. This project will ensure
23 that the Columbia River can accommodate the large
24 fuel-efficient ships that increasingly dominate
25 the world trade.

1 As everyone is aware, the
2 current state of our economy mandates that we
3 provide every opportunity possible to the
4 businesses of our region to remain viable. The
5 critical importance of marine commerce to our
6 region is dependent on cost-effective and
7 competitive transportation. The effect in the
8 navigation of the Columbia River is dependent on
9 deepening the channel from 40 feet to 43 feet.
10 With this in mind, the Columbia River Channel
11 Deepening Project will benefit not only our
12 economy, but our environment as well.

13 As a citizen of the Pacific
14 Northwest and all that it represents, the estuary
15 and ecosystem of the Columbia River are important
16 and should be protected and can be enhanced by
17 this project. An independent panel concluded the
18 deepening will have no measurable affect on the
19 threatened and endangered fish. Biological
20 opinions issued by the National Marine Fisheries
21 Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Departments
22 demonstrate the environmental protections and
23 benefits of this project. By ensuring safe
24 transit of our river system, we will enhance the
25 safeguards placed in the -- in place for our

1 environment.

2 In closing, I'd like to read
3 from the -- "Effective maritime transportation is
4 vital to sustaining and strengthening our region
5 in this global economy and this trade-based
6 economy. I urge you to finalize the
7 supplemental report and grant pending regulatory
8 permits and approval to move the important
9 project to completion. Thank you for the
10 opportunity to speak for you."

11 MS. BROOKS: Dan James.

12 MR. JAMES: Good afternoon. My
13 name is Dan James. I'm a governmental
14 professional based in Portland, but I'm here as
15 a private citizen today to speak in support the
16 Columbia River Channel Deepening Project and
17 encourage the Corps of Engineers to move forward
18 on finalization of plans. I simply want to add
19 to what others have said to recognize that this
20 project is crucial to our region -- Oregon,
21 Washington, Idaho, and Montana and really --
22 really the nation. It's critical to continue to
23 develop the rural interior of our -- of our
24 region. It's especially the key in -- in -- on
25 the west side as well, given the fact that

1 we're so dependent upon this river system and
2 commerce that it generates.

3 With that, I'll simply
4 encourage, again, the Corps to move forward.
5 And I appreciate your time. Thank you.

6 MS. BROOKS: Jonathan Schlueter.

7 MR. SCHLUETER: Good afternoon,
8 Colonel, and members of the public. My name is
9 Jonathan Schlueter. I'm the Executive Vice
10 President of Pacific Northwest Grain & Feed
11 Association in Portland. It's a regional trade
12 organization that represents the commercial grain
13 handlers operating in the Pacific Northwest
14 states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana.
15 In that description, I'm representing 210
16 commercial grain elevator companies, animal feed
17 mills, flour milling companies, processors of
18 grain and exporters of grain operating in these
19 four states.

20 And it's perhaps appropriate
21 before your 5 o'clock dinner hour to have a
22 representative of the agricultural community to
23 offer this testimony in the few brief minutes
24 that we have here. Because we are the ones
25 that supply wheat, barley, corn, soybeans,

1 sorghum, various feed and grain materials to 40
2 different countries around the world. And 95
3 percent of that grain which is grown in Oregon
4 ends up in the exports stocks of our member
5 facilities who are on the lower Columbia River
6 and member facilities up in the Puget Sound
7 District as well.

8 So there is a big demand for
9 our grain and agricultural products around the
10 world -- growing demand for those products. As
11 you consider the testimony that's already been
12 presented here, and that which will be presented
13 later this evening, I'm sure, you will be left
14 with a couple of conflicting comments and
15 thoughts. I would -- I would like to address
16 my comments to four areas of issue.

17 First of all, that this is not
18 a local issue. This is not a Portland or a
19 Vancouver issue. This is very much a regional
20 issue, and I would submit a national issue.
21 Because having described the member of companies
22 I represent are scattered across four northwest
23 states. We're drawing grain here from 11 states
24 as far east as Minnesota, as far east as Kansas,
25 as far south as Arizona, and all points in

1 between. Therefore, this issue and the decisions
2 made here locally and by our region will be
3 affecting farmers and communities and businesses
4 and supply those farmers and communities in 11
5 western states. And so it is very much a
6 regional and national issue in scope.

7 Those of us who worry about our
8 local economies -- local and regional issues --
9 have very much to consider the regional and
10 national implications of those decisions as we
11 consider this issue.

12 Number two, those who worry
13 about the economy and jobs of this area need to
14 realize that 40,000 jobs are dependant on upon
15 the Columbia/Snake system and the commerce that
16 moves on this river system and the infrastructure
17 that serves it. Indeed, the channel deepening
18 project contends that it will expand those job
19 opportunities, create additional employment
20 opportunities, and indeed, represents the best
21 employment growth opportunity that we have in
22 this region. At a time when Oregon and
23 Washington are facing some of the worst
24 unemployment situations in this country, I
25 suggest this is a very valuable and necessary

1 project for this region and for the people that
2 live here.

3 Thirdly, you will hear much
4 about the environmental implications and whether
5 or not this is good for the environment or has
6 impacts against the environment. I suggest that
7 in trying to supply the food needs of a growing
8 planet, my bet and my confidence is with the
9 American farmers. The American farmer is the
10 best trained, best equipped, best financed, best
11 skilled farmers in the world.

12 And at a time -- in the short
13 time that I'm allocated to testify here this
14 afternoon, the world's population is increasing
15 at a pace of 268 people per minute; thousand and
16 -- two hundred souls in the five minutes that
17 I'm allocated. Those people expect to be fed.
18 My confidence is with the American farmer to
19 supply those needs, rather than to rely on the
20 itinerate third world proper devising whatever
21 means or mechanisms left to his disposal to
22 provide for he and his family.

23 And the implication to the
24 environment here on the Columbia River pale in
25 comparison to some of the environmental

1 degradation that may be wrecked upon other parts
2 of the world if we are to forego this
3 opportunity or miss this opportunity.

4 Fourth and finally, much in the
5 past year has been focussed on our own national
6 security and whether or not our nation is safe
7 and whether or not we can -- we can do business
8 with other countries around the world.

9 In the next month, off the
10 Columbia River District, the grain exporting
11 companies that I represent will be shipping
12 grain to North Korea, to Ethiopia, to Pakistan,
13 and to Afghanistan, as well as food aid to
14 hungry nations in South Africa currently wrecked
15 by drought. People who trade cannot afford to
16 fight against each other. Trade fosters improved
17 relations between people. And improved relations
18 is -- at a time that we -- a time like this,
19 something that we all desperately need and
20 desperately desire.

21 Trade fosters better dependency
22 and better relations among people. And this
23 project, by improving trade opportunities,
24 allowing deeper draft vessels to carry needed
25 grain to the people and countries that need it,

1 are desperately needed at this time.

2 Those who criticize American
3 farmers or worry about the agricultural picture
4 of our country and whether or not we have a
5 stake in this river and in this issue should not
6 -- should not be criticizing American farmers
7 when your stomach is full. It's time for your
8 dinner break. I ask you to consider these
9 points as you do. Thanks.

10 MS. BROOKS: Mr. Crow.

11 MR. CROW: My name is Minyo Crow
12 (phonetic). I basically am a citizen here in
13 Vancouver, Washington. In addition to the
14 dredging of the Columbia River channel, a new
15 freeway must also be in place between the ports
16 of Portland and Vancouver. It's absolutely
17 critical that merchant shipping companies move
18 products in and out of the ports as efficiently
19 as possible. We must be very aggressive in
20 competing for new business with other sea ports.
21 And without any attractions like this highway,
22 why should they come?

23 Right now, most coastal seaports
24 are focussed on southeast Asian markets. But
25 wait five to seven years from now when the

1 implementation of reforms takes into effect.
2 Russia will be the next big market. And we
3 must be at the forefront. What that indicates
4 is it's critical that we definitely do dredge
5 the Columbia River so we will be competitive
6 from New Zealand all the way to our longtime
7 adversaries, Russia, and -- to move products in
8 and out. To do what Governor Gary Locke was
9 promoting, as far as from the heartland of
10 Washington and Oregon's Made in Oregon products.
11 Get that out to the market. Distribute it to
12 the rest of the world; Europe, Asia, and
13 obviously Africa. We need to be competitive.
14 We need to go ahead and increase our
15 productivity as far as jobs, as far as quality
16 of liveability, and improve our regional
17 economy. Because right now, Oregon and Washington
18 are not doing very well.

19 And I personally feel that the
20 best thing for this region, in addition to the
21 dredging, is a third bridge of the Columbia
22 River basically connecting SR-500, SR-14,
23 tunneling through Forest Park, connecting to
24 Highway 26 using the Burlington right of way.
25 I've already been soliciting the Bush

1 administration on this proposal as well as the
2 Republican and some Democratic candidates to move
3 our economy -- move region forward. And let's
4 get the ball rolling. Thank you very much.

5 MS. BROOKS: Is there anyone in
6 the room that hasn't had a chance to speak that
7 didn't get an opportunity to sign up? Please
8 state your name when you're up front. Thanks.

9 MS. BRANER: Good afternoon. I
10 guess I am the last one before dinner, so I'll
11 try and be short. My name's Louise Braner
12 (phonetic). I'm the Government Relations Director
13 and Counsel to the Pacific Northwest Waterways
14 Association.

15 We advocate for Federal policy
16 in support of regional economic development, and
17 we represent multiple industries in both public
18 and private sectors in Washington, Oregon,
19 Idaho, and Montana. Our membership of
20 approximately 110 organizations includes
21 individuals from across this region and includes
22 port authorities, tow and tug operators,
23 steamship operators, pilots, state economic
24 development agencies, local governments,
25 agriculture and forest products producers, energy

1 interests, and consulting engineers and
2 environmental consultants. We work with Congress,
3 Federal agencies and regional leaders on
4 transportation, trade, energy, and environmental
5 policies. I appreciate the opportunity to offer
6 comments on the DEIS. I'll make some brief
7 comments on the environmental issues. But the
8 bulk of my comments are addressed to the
9 economic benefits of the project.

10 We support the project and urge
11 that you continue taking all necessary steps
12 towards implementation. We urge you to continue
13 the collaborative, cooperative, multi-agency
14 approach that you have used thus far, and we
15 urge you to continue seeking the public's input
16 as you have throughout this process.

17 We believe the project is
18 proceeding in an environmentally sensitive manner
19 and further believe that many of the ecosystem
20 restoration projects proposed in the document
21 will improve salmon habitat restoration. The
22 Upper River Salmon Biological Opinion states that
23 the lower Columbia River ecosystem needs to be
24 improved in order to improve survival rates for
25 the salmon as they move downstream. The project

1 as proposed in the document will help accomplish
2 those goals. In fact, initial corporation's
3 being sought -- construction corporation is being
4 sought for ecosystem restoration; not for
5 dredging.

6 This project is perhaps the most
7 important economic development project for the
8 long-term prosperity of our region. The Columbia
9 River and Snake River Ports support this project
10 for the obvious reasons: The deepening will
11 foster increased and more efficient cost-effective
12 movement of cargo. But at -- I probably don't
13 even need to address this after Mr. Schlueter.
14 But my next subject was the agricultural
15 producers are supporting it in eastern -- eastern
16 Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

17 Some of the issues that relate
18 to the agricultural producers -- if they don't
19 have -- if they don't have a competitive
20 Columbia River option for transporting their
21 cargo, then those -- That cargo is going to go
22 onto the trucks. The trucks are going to
23 congest the highways; wear them down. There
24 isn't money now to repair those roads. It's
25 also going to congest the railroads. And they

1 are already congested.

2 This, of course, is going to
3 impact, you know -- the traffic delays will be
4 impacting the freight folks as well as passenger
5 traffic. And an unimproved Columbia River/Snake
6 River system also means that if they don't have
7 the Columbia River to go to, the Mississippi
8 River prices are going to go up because there's
9 not a competitive balance between the two
10 systems.

11 We've got cargo that comes into,
12 for example, Puget Sound, heading for Chicago.
13 If the ports in Puget Sound are congested with
14 grain that's going out, then they're not going
15 to be able to get container traffic moving east.
16 And that means prices for everyone is going to
17 go up. But it also means Washington state,
18 which is the most trade-dependent state in the
19 nation, will lose jobs and will lose market
20 share -- further market share to the southern
21 big ports in California.

22 If our transportation system is
23 not maintained and improved, commerce will be
24 lost. And we as a society will not meet the
25 future needs of our citizens; over 40,000

1 family wage jobs and another 59,000 northwest
2 jobs depend directly or indirectly on the
3 Columbia River's maritime commerce. More than a
4 thousand businesses rely on this river to send
5 their products to the global market.

6 Clearly, PNWA believes that this
7 project is highly beneficial to the region and
8 the nation. In fact, we believe that the Corps
9 new economic analysis is overly conservative and
10 greatly underestimates the benefits to the region
11 and nation. We respectfully request that the
12 technical review group carefully look at the
13 benefits side of the economic question. I
14 appreciate the opportunity to speak with you.
15 And -- Guess you're not asking questions. So I
16 won't ask you that.

17 MS. BROOKS: I believe that's our
18 last speaker. You guys want to wrap up?

19 COL. HOBERNICHT: Again, I want
20 to thank you for coming. I know you all have
21 busy schedules. I'll be -- I'm not going
22 anywhere until 9:00. So if I have a chance to
23 talk to you, I'd sure like to meet you.

24 (MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:07 P.M.)

25 .

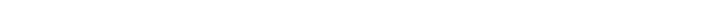
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-- REVISED --

COLUMBIA RIVER CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, July 31, 2002

(EVENING SESSION)



BE IT REMEMBERED THAT, pursuant to the Washington Rules of Civil Procedure, the Columbia River Channel Improvement Project Public Hearing (Evening Session) was taken before Tamara Ross, Certified Shorthand Reporter in the State of Washington and Licensed Notary in the State of Washington, on Wednesday, July 31, 2002, commencing at 7:08 p.m. at the Water Resource Education Center: 4600 S.E. Columbia Way, Vancouver, Washington.

1 VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON;
2 WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2002
3 7:08 P.M.

4 .

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: One question:
6 You indicated earlier that only public lands were
7 going to be used for restoration projects. Were
8 there no private individuals willing to get
9 involved?

10 MS. HICKS: Our folks -- probably
11 outside could help to answer that, sir. Because
12 this part is going to be for testimony. But we
13 have representatives that can help answer your
14 question.

15 MS. BROOKS: Good evening. I was
16 just asked to go over a few ground rules for the
17 evening for testimony. Excuse me. And these are
18 ground rules that are going to be used in each of
19 these public hearings. I'll just kind of walk
20 through these with you folks.

21 Given the public interest in this
22 issue, the Corps would like all of us just to
23 follow a few things: First of all, speakers will
24 be recognized in the order as you signed up. So
25 I'll be given a sheet, and I'll read off your name.

1 If you can come forward to the microphone, state
2 your name, go ahead and give your comments. And
3 I will have some cards. Everybody gets five minutes
4 to -- to give your comments; have your say.

5 When you get to the four-minute
6 point, just so you can pace yourself, I'll hold up
7 a card that says "one minute." That means you have
8 one minute left in five minutes. And when you
9 start to wrap it up, if you start to go over that
10 five-minute period of time, I'll hold this up. You
11 probably won't be able to read it because you'll be
12 busy, but you'll know it means you need to wrap it
13 up.

14 We ask that everyone is respectful
15 of one another. There may be some comments that
16 some of you agree with or disagree with. Please
17 let that person speak; have their say. The Corps
18 is interested in hearing everybody's point of view.
19 If you want to clap afterwards, could you please
20 wait until the comments are done and keep it to a
21 minimum so we can keep moving those through and be
22 sure and get everyone up to the microphone --
23 opportunity that wants to speak.

24 Let's see. What else do I need
25 to talk to you about? This meeting is not a vote

1 or any sort of a consensus or either -- or even a
2 dialogue. This is your opportunity to tell the
3 Corps of Engineers what's on your mind, what your
4 opinion is, what your concerns are, etcetera. So
5 when you address them, it's probably not going to
6 be a question and answer forum. That's what the
7 out -- for outside afterwards; your questions
8 answered. Response to direct -- I already went
9 over that.

10 To make sure we end on time,
11 speakers will be limited, as I mentioned, to five
12 minutes. Your time is your own. And in the
13 interests of hearing from as many of you as
14 possible, we would ask that you speak on your own
15 behalf. And if you're representing an association,
16 you're welcome to do that as well. That doesn't
17 mean two separate terms. That means one. And
18 you're speaking on behalf of yourself or the
19 association for the evening.

20 There are three public hearings.
21 You get three turns to come up and share your
22 comments. And also, please know that the comments
23 you give tonight orally or any other night isn't
24 your limitation. You can also submit written
25 comments.

1 I think I've covered pretty much
2 everything. We intend to end this hearing -- this
3 part of the hearing -- We had one earlier today as
4 part of the same hearing. We took a break. We're
5 back; hoping to end this one at 8 o'clock. And
6 I'm not sure we'll even go that late, given the
7 people here. Does anyone have any questions?

8 MR. RABE: Eight or 9:00.

9 MS. BROOKS: When was the scheduled
10 time?

11 COL. HOBERNICHT: We'll go to 9
12 o'clock.

13 MS. BROOKS: Did I say 8:00?
14 Okay. Thank you. Please remember to state your
15 name when you begin your testimony as well. Mike
16 Jones -- Michael Jones.

17 MR. JONES: A podium would be nice.
18 I think we've all got papers and stuff here.
19 Anyway, we'll do the best we can. I came early.
20 I had a chance to see the stuff out here. Boy,
21 this is really neat. I wonder just once if the
22 Port of Portland had done something like this
23 around -- on the Oregon side. It'd make such a
24 difference. Then I got to thinking, well, how
25 lucky these people are, whichever side you live on

1 the upstream of the Port of Portland.

2 Now, when I heard that you were
3 reconsidering channel deepening, I thought that's a
4 really nice idea. I think that's great; especially
5 great for me. Because in 2000, I filed a lawsuit.
6 In fact, Laura's one of the Defendants. And we've
7 been through a big hunk of it. All the responsive
8 emotions are gone. And so everything in my
9 Complaint that refers to NEPA is still there.

10 And to give you a little help
11 with this, even the EPA is still in. So the
12 Government hasn't been doing well in this lawsuit.
13 So I figured well, maybe when you decided to
14 reconsider channel deepening, you'd look at some of
15 the things I thought ought to be looked at. Well,
16 I poured through the documents, and not a damn
17 thing has been looked at. But I have to tell you
18 something: The court will give me more than five
19 minutes to talk about this. They'll give me years.
20 They already have given me two, and probably give
21 me another five or six.

22 So wouldn't it be a -- What an
23 idea to do the process the way the process is
24 supposed to be done, instead of in court. I mean,
25 why not do it now? Why not come to me and say,

1 "Let's get together. Let's figure out what's going
2 on"?

3 Now, let me tell you I understand
4 something about NEPA. And -- and NEPA is a
5 process. It's a process of reason. A process that
6 makes governments do reason -- consideration. And
7 you -- if you do those things, I have no
8 alternative. If you do the -- If you do the
9 mandated process, it's over. There's nothing I can
10 do about it. I'm not -- I won't be in court or
11 anything. So why not do the process right? I
12 mean, what a concept.

13 But I'll give you an example.
14 There's an Executive Order for the flood plain. No
15 Corps' document (phonetic) -- ever -- in Oregon has
16 -- has looked at this flood -- has looked at the
17 flood plain Executive Order even though every single
18 action requires it. So last time you had a meeting
19 like this, I stood up and said, "You haven't looked
20 at the flood plain." You still haven't looked at
21 the flood plain.

22 Now, I've got so little faith in
23 the Corps, no matter how bad it is -- and it will
24 be bad -- You won't care. You'll go ahead and do
25 channel deepening. So use your brains here. Just

1 do the flood plain Executive Order like it's
2 supposed to be done. Go ahead and do channel
3 deepening, and I'll be out of court, see. But
4 don't do it again, like it is now, where you
5 haven't done anything with that Executive Order.
6 In fact, I have a proposal. One of the sites
7 that's a major part of this plan -- channel
8 deepening plan -- is an illegal dump site. It was
9 never -- It was never cited. It -- It's filled
10 illegally by the Port of Portland. The Port of
11 Portland admits they filled it illegally. And
12 that's where we are at court, is that we don't have
13 to decide whether it's illegal or not. We just
14 need to decide how much of it was illegal and
15 what you're going to do about it. If I win,
16 you're going to remove it. That's going to make
17 it difficult to keep calling it a dump site.

18 And -- and to help you out, the
19 Port's now halfway through removing 37 acres of
20 what I won last time. And they're up to about
21 five million dollars. See, I'll have to go to all
22 three, and then even more.

23 But -- Well, I guess I'm not
24 going to get to say all the things I wanted to
25 say. If you want, I can give you your Federal

1 Attorney's name and number. And he can help you
2 out with the Complaint and what it's about and
3 stuff. And then we can save The Court's time.

4 MS. BROOKS: Jay Waldron.

5 MR. WALDRON. I'm Jay Waldron.
6 I'm the President of the Port of Portland
7 Commission. I practice environmental law for
8 Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt. And I've practiced
9 environmental law in this region since 1974. I
10 actually took the first environmental law course
11 ever offered at the University of Virginia.

12 I want to -- First of all, I
13 can't speak on behalf of the Corps. But I accept
14 Mr. Jones' offer, and I'd be a happy to have
15 lunch with you. And I'll call you next week.

16 Thank you for giving us the
17 opportunity at the Port to comment on the draft
18 Supplemental Feasibility Study and EIS for the
19 Columbia River Channel Deepening project. This is
20 obviously vitally important to both the economic --
21 and the Port and I strongly believe the
22 environmental health of this region. As President
23 of the Port of Portland Commission, I have been
24 closely involved in monitoring this project's
25 process and its regulatory review for several years.

1 And prior to that, as a citizen interested in
2 environmental issues, I've been following this for
3 more than a decade.

4 With the completion of the
5 biological opinion by the National Marine Fisheries
6 Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the
7 completion of the draft supplemental reports, I'm
8 more convinced than ever, having read them, that
9 this project can and should move forward in an
10 economically and environmentally sound and
11 responsible manner.

12 I believe it is the responsibility
13 of the Port of Portland and our sister ports on the
14 Columbia River to ensure that our region's people
15 and businesses can succeed in the international
16 market. We need this project -- I don't think
17 that's been controverted -- to successfully do our
18 job. This project benefits the economic health and
19 vitality of our entire region.

20 The Columbia River system, as many
21 of us know, exports more wheat than any other port
22 area in the United States. And this is especially
23 important now, as our food resources have become
24 strategic resources in Asia. This area is the
25 second largest grain exporting center in the world.

1 The Port of Portland has the ninth largest total
2 tonnage and the fifteenth largest container
3 operation in the United States. Every day, 40,000
4 people in our region go to work because of maritime
5 trade. And more importantly than that, every day,
6 well over 100,000 children depend on maritime trade
7 for their economic health, for their health care,
8 for their ability to get an education. If there's
9 one thing where the environment and the economy
10 marry in this project, it's the affect on this
11 region's economy and on the health of our children.

12 The jobs and the business success
13 that are directly tied to having cost-effective
14 maritime access are the essence of this region.
15 Oregon, for example, is the -- the -- among the
16 United States -- among the 50 states -- the sixth
17 largest in gross product dependent on trade. I
18 believe Washington is second or third. This region
19 was built, exists, prospers, and takes care of its
20 children based on trade. Whether you're in Burns
21 or in Lewiston -- One of the largest importers that
22 we have is in Bend, Oregon, which imports logs from
23 New Zealand, processes them, and sends them to
24 Japan. We are a trade area.

25 The future effectiveness of the

1 Columbia navigation channel is directly dependent on
2 deepening it to 43 feet to accommodate the
3 post-Panamax world. The supplemental report that
4 you've prepared is a key part of the project's
5 extensive environmental review, which is important
6 to both mitigating unavoidable environmental impacts
7 and to ensure that the project leaves the river
8 better off than it was before the project starts.

9 Achieving net environmental gains
10 is a high standard for a project like this. But
11 we believe at the Port that it's the right standard
12 to apply. The estuary and the ecosystem of the
13 Columbia River is also important to our children.
14 And it can be protected and enhanced at the same
15 time that this channel deepening project advances.

16 An independent scientific panel
17 convened last year to review Endangered Species Act
18 questions -- The panel concluded the deepening
19 project will have no measurable affect on listed
20 salmon. The biological opinion from NMFS and the
21 U.S. Fish & Wildlife service has made similar
22 findings. As this supplemental report demonstrates,
23 the benefit to cost ratio for this project remains
24 strong.

25 Even more importantly, northwest

1 businesses and northwest farms stand to gain major
2 regional economic benefits from this project that
3 unfortunately, the way the Federal law works, cannot
4 be included in the Corps' analysis. It's not
5 something you consider. But there's not a farmer
6 in this state that isn't dependent on this project.

7 MS. BROOKS: I'm sorry, Jay.
8 You're about out of time.

9 MR. WALDRON: Okay. Thank you.

10 MS. BROOKS: Uh-huh.

11 MR. WALDRON: We think that this
12 project has exciting potential. We think it's
13 going to be the lifeblood of the region's ports,
14 the region's trade, and most importantly, the
15 region's children. Thank you.

16 MS. BROOKS: David Moryc. Is that
17 how you pronounce it?

18 MR. MORYC: Moryc.

19 MS. BROOKS: Moryc.

20 MR. MORYC: My name is David Moryc.
21 I'm here representing American Rivers, a national
22 river conservation organization. And just because I
23 have serious concerns about this project, I want
24 everyone here to know also that I support our
25 region's children as well.

1 As we all know, I think a lot of
2 us here are familiar faces. And we're here to
3 discuss the Portland District Corps of Engineers
4 project. They're authorized to complete a project
5 deepening the Columbia River navigation channel from
6 40 to 43 feet.

7 In today's testimony, I'd like to
8 just focus on the need for a truly independent
9 review of this project, both economically and
10 environmentally. It's something that folks that I
11 talked to think well, it's -- We're too far along
12 in the process. It's too time-consuming. The fact
13 of the matter is that many of us have been working
14 on this project for years and have been calling for
15 independent review of both the economics and the
16 environmental impacts for years.

17 And then I'll just go on to give
18 a few quick examples of why this extra step is
19 necessary. Since the original congressional
20 authorization in 1989, there have been numerous
21 economic and environmental concerns raised in
22 relation to this navigation project. While the
23 Corps has made attempt to investigate validity and
24 accuracy of this economic and environmental analysis
25 by trying to get input from the public, like we're

1 doing here tonight, conducting internally directed
2 review processes like the one that you did earlier
3 in the SEI process. And then next week, you'll be
4 doing the economics. I think these attempts have
5 continued to be insufficient. Unfortunately, there
6 still remains significant economic and environmental
7 concerns with the project.

8 Nationwide, as many of you know,
9 the Federal U.S. Corps' analysis and public faith
10 in the reputation of its analytical capabilities has
11 been marred over the last year and-a-half or so by
12 revelations of faulty economic environmental analyses
13 in project after project. Examples include the
14 Delaware deepening project, the Mississippi
15 navigational study, and others. According to the
16 National Academy of Sciences report released just
17 last week, that assessed the Corps of Engineers'
18 methods, analysis and peer review. The Corps'
19 analysis of its own proposed projects is inadequate.
20 Independent -- And they also said that independent
21 review of the projects -- other projects is
22 necessary to be sure that the projects are based on
23 valid economic environmental analysis.

24 The upcoming -- Excuse me. As
25 well intended as they may be, the methods used by

1 the Portland Districts in the case of the channel
2 deepening project have run counter to the
3 recommendations of the Science Academy. This
4 includes selecting and employing members of their
5 review teams in both the SEI and next week's
6 economic review teams. For this reason -- for this
7 reason, I urge the Corps to call for an independent
8 environmental analysis of the project. Such an
9 analysis at -- should include at the minimum an
10 independent evaluation of the Corps' cost benefit
11 analysis, the external cost to the economies of the
12 global community dependent on the lower Columbia
13 River, and the impact of the project on threatened
14 endangered species.

15 First, the independent analysis
16 should investigate the entire range of economic
17 issues associated with the project. Many of the
18 Corps' projections, such as their estimates of key
19 export commodities, appear to artificially inflate
20 the benefits of the overall project. With leading
21 agricultural economists calling some of their
22 forecasts, quote, "likely to be mistaken", and with
23 close to one hundred and sixty million dollars in
24 taxpayer money at stake, these differences of
25 economic opinion must be addressed in the form of

1 an independent review.

2 Second, the Corps has not
3 addressed many of the external costs to local
4 communities. And one example under the preferred
5 alternative, the much-discussed project to dump
6 close to seven million cubic yards of dredge spoils
7 in either the lower river just east of Astoria or
8 in the deep water site would it destroy either
9 lower water -- lower river fishery or bury prime
10 crabbing habitat. The affect on the economy of
11 these communities could be substantial. I think a
12 -- a quantitative analysis of these -- of these
13 adverse impacts must be conducted to fully
14 understand the economic costs truly associated with
15 the project.

16 Third, the Corps' analysis
17 neglects to answer key questions about the affects
18 of this project on threatened and endangered salmon.
19 The Corps' analysis relied on incomplete models to
20 changes in the ecosystem of the Columbia River
21 estuary, a critical area for salmonids.

22 For example, the salinity model in
23 the report on which the Corps relied is incomplete.
24 Salinity is the mixing of fresh water and salt
25 water in varying concentrations in the mouth of the

1 Columbia River that kill salmon in many ways. So
2 accurately modeling changes in salinity to do the
3 channel deepening is critical to understanding the
4 affects of the project on these salmonids.

5 In this case, the scientists who
6 developed the key salinity model and test the
7 affects of the projects on threatened and endangered
8 salmon warn that the results, quote, "May be used
9 to guide management decisions. But only if the
10 model of uncertainty is further reduced." That
11 quote was taken from an appendices in the Corps own
12 biological assessment. He emphasized the word
13 "only" in his text.

14 Furthermore, the Corps' analysis
15 focuses specifically on short-term impacts even
16 though several scientists have noted that there may
17 be significantly long-term impacts to salmon. We
18 need to look at more than just a snapshot in time.
19 We've been dredging this river for over 100 years.
20 There's really just simply too much at stake --
21 Federal and taxpayers' dollars, critical habitat for
22 endangered species -- not to proceed with an
23 independent review. Thank you.

24 MS. BROOKS: Greg de Bruler.

25 MR. de BRULER: Good evening. My

1 name's Greg de Bruler, and I'm a resident of
2 Washington State. I've been here more than once.

3 Tonight, I've heard some people
4 speak about the ecosystem. And what I find kind of
5 appalling is what they're talking about is not an
6 ecosystem. They're talking about maybe a fish, but
7 they aren't looking at the whole ecosystem. The
8 ecosystem of the Columbia River goes well beyond
9 salmon; goes well beyond salmon; lamprey -- every
10 other species that's out there.

11 If you think about what's going on
12 in the Columbia River in the last 100 years, it's
13 severely degraded. If you look at the study that
14 was just done by the Columbia River Tribal Fish
15 Commission with EPA, and you're a Native American
16 fishing in the Columbia River, your risk of dying
17 of a fatal cancer from eating sturgeon out of the
18 Columbia River is about 1 in a 100. If you're a
19 Native American eating fish out of the Columbia
20 River, your risk of dying of a fatal cancer can be
21 as high as 2 in 1,000 if you're eating salmon out
22 of the Columbia River. But that's eating fish.

23 And we're talking about dredging a
24 river 106 miles long. And the Corps has said, "We
25 took 23 grab samples." I mean, my business -- my

1 job -- I'm an environmental consultant. I live and
2 breath looking at ecosystems. I've handled a lot,
3 so I'm used to the Department of Energy and I'm
4 used to the way that they worked with their models.
5 And Hanford has developed some of the most
6 intricate and sophisticated models in the world for
7 dealing with their ground water and contamination
8 (phonetic). But yet, their models are very, very
9 insufficient to model what's really happening in the
10 world.

11 You took 23 grab samples from the
12 upper Columbia River. You come back and say in
13 your literature for the public, "It's clean sand."
14 This is the farthest thing from the truth. This
15 isn't clean sand. Are you prepared to close down
16 the clam shell -- the clam business -- or crabs --
17 shut it down when you're dredging for the next two
18 years because the crabs are going to be taking the
19 contamination that you're releasing along the
20 Columbia River? Are you prepared to look at the
21 impacts that have occurred to the people that have
22 lived off the Columbia River from where you're
23 dredging to the mouth? Look at the cancer rates of
24 those people? Are you prepared to look at what
25 they're going to be inflicting by what they're

1 eating out of the river? Are you prepared to look
2 at what the lamprey are up-taking? No.

3 So you know, we're saying we're
4 using good science, but we aren't. This gentleman
5 from American River stands up here and talks about
6 independent science. I agree with him. We -- We
7 need independence in this thing. When the National
8 Academy of Science comes out and says, "Oh, the
9 Corps -- We didn't give you a very good rating for
10 the way you do your analysis", I have to agree.

11 The Corps dredged Port of
12 Kennewick and Port of Pasco a few years ago. And
13 I called the Corps up and asked them what did they
14 sample for it? And they said, "Oh, the normal
15 contaminants of heavy metals." I said, "Oh. You
16 didn't check for pesticides or radio isotopes from
17 Hanford?" "Oh. No, we didn't." You're kidding me.
18 So finally, we got the State of Washington to come
19 out; shot rock on the islands on the Snake River.
20 And they found radiation. So they had to post
21 (phonetic) the island.

22 So I am sitting here saying I
23 hear 18 million dollars a year economic benefit. I
24 hear we're here for the children. We're going to
25 have a 100,000 people that benefit on this. But

1 yet, I have a good friend of mine who's a pilot
2 who's been working on the Columbia River for the
3 last 25 years. I said, "What do you think about
4 this thing?" He says, "Oh, take it or leave it.
5 It's not going to make that big a difference. We
6 aren't going to get that many more ships in here.
7 You look at what the world trade is doing", he
8 says, "Might make a difference; might not."

9 So I've heard and I've listened to
10 the people of the various communities up and down
11 the river, and I've actually heard a very harsh
12 critic of the process has said, "You know, if they
13 would just work with us, we could put together a
14 plan that makes sense. And you might even be able
15 to get to dredge if you work with the people. And
16 you'd mitigate all the problems that are down
17 there." You know, we think of the Port of
18 Portland. We think of shipping; great. But what
19 about the small communities? What about the small
20 fishermen? What about the small factories? What
21 about the ecosystem?

22 And the ecosystem is everything
23 that lives in the Columbia River. So when you say
24 you're protecting the ecosystem, you aren't. You're
25 trashing it. You're trashing the food chain for a

1 whole bunch of species that you don't even think
2 about because they, quote, "aren't endangered or
3 aren't listed or protected."

4 And so I think it's the year
5 2002, and I think we need to learn from our
6 science. We need to go back and really do a good
7 job. Let's do it right. Let's get the independent
8 analysis that we need. But let's don't do it
9 half-baked. Let's get the people in the room that
10 have the concerns. Let's go step by step process
11 and alleviate these pains and suffering that's going
12 on and address these shortcomings. And please
13 don't come back and say, "Oh, our biological
14 opinion says we aren't going to trash the
15 ecosystem", because you are. It's not about
16 salmon. It's about the Columbia River. I
17 appreciate this opportunity. Thank you.

18 MS. BROOKS: Chris Hatzi.

19 MR. HATZI: Good evening. My name
20 is Chris Hatzi. I'm President of Columbia River
21 Port Rejuvenation, an organization of regional
22 business, business associations, and citizens that
23 are committed to improving the international market
24 access for the region. Thank you for providing me
25 an opportunity to publicly -- on -- for public

1 comment on the draft supplemental feasibility report
2 in the area of the Columbia River channel deepening
3 project, which is vitally important to the economic
4 and vital health of our region.

5 With the completion of the
6 biological opinion and the completion of the draft
7 supplemental report, it is clear that this product
8 can and must move forward in an economically and
9 environmentally responsible manner.

10 Channel deepening is vitally
11 important to our economy. Effective and efficient
12 maritime transportation is vital to sustaining and
13 strengthening our region's trade-based economy;
14 especially during these difficult economic times.
15 Deepening the Columbia River navigational channel is
16 critical to maintaining maritime commerce into
17 sustaining businesses, farms, and jobs in our
18 region.

19 This project will ensure the
20 Columbia River can accommodate the larger
21 fuel-efficient vessels that increasingly dominate the
22 world fleet. This broad-based -- This project has
23 broad-based support from businesses, labor unions,
24 farmers, ports and communities throughout the
25 northwest from the Tri-Cities to Lewiston to Klamath

1 Falls.

2 Over 40,000 local family wage jobs
3 are dependent on -- and another 59,000 northwest
4 jobs are influenced by Columbia River maritime.
5 Due largely to delays in channel deepening,
6 longshore job losses on the Columbia River in the
7 last five years have taken 16 million dollars
8 annually out of the economy. With the northwest
9 leading the nation in unemployment, we cannot afford
10 to lose anymore jobs. Vitality of these jobs and
11 businesses require access to cost-effective maritime
12 transportation. The future effectiveness of Columbia
13 River navigation is directly dependent on deepening
14 the channel from 40 to 43 feet to maintain the
15 vitality of this transportation route and our
16 region's trade-based economy.

17 As the supplemental report
18 explains, the benefit to cost ratio for this
19 project remains strong. Even more importantly,
20 northwest businesses and farmers obtain major
21 regional economic benefits from this project that
22 cannot be included in the Corps' analysis. The
23 economic benefits are largely diverse, rural and
24 urban, east and west, Oregon, Washington, and
25 Idaho; across our entire region. Without sufficient

1 market access, rates from the Columbia River have
2 increased making some northwest commodities
3 uncompetitive in most international markets. Columbia
4 River maritime commerce provides 208 million dollars
5 in state and local taxes that benefit communities
6 throughout our region.

7 I will leave the environmental
8 debate to the experts. However, I would urge you
9 to consider the environmental impacts of not
10 dredging: The ships can be the most
11 environmentally friendly method of moving goods
12 between two points. By having sufficient ocean
13 carrier service in the Columbia River, there will
14 be less need to truck cargo between the Columbia
15 River ports and California and Puget Sound. Fewer
16 trucks mean less road wear and lower truck
17 emissions.

18 The Columbia River channel project
19 will benefit both our economy and our environment.
20 I urge you to finalize the supplemental report and
21 grant the pending regulatory permits and approvals
22 to move this important project to completion.

23 MS. BROOKS: Larry Snyder.

24 MR. SNYDER: My name is Larry
25 Snyder. I'm -- S-N-Y-D-E-R. I'm President of the

1 Vancouver Wildlife League. We're a group of
2 hunters, fishermen, and conservationists over 200
3 strong. We've been in existence since 1929. And my
4 membership looks at this project as very
5 disquieting. Many of them have been recreating,
6 hunting and fishing on the Columbia River for more
7 than 60 years. And they knew what it was, and
8 they are concerned about what it's going to be --
9 or going to become.

10 They look at it in several
11 different ways: Number one, the biggest example of
12 government pork (phonetic) that they can remember.
13 Number two, they look at this as another example of
14 what occurred at Rice Island. They look at the
15 decline in their fishing and hunting opportunities,
16 and they think it will continue to be that way, and
17 this project won't help it a bit. They look at
18 this as the old Chinese proverb: Death by a
19 thousand cuts. The Columbia River, that is.

20 Our main concern is what you're
21 going to do with the dredge spoils. We've seen
22 examples of that in the past, where sloughs have
23 been totally covered, and areas that were wetlands
24 are now 10 feet high with sand and various other
25 dredge spoils.

1 Our primary concern is the
2 Vancouver low lake -- lake lowlands. And of
3 course, we have to take that up with the Port of
4 Vancouver, which is one of the sponsors of this
5 project. 'Cause they're going to fill 500 acres
6 south of the Flushing Channel for heavy industry.
7 And then they want to take the area north of the
8 Flushing Channel and put light industry and fill
9 that too. So this project, if it is successful in
10 getting off the ground, will result in a
11 degradation of the Vancouver Lake Lowland.

12 The Vancouver Wildlife League has
13 spent years attempting to improve the habitat for
14 migratory waterfowl and upland game. And this will
15 be the end-all of that particular project that
16 we've put so much time and energy into. That area
17 north of the Flushing Channel should not get one
18 pound of sand. Thank you very much.

19 MS. BROOKS: Cyndy de Bruler.

20 MS. de BRULER: Good evening.
21 Cyndy de Bruler. I'm representing Columbia
22 RiverKeeper, a nonprofit environmental group that
23 works to restore and protect the water quality of
24 the Columbia River. And I come tonight with some
25 concerns that I would like to express.

1 First of all, I'm very
2 disappointed in the public process around this
3 meeting. We found out about this less than two
4 weeks ago. And that's not sufficient time for the
5 public process to adequately involve citizens. That
6 doesn't give us time to send out a newsletter to
7 inform our 700 paid members in the Portland area or
8 700 members in the Hood River area or members in
9 the Astoria area of their opportunity to comment.
10 And I think that you see directly the results of
11 that in an empty room here tonight, other than many
12 agency people. So much more outreach and public
13 involvement needs to be around this process if
14 you're going to get it to move forward.

15 Secondly, we're not convinced by
16 this proposal, as written, that it would be
17 economically or environmentally sound or beneficial
18 to the Columbia River. The restoration efforts
19 that you mentioned in detail need to be more deeply
20 analyzed. They fail to consider local impacts to
21 fishermen and the environment; especially in the
22 mouth of the river. You've heard this before, so I
23 don't think there's any reason to go into detail.

24 The restoration components must be
25 guided by the lower river citizens and organizations

1 like CREST and the local watershed organizations --
2 and they have just not been consulted in this
3 process -- to assure real restoration instead of
4 just using the term "restoration" for what is
5 really sediment dumps.

6 Environmental concerns of our
7 organization include impacts to salmon that have not
8 adequately been addressed and impacts to other fish
9 and wildlife in the ecosystem which have been
10 totally ignored. In particular, concerns about
11 inadequate windows for salmon migration. In the
12 document -- the biological opinion -- National
13 Marine Fisheries has stated that the project would,
14 quote, "adversely impact essential fish habitat",
15 end of quote, for salmon. So to move forward and
16 just ignore those type of conclusions is unwise.

17 The proposed ocean dumping of 14
18 square miles is bound to have an adverse affect on
19 Dungeness crab. We sympathize with the crab
20 fishermen, but we also feel for the crab. And I
21 don't want this to be a process where we're
22 deciding between salmon and crab. And that's kind
23 of what it's come down to.

24 Another environmental concern is
25 the contamination issue. Twenty-three grab samples

1 do not adequately address 106 river miles. In the
 2 bi-state water quality study, every sediment sample
 3 taken showed essences (phonetic) of dioxin. It's
 4 there in the river. We know it. And just saying
 5 that this entire dredged channel is coarse sand
 6 does not avoid the issue. If this project moves
 7 forward, there must be diligent ongoing testing of
 8 the dredge materials. And it must be to detection
 9 levels for things like dioxin that are meaningful.
 10 And there has to be an action plan in place if
 11 contaminants are found to protect fish and wildlife
 12 and human health.

13 Finally, I agree entirely with
 14 American Rivers' proposal for an independent review.
 15 I think that this is the only way that this project
 16 can move forward. The review -- The process that
 17 has happened today is not independent, and the
 18 stakeholders do not see it as such. There's a
 19 reason for that. Citizens must be more involved in
 20 the process as it moves forward. Thank you very
 21 much for being here tonight and the opportunity to
 22 comment.

23 MS. BROOKS: Was there anyone else
 24 in the room who didn't have the opportunity to sign
 25 up to speak that would like to now? Could you

1 come forward and -- and give your name?

2 MR. WELLS: My name's Charles
3 Wells. My family has property on the river. But
4 the other thing I wanted to address -- I live in
5 Portland also, so I have an interest in that
6 aspect. But I have found that virtually the ports
7 are all public sponsored. And it's like each of
8 these port areas is trying to build their area
9 greater. And it's all done with taxpayer dollars.
10 So it's like this port versus this port versus this
11 port, and it's taxpayers' dollars in each of them
12 on this competition.

13 My cost to bring a container from
14 Seattle as opposed to bringing it in from Portland
15 is about \$150 difference. It's not that great.
16 And I can actually negotiate that out with my -- my
17 vender on the other end. So as far as -- I mean,
18 I don't see where there's this huge economic
19 incentive that everybody's talking about that's
20 going to actually happen. But I -- but when I'm
21 there on the river, and I -- there's these
22 freighters coming by -- And especially now, when
23 you're talking about the months where the river's
24 shallower -- there's these huge surges. And
25 there's a -- like -- the cove; Quinn's Cove. All

1 of a sudden, it will go dry. Then this water will
2 come in and turns into rapids. And what was calm,
3 clear water will turn into silt. And you'll see
4 that the fish that were there are all of a sudden
5 breathing -- They're breathing mud. And you know
6 that has an affect on them. You'll see small
7 ones being thrown off to the side. And it happens
8 every time a large freighter comes in.

9 And at night -- Because the Coast
10 Guard doesn't really enforce the speeds of these
11 freighters, you'll have surges -- Some nights, it'll
12 just be amazing. The boats are slamming around.
13 The houseboats are moving around. People walking
14 down the dock -- "What's happening here?" I said,
15 "This is the freighters coming by." And it's going
16 to be worse with larger freighters. It's going to
17 be worse.

18 I had friends that -- They were
19 coming in to shore over on Caterpillar Island. And
20 all of a sudden, their boat just slammed high on
21 the beach. They had to get many other people to get
22 their boat off the beach. There's a danger that
23 happens with the surges. And it has an impact on
24 there.

25 The other thing is now the Corps

1 wants to go into new things. They have destroyed
2 so many areas they pumped in. This -- this cove
3 at one time -- I think this used to be Hay's
4 Island (phonetic). And you could take a boat
5 around Hay's Island. Like the joke in the
6 community -- you realize this is Frenchman's Bar.
7 The reality is there is no Frenchman's Bar. There
8 used to be a sand bar. And you'd come in the back
9 side and go around Hay's Island. And that was a
10 sand bar. But the Corps filled it in. So now,
11 it's just a section of beach. So the next time
12 you see Frenchman's Bar, remember there's no bar
13 there anymore. It's gone. The Corps destroyed it;
14 destroyed habitat; the otters in the fishermen's
15 slough. The beavers that are in the slough. All
16 of the game birds that are in the slough. They
17 cannot use that. They can't use the dirt. So
18 that's just lost habitat.

19 As far as the river temperature --
20 Because it would be through an area that's
21 shallower. That's no longer protected. So it's a
22 loss of habitat; damages by the huge surges that
23 are going to be larger yet. And the question is
24 who does it really benefit? It benefits
25 bureaucrats that want to have a larger King Dome;

1 maybe larger than this port or larger than that
2 port. Thank you.

3 MS. BROOKS: Anyone else? I'd like
4 to mention one last thing -- Yes? John Fratt?
5 Sure.

6 MR. FRATT: My name is John Fratt.
7 I live at 5208 Deboyce (phonetic) here in
8 Vancouver, Washington. Welcome to Vancouver. I
9 work for the Port of Vancouver. I was with the
10 group that started the reconnaissance to the
11 reconnaissance study. I followed this project
12 very closely.

13 I commend the Corps in its review
14 and the excellent work that was done in reviewing
15 the policies and the development of the scientific
16 committee. I think you've gone out of your way to
17 prove that this is a project that can be done.
18 We're talking about three feet on an already
19 existing 40-foot channel. It is not as though
20 we're starting over again. The restoration projects
21 that are envisioned in this plan are excellent and
22 will do exactly that: They will restore habitat.

23 Oftentimes, in the port industry,
24 we go and say, "All right; mitigation. It's just a
25 cost." Now, in the port industry, we're talking

1 about restoration. And we understand that that's
2 our responsibility. I thank you very much for your
3 work, and I thank you for coming to Vancouver,
4 Washington to take this hearing today. Thank you.

5 MR. HUNT: My name is Dave Hunt,
6 and I serve as Executive Director of the Columbia
7 River Channel Coalition. It's a coalition of ports
8 and businesses and labor unions and agricultural
9 interests, economic development transportation from
10 throughout the region who disagree on a lot of
11 things. But when it comes to this project, we very
12 much see the special value and the unique nature
13 of this project and the benefits it will have for
14 our region, both economically and environmentally.

15 I really want to commend the Corps
16 and the other agencies you've worked with for
17 several things: One, for doing this series of
18 public hearings and taking evenings and long drives
19 during the next several weeks and months out of
20 your schedule. I think that's important so you can
21 hear what's on my mind (phonetic) -- of your
22 constituency.

23 For the -- For both the SEI
24 process, which brought independent scientists to
25 look at the environmental aspects, as well as for

1 the expert panel that's going to be looking at the
2 benefit cost analysis, you are really going above
3 and beyond any requirements that you have. And
4 you're really setting the pace for the rest of the
5 nation.

6 So despite some other comments
7 that have been made, I really want to commend you
8 all for going above and beyond, in terms of opening
9 yourselves up, not knowing what the SEI panel will
10 do -- benefit/cost panel may say -- but being
11 willing to subject this project to that additional
12 review.

13 I especially for your -- want to
14 commend you for your commitment to work diligently
15 at either dramatically reducing or potentially even
16 eliminating ocean disposal. As we have done our
17 work around the region, that's been a key concern
18 that's come up. Both from crab fishermen who are
19 concerned about habitat, but also from those who
20 want to keep beaches nourished on the Oregon Coast.

21 And so that whole effort to keep
22 sand in the systems, not -- to not give it away to
23 deep water disposal, and to not subject it to
24 potential impacts on the crab habitat. I know it
25 has been a difficult effort to get it there, and I

1 want to commend you for that.

2 As I read the supplemental
3 feasibility report and EIS, several things become
4 clear to me: One, that there are huge regional
5 economic benefits; not just in Portland, Vancouver,
6 Kalama, Longview, or St. Helens, but throughout the
7 entire region. That -- Also, it's clear that there
8 are significant environmental -- both restoration --
9 both mitigation efforts that will actually deal with
10 unintended impacts -- unavoidable impacts -- but
11 also the ecosystem restoration efforts, which I
12 think so many of us fail to recognize go above and
13 beyond the actual impacts of this project. That's
14 very clear in the supplemental report.

15 It's also really clear the
16 benefits are rural and urban throughout the entire
17 region. That, I think, makes the project unique.
18 It's clear the area to be dredged is small -- only
19 a small percentage of the river between Astoria and
20 Vancouver -- as I've seen the segments, only about
21 three and-a-half percent of that -- of that river
22 surface, which is pretty significant. It's also
23 clear those areas are going to be the same areas
24 where dredging is already occurring. We're not
25 comparing the river when Lewis and Clark were here

1 to what it would be in a deeper channel. We're
2 comparing the channel today to a deeper channel.

3 A comment was made earlier that
4 the Columbia River's degraded over the last 100
5 years. I'd agree with that statement. I think most
6 of us probably would. The question for us now, I
7 think, is are we going to do something about that
8 by doing the kind of ecosystem restoration measures
9 that are included in this project and other
10 measures that are part of other projects, or are we
11 going to not do that? Are we going to do it in a
12 way that really damages our economy or do it in a
13 way that enhances our environment and economy at
14 the same time?

15 I think the coalition strongly
16 supports efforts to do both. To have the
17 environment -- the economic process we need as a
18 region, certainly, during these difficult economic
19 periods, as well as the environmental progress
20 that's really called for based on history of the
21 river. I think it's clear -- If you think about
22 projects of any sort in our region, I cannot think
23 of another single project that has such dramatic
24 positive economic benefits on the region. And
25 again, it's not just here throughout our entire

1 region that it has such major benefits, in terms of
2 job reconstitution and creation that makes such
3 significant progress in terms of -- and
4 environmental progress to deal with the channel in
5 the Columbia River. It really brings our region
6 together.

7 Whether you're looking at the
8 channel coalition or congressional delegation or
9 state legislators for Oregon and Washington or all
10 of the groups throughout the entire region who have
11 come together, tens of thousands of people came
12 together and said, "This is critically needed.
13 This makes sense."

14 This one project is uniting our
15 region in a way that I think any other project that
16 -- that it has or will. And so I just want to
17 commend you for your progress, to urge you to hang
18 in there despite the difficult challenges ahead, and
19 continue to make the kind of progress that will
20 bring us both economic progress and environmental
21 progress.

22 MR. BARTON: My name is Tom Barton.
23 I live in Hazel Dell, Washington, which is just
24 north of Vancouver. One of the items I've not
25 heard mentioned here regarding the environmental

1 protection is the issue of mosquito control. As
2 you know, the Columbia River has historically been
3 associated with mosquitos. And there are a lot of
4 people that live here and a lot of people that
5 lived here before the white man came. And I am
6 told -- and -- historically that most of the native
7 population that lived on Sauvie Island died from
8 malaria within a couple of years. It's documented
9 in the Hudson Bay Company's hospital -- the
10 patients with malaria who were trappers and local
11 people in the area.

12 So the Columbia River makes a
13 sharp turn at Portland and heads north. It makes
14 another sharp turn and heads west. Where it turns,
15 it floods. And when it floods, it makes a habitat
16 that's ideal for mosquitos to breed. And I haven't
17 heard one mention of mosquito control. And I see
18 this document here, an Environmental Protection Fact
19 Sheet. And it goes into birds and fish, but it
20 does not mention mosquitos. And mosquitos are a
21 hazard to people and to animals.

22 Malaria is one thing. But now,
23 we are also having people's health to consider with
24 the West Nile Virus being predicted to be on the
25 west coast as similar as it is on the east coast.

1 And this is with the -- with the birds. Primarily
2 the crow was very -- and the species similar to the
3 crow are very susceptible to West Nile Virus.

4 So I would like to see some
5 priority be given to the dredge spoils that would
6 place some of these spoils in areas that are high
7 habitat for mosquitos and not just disposed out
8 into the ocean.

9 And I think that these -- The
10 people who live here, even though they are -- maybe
11 to some are not as important as fish -- I think
12 the people that live here have some priority too.
13 And one of them is to be able to live and to enjoy
14 their livelihood without the nuisance of mosquitos,
15 as well as the impact on their health.

16 So if you could consider this in
17 your dredging -- I was surprised to find -- I
18 thought the dredging was going to include three
19 feet off the top through the whole length of this
20 corridor. And my understanding is that it's just
21 the top -- parts of three feet. The -- the points
22 that are going to be leveled off to make it
23 navigable to larger ships. And of course, this will
24 be economically beneficial. But I would like to see
25 consideration be given for the spoils of the

1 dredging to fill areas that are problem breeders
2 for mosquitos that cause problems for the people
3 who live here. And they also -- much to people
4 who love animals, they create a great deal of
5 problems for animals as well. Thank you.

6 MS. BROOKS: Is there anyone else?
7 I'd like to mention one point that I left off when
8 I -- I did my opening remarks; that the response --
9 There will be responses to your testimony. And the
10 Corps will do that after all of the hearings are
11 complete in their review process. So I wanted to
12 make mention of that.

13 So with that, I'll turn it back
14 over to you.

15 COL. HOBERNICHT: Again, thanks for
16 coming. I appreciate you all taking time out of
17 your busy schedules to come and let us know what
18 your thoughts are on this project. So with that,
19 this ends the evening. Thank you.

20 (Discussion held off the record.)

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COLUMBIA RIVER CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

-- REVISED --

DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL INTEGRATED FEASIBILITY REPORT
AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Public Hearing
September 5, 2002
Longview, Washington

-- -- --

1 LONGVIEW, WASHINGTON;
2 THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2002
3 6:00 P.M.

4 .
5 COLONEL HOBERNICHT: Thank you for
6 coming today. My name is Richard Hobernicht and I'm the
7 new district engineer for the Portland District United
8 States Army Corps of Engineers. Most of you probably knew
9 my predecessor, Colonel Raymond Butler. I look forward to
10 getting out in the communities and meeting each of you. If
11 you get a chance, please introduce yourself to me tonight.

12 This public hearing and the next one
13 in Astoria will be run with the aid of a professional
14 moderator. I will have some introductory remarks in a few
15 minutes, but at this time I'd like to transfer the meeting
16 over to Miss Jacqueline Abel to get it started.

17 Jacqueline.

18 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

19 Hi. As the Colonel said, my name is
20 Jacqueline Abel. I'm a professional facilitator and
21 mediator and I was asked by the U.S. Army Corps of
22 Engineers to be the moderator for tonight's meeting. I'm
23 not a staff member of any government agency. I was asked
24 to moderate to assure that a fair and impartial hearing of
25 information and concerns may occur tonight. I do not have

1 any stake in the outcome of today's hearing and I believe
2 I'm impartial on the issues here tonight.

3 I know many of you have very important
4 points that you would like to have heard by your
5 government officials. They are here to present an
6 overview of the status of the proposed Columbia River
7 Channel Improvement Program and to listen to what you have
8 to say to them. This is an important opportunity for all
9 of you that will require respect for the process and for
10 each other. I will need your help in order to let as many
11 of you as possible have the chance to say what you want
12 tonight. But before I discuss ground rules, let me make
13 sure you're in the right place.

14 The purpose of today's meeting is to
15 provide the public an opportunity to hear briefly from the
16 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about the status of a
17 proposed improvement of the existing 40-foot Columbia
18 River Federal navigation channel and a Draft Supplemental
19 Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact
20 Statement that they have prepared and issued last July and
21 to provide you, the public, with an opportunity to submit
22 both oral and written comments.

23 We are holding this hearing because it
24 is important for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, for the
25 people of the region to have spoken and to have been

1 heard. The time you have taken to be here to make your
2 comments is very important and greatly appreciated. Thanks
3 to all of you for coming. To this end, we provided two
4 ways for you to make your thoughts and feelings known. You
5 may give testimony in this room or you may submit written
6 comments to the Corps. Written comments can be submitted
7 until September 15th of this year.

8 Before we begin, I'd like to review
9 the upcoming agenda for the evening and go over a few
10 administrative details. We will begin today by hearing a
11 bit more from Colonel Richard Hobernicht, District
12 Engineer, Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
13 He will give an introduction and introduce the rest of the
14 panel members sitting at the table tonight and then there
15 will be a brief presentation by Laura Hicks. When the
16 presentations are over, we will move into public
17 testimony. We've scheduled the hearing to end at 9:00
18 tonight. Individuals will be given five minutes to
19 testify. We may take a break during the evening to give
20 everyone a chance to stretch. All of the oral testimony
21 will be recorded by our court reporter for the public
22 record. If you also have your comments in written form,
23 we would appreciate a copy of them. Please note that
24 there's a drop off box in the open house area at the back
25 of room. Someone there can help you if you have written

1 comments with you. The Corps does want to hear what you
2 have to say in person or in writing.

3 Given the interest in the issues that
4 will be discussed today, I'm requesting that we all follow
5 these grounds rules, and you may have seen them on the way
6 in tonight. Speakers will be recognized in the order in
7 which they signed up to speak. Any elected public
8 officials who are present will be recognized first and I
9 know we do have a few of them here tonight. Treat each
10 speaker and the panels with respect. You may not agree
11 with what a person is saying, but everyone has a right to
12 their own views and we want to get them all on the record.
13 As strongly as you may feel about an idea you hear, please
14 keep side conversations and comments to a minimum so that
15 the court reporter can get all testimony into the record
16 and so others have ample time to make their comments as
17 well. Help me help you testify by being at the microphone
18 here in front and ready to testify when I call your name.
19 Be courteous to others and stop speaking when I let you
20 know that your time is up. Please follow my instructions
21 to help us all avoid confusion. Remember that today's
22 meeting is not an attempt to consensus or some kind of
23 vote. It's an opportunity for members of the public to
24 have their thoughts heard and considered by Federal
25 officials. Please don't disrupt that opportunity.

1 Because of time restraints and because
2 the representatives of the Corps are here to hear what you
3 have to say, responses to your direct testimony will not
4 be possible today but will be reflected in the Corps'
5 final report. To make sure we end on time, speakers will
6 be limited to five minutes. Your time is your own. And
7 in the interest of hearing from as many of you as
8 possible, your time may not be assigned to other people.
9 If you have already testified as a spokesperson for a
10 group or an HEC (phonetic) organization, you should not
11 testify again as an individual. Remember, you will have
12 10 additional days after the hearing to submit complete
13 written comments. As I said before, we intend to end the
14 meeting about 9:00 p.m. with brief remarks from Colonel
15 Hobernicht.

16 You may provide written comments on
17 the proposed improvement of the Columbia River Federal
18 navigation channel, specifically the Draft Supplemental
19 Integrated Feasibility Report and EIS, to the Corps by
20 September 15th at the address indicated in the public
21 notice or in the information sheets that are available.
22 And they were available in the back of the room if you
23 want to pick those up with the addresses so you can send
24 comments in later.

25 What will happen with all of your

1 comments? The Corps will review those comments submitted
2 in writing and the transcripts from the public testimony
3 at hearings like this one tonight. They will consider the
4 information you provide that is related to the proposed
5 improvement of the Columbia River Federal navigation
6 channel, specifically the Draft Supplemental Integrated
7 Feasibility Report and EIS. The Corps will then issue its
8 findings, including all of your comments, as part of the
9 final record of decision. Written and oral comments will
10 be considered equally.

11 Finally, I'd just like to cover a few
12 quick necessary details. You might have even noticed the
13 bathrooms are out in the hall to your -- to my left as you
14 go back out there. Emergency exit doors -- if you have
15 any problems, go out the way you come in.

16 Thanks for your attention and thanks
17 again for coming to share your views on the region's
18 future. I will now turn the meeting back over to Colonel
19 Hobernicht.

20 COLONEL HOBERNICHT: Tonight we are
21 here to exchange information with you about the Columbia
22 River Channel Improvement Project and take your formal
23 testimony on the project. As you are probably aware, the
24 Corps just completed revising the economic analysis for
25 the project and added several new environmental

1 restoration components. This was contained in the
2 supplemental project report we released earlier this
3 month. I'd like to point out that this is a draft report.
4 And over the 60-day comment period, we have asked you to
5 share with us your thoughts about this report. Your
6 comments are important to us and we will review them all.
7 If you have information you know or feel we have missed,
8 please let us know before September 15th so we can
9 consider it before we make this report final.

10 Around the room in the back and in the
11 hallway you'll find representatives from the states of
12 Oregon and Washington, NOAA-Fisheries, and the U.S. Fish
13 and Wildlife Services, Corps sponsors and the Corps of
14 Engineers. Please talk to the agency representatives here
15 tonight to understand how we got here today and where we
16 still need to go in the weeks and months to come.

17 In addition to the oral testimony that
18 will be captured by the court reporter, we will accept the
19 written comments, if you prepared any. Again, there is a
20 box near the door for you to place them in.

21 In addition to -- in addition to this
22 session, two more public hearings were scheduled along the
23 lower river. The first public hearing was held in
24 Vancouver on July 31st. The last hearing will be in
25 Astoria on September 10th.

1 With that, I would again like to thank
2 you for coming out here tonight. I know each of you are
3 busy and I appreciate you taking time to participate in
4 this process. I'll be here through the entire session
5 tonight. Feel free to come up and talk with me. If you
6 have a question I cannot answer, I will get you to the
7 right person who can answer that question.

8 Before we begin taking your testimony,
9 I'd like to introduce the two people seated alongside of
10 me, Laura Hicks and Marci Cook. Marci is a member of my
11 environmental resources staff and is responsible for
12 ensuring this project meets the requirement of the
13 National Environmental Policy Act. Linda is the project
14 manager for the Columbia River Channel Improvement
15 Project. She has a short presentation before we get
16 started.

17 Laura.

18 MS. HICKS: I also would like to
19 welcome you all today and we look forward to hearing your
20 testimony.

21 The brief presentation kind of brings
22 everybody up to speed. And I kind of want to just walk
23 through what this project is, what changes have been from
24 our last document in 1999 to the document that's out for
25 public review today.

1 As you all know, our project starts at
2 river mile three on the Columbia River, comes up to the
3 Portland-Vancouver area at river mile 106.5. Also
4 authorized for construction and improvement is the
5 Willamette from river mouth zero to river mouth 12. That
6 portion of the project is being deferred until all of the
7 Super Fund issues on the Willamette are resolved and the
8 government understands what the region would like to do
9 with the contaminated sediment, so that part we're not
10 taking testimony on. We're not going to proceed with that
11 part until we know what's going to happen with the Super
12 Fund clean up.

13 A brief history of where we've been
14 and then where we're going. Basically, for any Federal
15 action that the Corps undertakes, we have to receive a
16 study resolution from U.S. Congress. We got ours for this
17 project in August of 1989. With that, the Corps of
18 Engineers did what we call a reconnaissance report. We
19 took a year. We looked at whether or not there was a
20 Federal interest in pursuing further investigations. That
21 was a favorable report. We then initiated what's called a
22 feasibility study. We started that in April of 1994. We
23 produced our first draft feasibility report and EIS in
24 October of '98. That was out for public review and
25 comment. Those comments were responded to, put in a final

1 feasibility report that was also circulated for public
2 review. And then we applied for and sought coastal zone
3 management consistency and received biological opinions
4 from National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and
5 Wildlife. We got a -- basically, a new start construction
6 authorization by Congress in December of 1999. August of
7 the following year, 2000, NMFS had new information that
8 related to endangered species in the Columbia River and
9 they had information on contaminated tissues within some
10 of the salmon. They also had information that related to
11 bathymetry and velocity and how that affected endangered
12 species. They asked us to take another look at where the
13 project was given their new information. They withdraw
14 their biological opinion. When they withdrew their
15 biological opinion while we were seeking water quality
16 certification from the two states, we received denial
17 letters. We were not issued water quality certification
18 from Oregon or Washington.

19 So then the Corps went back,
20 reinitiated consultation for endangered species in
21 September, and in January of this year, we then decided to
22 supplement the EIS that's out for review today. It's
23 important to know that it's an integrated report, so it
24 not only contains NEPA information that relates to -- to
25 all of the environmental impacts, but it also has certain

1 criteria that the Corps uses in a feasibility study. So
2 we have, then, a benefit of cost analysis that's in there
3 and all of this information was decided to be revised and
4 updated before we supplemented this report.

5 We then also decided to incorporate
6 enough information into this document to also satisfy the
7 State of Washington's SEPA, State Environmental Policy
8 Act, so that the Washington state -- Washington Department
9 of Ecology then could have -- it meets the qualifications
10 for their water quality and coastal zone management
11 consistency. Port of Longview is the lead agency for the
12 SEPA portion of the project.

13 In May of this year, then, we received
14 new biological opinions from National Marine Fisheries and
15 U.S. Fish and Wildlife. They were nonjeopardy opinions.
16 And so we then put all of that information together. It's
17 available on our website if you'd like to look at the
18 biological assessment, our amendment to the biological
19 assessment or any of the biological opinions. Those are
20 on the Corps' website. They're also in a CD that was
21 circulated with the document.

22 We're holding -- we've held a series
23 of public meetings starting back in 1994 and we've been
24 out to numerous meetings. Each time we come out, we try
25 to go to the Portland-Vancouver area, the Longview area

1 and down to Astoria. We did that in '94, '97, '98 and
2 we're doing it again in 2002. We also conducted 17
3 environmental round table meetings through that time
4 period where we tried to solicit some of the concerns from
5 key stakeholder groups and tried to incorporate some of
6 the concerns into the project that you're currently
7 reviewing. We've had numerous resource agency meetings
8 with both State and Federal agencies that relate to
9 salinity intrusion, wildlife mitigation and ocean dredge
10 material and where to dispose of material in the ocean.

11 Okay. So this is just an overview.
12 We've already conducted an information meeting in Astoria.
13 We had a public hearing in Vancouver. We also convened a
14 technical panel that looked at the costs and benefits that
15 were revised for this report. That is open for people to
16 observe. That information is available on our website.
17 The panel will give us conclusions in a formal
18 documentation of their findings probably later this week.
19 When we receive those, that also will be posted on our
20 website. And like the Colonel has said, we're taking
21 public testimony here tonight. Tuesday we'll be in
22 Astoria taking public testimony as well. And then the
23 public comment period will end on the 15th.

24 So then quickly, it's important for
25 people to understand that this is basically a

1 multi-purpose project from the Corps' point of view and
2 we're incorporating navigation improvements as well as
3 ecosystem restoration components. And so the things --
4 the primary things that have changed since the 1999
5 document and the one that's out for public review today is
6 there's three years of additional data and analysis that
7 relate to smelt in the river. We also have three years
8 more of data on white sturgeon. We have done extensive
9 explorations in the river to look at areas that we thought
10 had basalt in them and whether or not blasting would be
11 required for the project. The rock blasting has basically
12 been reduced to only one location on the Columbia. We
13 revised the dredging quantities based on new hydrographic
14 surveys that were in December of '01 and January of '02.
15 We have additional information that relates to Dungeness
16 crab and impacts or embankment projects for this crab. We
17 have the new ESA consultation. And with that, we've added
18 six new ecosystem restoration features to the project as
19 well as the three that we had in the original project.
20 We've also included research and monitoring actions that
21 relate to watching what we do and gaining more information
22 that relates to endangered species. Then, as I've told
23 you, we revised both the costs and the benefits for the
24 entire project.

25 The major changes just, you know,

1 encapsulated, from 1999, we had 18.4 million cubic yards
2 of dredge material that we were proposing to remove from
3 the channel during the deepening construction. That now
4 is down to 14.5 million cubic yards. The basalt has been
5 reduced to 50,000 cubic yards. We once thought that there
6 was up to five different utilities that crossed the
7 Columbia that was submerged that may needed to be
8 relocated as a result of deepening the channel. The State
9 confirmed that none of those utilities will have to be
10 relocated as a result of the deepening. They're all
11 deeper than the dredging prism. And everything that the
12 Corps does, we try to be consistent nationally, so we
13 prepared what's called national economic development costs
14 and benefits and then we compare those projects across the
15 nation. And so the cost for the project under AD
16 (phonetic) analysis dropped from 154 million to almost 133
17 million.

18 And then on the benefit side, when we
19 look at the benefits that are attributable to the Federal
20 action, those also dropped. It went from 28 million
21 annual benefit to 18.3 annual benefit -- million. I'm
22 sorry. And then when you compare, then, the benefit to
23 cost ratio and you marry up the benefits and divide it by
24 the cost, we also drop from 1.9 to 1.5. The total project
25 cost -- and this would include everything that's in the

1 project, ecosystem, restoration and navigation components
2 -- those went from 160.9 million to 156.

3 Okay. So the ecosystem restoration
4 component that we added. The first three, Shillapoo Lake,
5 the tide box retrofits and Lord-Walker Hump fishery
6 improvement, those were included in 1999. All of these
7 other ones were added as a result of our ESA consultation.

8 Last go around when we consulted, we
9 had a term and condition and a change to the project where
10 the Corps said that we would go out and try to restore up
11 to 4500 acres of marsh habitat in the estuary independent
12 of channel deepening and using our other authorities.
13 This time when we redid the consultation, we tried to be
14 as specific as possible to identify locations, to look at
15 things in an ecosystem approach, to try to select
16 improvements and restoration projects that's hoped to
17 function, form and value for the endangered species. We
18 also tried to put an emphasis on publicly held lands so
19 that we could have assurance that those projects would be
20 able to be implemented and not have to worry about private
21 land ownership and acquiring the lands.

22 And so one of the major things that
23 happened in the project as a result of the consultation
24 was a shift from ocean disposal in the first document in
25 1999 to two restoration projects that are included within

1 the estuary. The proposal that's out for review is to take
2 the material from the lower 40 miles of the river, take it
3 to a temporary sump that's outlined there as number one --
4 that's kind of an orangish color -- and to use that as a
5 temporary sump to hold the material from the hopper
6 dredges. Then during the in-water work period, we would
7 pipeline the material from that temporary sump into the
8 Lois Island embayment and work to restore it. This
9 basically shows an aerial photography of what Lois Island
10 looks like today compared to what it was in the 1935 ^
11 CREDDP atlas. This used to be an area that was minus six
12 or zero/minus 12 depth of water and it was dug out for
13 liberty vessels during World War II. And so as a result,
14 this area, then, if you look at the 1982 CREDDP atlas, you
15 can see minus 24 depth of water/18 feet of water in this
16 area. So the proposal -- the proposal is to bring that
17 back up to what it looked like more representative of 1935
18 than what it would have looked like today.

19 So that piece would take all of the
20 construction material for the lower river. And then the
21 maintenance material that would result for the first 10
22 years after construction we're proposing to put in an area
23 that we refer to as Miller-Pillar. Pile dikes would be
24 necessary to hold the material. It's located between
25 Miller Sands Island and Pillar Rock. The goal will be to

1 create shallow water habitat. And this kind of does the
2 same comparison between 1935 and 1982, so you can see
3 where it used to have six and 12 feet of water, there's 44
4 and 18 feet of water. It's kind of an active erosion
5 area. We're also proposing to do restoration kind of in a
6 base approach, if you will, that relates to Tenasillahe
7 Island. We have interim measures and we have where we're
8 trying to reintroduce Columbian white-tailed deer. And if
9 successful in delisting those deer, we would go back and
10 do long-term measures at Tenasillahe Island.

11 One of our disposal sites is on
12 Howard-Cottonwood Island and that's shown in the yellow on
13 this map. The port is willing to buy all of the private
14 lands on the island and then allow them as part of the
15 reintroduction of Columbian white-tail deer move deer to
16 this island to try to get three distinct populations with
17 a certain amount within each to see if then the deer could
18 ultimately be delisted from the Endangered Species List.

19 If -- if that happened, what would
20 happen on Tenasillahe -- a couple steps would happen. We
21 would do a hydraulic study for the channels within
22 Tenasillahe. We would see if we could open up, first of
23 all, the tidegates that are there to allow fish passage
24 through the island. If the deer were delisted, then the
25 Corps would come back and do a long-term action where we

1 would breach the flood control dikes along the Tenasillahe
2 and then open up the whole island for fish use.

3 Another one of the restoration
4 components that was added to the project is Bachelor
5 slough. And what we would do here is first test the
6 sediments within the slough. If they tested clean, then
7 we would dredge out about three miles of the slough, take
8 that material and create riparian habitat for the places
9 we show on the map.

10 So what we're asking for today is your
11 testimony, your comments on these proposals. It would be
12 very helpful if you could try to concentrate and help us
13 with our decision making in the lower river, what to do
14 with the dredge material. The first go around we were
15 proposing deep water ocean disposal. Now we have two
16 restoration projects on the table that we're asking for
17 your comments about our beneficial use of dredge material.
18 When we receive your comments, then it will be our
19 responsibility to respond to your comments, produce a
20 final supplemental EIS feasibility report, circulate that
21 back out for public review. At the same time we're
22 actively pursuing application for water quality
23 certification in Oregon and in Washington at the same time
24 working on coastal zone management consistency
25 determination in both states as well. When the Corps

1 produces the final document, receives the certification,
2 concurs with our consistency determination, we can produce
3 our record of decision, and at that point we'd be able to
4 get in the budget -- the President's budget for some
5 construction effort. That basically concludes my
6 presentation of where we are, what our next steps are and
7 I look forward to your testimony.

8 MS. ABEL: As Laura said, this is the
9 time now to hear from all of you, so we're going to start
10 the oral testimony part. I will call your name and then
11 you'll come up to this microphone here. If you need us to
12 bring a microphone to you, we can do that, if anybody has
13 any trouble getting up to that microphone. I'll call the
14 name of the person who's up first, then who's next and
15 then who's third in line so that you'll know your turn is
16 coming up soon. Please be ready to speak.

17 The court reporter has asked me to
18 remind you to speak clearly and slowly to make her job a
19 lot easier. It's a little bit slower than maybe you'd talk
20 in normal language.

21 I've asked the Corps to help me out by
22 assigning their staff member, Ron Musser, here to help me
23 with the timing of your comments and to work under my
24 direction tonight. So here's what we're going to do:
25 When you start speaking into the microphone, he's going to

1 turn on his stopwatch that he's got for your five minutes
2 so that everybody will get the same amount of time. When
3 you get down to one minute, he's going to hold up this
4 sign. You must keep an eye over there for his little one
5 minute sign. And then when your time is up, he's going to
6 hold up a second sign that will ask you to please conclude
7 your comments. Go ahead and finish your thoughts, you
8 know, finish what you're saying, and then stop so the next
9 person and the next up, one of your neighbors, will be
10 able to come up and speak and have their five minutes too.
11 I'll also be keeping an eye on the time to make sure we
12 can get everybody heard and also be giving my attention to
13 your testimony.

14 At the end of your time, please leave
15 the microphone so the next speaker may begin. It looks
16 like we ought to be able to make sure that everybody who
17 signed up can speak tonight, but we'll need your help in
18 moving that along. Please, when you come up to the
19 microphone, please state your name and spell your last
20 name so we get that in the record. Please state the name
21 of your organization or agency, if you're with one. Then
22 direct your comments to Colonel Hobernicht and the rest of
23 the panel because they are here to hear you tonight. I'm
24 going to call the first speakers and, as a courtesy, as I
25 mentioned in the opening remarks and the ground rules, we

1 will have elected public officials go first, if they wish
2 to speak, and my understanding is we do have some with us
3 tonight, so let me call their names. Bill Lehning,
4 Cowlitz County Commissioner; Dan Buell, Port of Longview;
5 Walt Barnum, also Port of Longview, but I believe Walt may
6 not want to speak. He may just want to be acknowledged.
7 Why don't I have the three of you stand up and the first
8 two can come up to the microphone.

9 Do we have any other public officials?
10 I'd like the public officials tonight.

11 Wow, okay. What I'm going to do while
12 we hear our first speaker, then, is I'm going to come back
13 and get your names as well so that we can get you in the
14 line of speaking.

15 MR. LEHNING: Good evening Colonel,
16 Corps staff. My name is Bill Lehning, L-e-h-n-i-n-g. I'm
17 a Cowlitz County Commissioner and I felt the testimony was
18 so important to be here tonight, I left a meeting in
19 Vancouver to get here so that I can talk to you for a few
20 minutes.

21 I appreciate the environmental impact
22 studies that you've been doing and I think that you've
23 addressed them very well. I would, though, like to talk
24 about how this whole project is going to effect Cowlitz
25 County. Our unemployment in Cowlitz County is the largest

1 on the I-5 corridor. We are in desperate need of jobs.
2 Cowlitz County has three ports located within our
3 boundaries. The County has gone to the State and secured
4 over \$20 million to increase the infrastructure in our
5 county to get jobs in the community. We have, working
6 with the ports, put in a rail spur into the Port of
7 Woodland and into the Port of Longview. We've helped to
8 establish a bridge into the area of the Port of Kalama.
9 We've also helped to build some roads into the port so
10 that we could have infrastructure so that the shipping
11 lines could locate here. We are very fortunate in Cowlitz
12 County to have the I-5 corridor, the rail and an airport
13 all here without congestion of the big cities like Tacoma
14 and Seattle. We have property that is available for
15 industry to bring family wage jobs to this community. It
16 is very, very important that we deepen the channel to the
17 point where the shipping lines will not bypass Cowlitz
18 County and Southwest Washington and North Oregon because
19 they can't load their ships. We are not talking about
20 dredging the entire Columbia River. We're just talking
21 about taking off some peaks in different areas so that
22 those ships can be filled. When those ships leave our
23 ports only three-quarters full, millions of dollars are
24 lost to the community. You're not going to find very many
25 ports anymore that have the area that we have with the

1 infrastructure that we have and the job markets that we
2 have here in Cowlitz County.

3 I'm very concerned about the
4 environmental issues, yes. I take my boat and I fish
5 right alongside of the dredge and I catch salmon right 50
6 feet away. It is important that we do not hinder the
7 runs, but the spawning and all those take place in the
8 other streams and if we can protect that and the crab
9 beds, I think, you know, this is very important to our
10 area here. So I hope that you will seriously move forward
11 with this project. It means so much to Southwest
12 Washington. Without it, our recovery here is going to be
13 very slow. And it seems like that the Pacific Northwest
14 are the last ones to feel it but the last ones to recover.
15 And we have so much to offer right here in Cowlitz County,
16 that this dredging is vital to our economy.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

19 Next we'll hear from Dan Buell and
20 then our other two elected officials, Jack Keulker and
21 Arch Miller, will be next.

22 MR. BUELL: Good evening. I'm glad to
23 be here. I don't know how this is to going to affect your
24 final document, but my name is Dan Buell, B-u-e-l-l. I'm
25 an elected Court Commissioner at the Port of Longview.

1 I've been a labor leader in this Southwest Washington for
2 15 years. I want my job, so it's a big thing for us. We
3 have 15,000 union members living in Cowlitz County and we
4 know that 40,000 jobs are dependent on the Columbia River
5 maritime economy, not just here but all the way up the
6 river. So I'm here mostly speaking for jobs. We're all
7 concerned about the environment. We not -- we don't want
8 the channel deepened at any cost. We don't want to end up
9 like China with whatever goes on over there with the
10 pollution and everything else. We just -- if it's
11 practical and it can bring jobs to Southwest Washington
12 and the Columbia River, that's what we'd like to see.

13 As Bill says, we are a depressed area,
14 22 percent unemployed. You're going to get -- from the
15 State, you'll hear 11, but there are so many people that
16 have run out of unemployment that you can almost double
17 it. Maybe I exaggerate. We must have the channel
18 deepened to sustain our trade based economy and to have
19 jobs for our children.

20 Thank you very much.

21 MS. ABEL: Jack Keulker and then Arch
22 Miller.

23 MR. KEULKER: Good evening. My name
24 is Jack Keulker, City of Kelso Council. And tonight I'm
25 representing the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments

1 for both Cowlitz and Wahkiakum County. I have a letter
2 I'd like to read into the record and then I have an
3 attached letter which I would like to present you with
4 this letter from the Kelso -- Cowlitz Council of
5 Governments.

6 "To Colonel Richard Hobernicht,
7 Commander, September 5th, 2002.

8 As you are aware, concerns have been
9 expressed by the Wahkiakum County and the lower river
10 ports and the communities as to the potential impact of
11 the channel deepening project and the effects of the
12 existing navigation channel and shipping activities.
13 These concerns and impacts to the lower river ports and
14 communities need to be addressed. Among these are
15 ensuring that the erosion damage to Puget Island -- which
16 I have two daughters that live there and which I'm very
17 much aware of the erosion over the last 52 years. Every
18 time the river is dredged for maintenance, you can see the
19 erosion and we'd like to make sure this is strongly
20 addressed, as well as all the tributaries and the streams
21 up and down Wahkiakum County and Pacific County and
22 Cowlitz County. The -- Wahkiakum County and the lower
23 river ports have not been idle waiting for a rescue. They
24 have taken initiative to coordinate the examination of
25 environmental situations in the lower river and are

1 identifying various needs and projects that should be
2 pursued if and when the channel projects move ahead. The
3 Columbia River Channel Coalition, through its board
4 members and staff, have worked -- are working very hard
5 with the lower river group to address their concerns on
6 how to solve some long ignored issues noted above.

7 "Now, the channel deepening project is
8 at a critical stage of moving ahead. Now more than ever
9 we stress its importance to the shaky region economy and
10 the fact that positive steps are under way to resolve the
11 impacts to the Lower Columbia region. The lower -- the
12 Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments at its meeting on
13 August 22nd once again discussed the project, the status,
14 its positive impact and the concerns of the lower river
15 groups and communities. Our conclusion: We urge the
16 Corps of Engineers to proceed with the project, implement
17 the mitigation measures to resolve the project related
18 issues in the lower river.

19 Again, thank you for making available
20 this opportunity."

21 And this is signed by Bill Lehning,
22 Chairman of the Cowlitz-Wahkaikum Council of Governments
23 and myself, who is Vice-Chair, who is representing the
24 Kelso Council of Government. And, again, I urge you to
25 please think of the 2500 citizens down there in Wahkiakum

1 County. They may be small, but they're mighty. And
2 they've been meeting with this project for the last two or
3 three years. They desperately need your attention and they
4 need your urgency on this project. We need to make sure
5 that the streams and the erosion banks, whatever, are
6 taken care of for those people. So we'd appreciate if you
7 would pay attention, listen to those people, and follow
8 through and see what we can do to help them.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

11 Next, Arch Miller.

12 MR. MILLER: Good evening, ladies and
13 gentlemen, Colonel, staff. My name is Arch Miller. I
14 reside at 107 South Santa Fe Court in Vancouver,
15 Washington. That's in the USA. I'm a Commissioner at the
16 Port of Vancouver, a position I've had the pleasure of
17 holding since 1990. As a matter of fact, I was elected
18 about two months after this project started in the fall of
19 1989.

20 Very recently, the Port of Vancouver
21 welcomed a new ship on her maiden voyage. She was
22 christened the MV Adriatica Graeca. She was built in
23 Japan and sailed empty to the Port of Vancouver for the
24 purpose of transporting wheat to Indonesia. She slipped
25 up the Columbia River shiny and new with a proud crew and

1 a crew of longshoremen waiting to load her with her
2 initial cargo. She berthed at the Harvest States grain
3 elevator at the Port of Vancouver and began taking on
4 wheat, wheat from Eastern Oregon, Eastern Washington,
5 Idaho, Montana, and other inland points.

6 After nearly a day of loading, she
7 departed the Port of Vancouver but without a full load.
8 Capable of handling 70,000 tons of wheat, she left with
9 only 56,000 tons, which was the maximum load due to draft
10 restrictions on the Columbia River. 14,000 tons short of
11 a full load, only 80 percent loaded. While this does not
12 occur with every ship, it is becoming a more and more
13 common occurrence as new ships enter the market.

14 Thank you for providing an opportunity
15 for public comment on the Draft Supplemental Feasibility
16 Report and the Environmental Impact Statement for the
17 Columbia River channel deepening project, which is vitally
18 important to the economic and environmental health of our
19 region. Deepening the Columbia River navigation channel is
20 critical to maintaining maritime commerce and critical to
21 sustain businesses, farms and jobs in our region. This
22 project will ensure that the Columbia River can
23 accommodate the larger, more fuel efficient ships that
24 increasingly dominate the world trade fleet. With the
25 completion of the biological opinions by the National

1 Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
2 Service and the completion of these Draft Supplemental
3 reports, it is clear that this project can move forward in
4 an economical and environmental responsible manner.

5 At the Port of Vancouver, nearly 5,500
6 jobs are directly tied to maritime and industrial
7 activities. Port workers earned \$242 million in wages
8 last year. Their purchases add another \$124 million to
9 our local economy and the goods and services they buy help
10 to support other jobs in our community. Overall, Columbia
11 River maritime commerce produces family wage jobs for over
12 40,000 people and influences another 59,000 jobs in the
13 Northwest. Last year marine activity in the Columbia
14 River created \$1.8 billion in personal income. Jobs and
15 businesses in our region require access to cost effective
16 maritime transportation. The future of the Columbia River
17 navigation is directly dependent on deepening the channel
18 an additional three feet. This will not only maintain our
19 shipping transportation routes, but will ensure our
20 region's trade based economy. Approximately -- tough to
21 get a real number on this, but approximately 35 percent of
22 all jobs in Clark County are trade-related jobs.

23 I thank you very much for your time.

24 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

25 Are there any other public elected

1 officials that would like to speak?

2 Okay. Let me call the next three
3 names, then. Chris Hatzi will be up next, then Eric
4 Johnson, then Ken O'Hollaren.

5 MR. HATZI: Good evening. My name is
6 Chris Hatzi. The last name is spelled H-a-t-z-i. I'm
7 President of the Columbia River Port Rejuvenation. We're
8 a nonprofit organization of regional businesses, business
9 associations, labor and citizens that are committed to
10 improving an international market access for the region.

11 Thank you for the opportunity for
12 public comment on the Draft Supplemental Feasibility
13 Report and EIS for the Columbia River channel deepening
14 project. This project is vitally important to the
15 economic and environmental health of the region. This
16 evening I will talk about the importance of channel
17 deepening to the regional economy and briefly about what
18 some of the environmental issues are.

19 Cost effective maritime transportation
20 is vital to sustaining and strengthening our regional
21 trade based economy, especially during these difficult
22 economic times. Deepening the Columbia River navigation
23 channel is critical to maintaining maritime commerce and
24 to sustain businesses, farms and jobs in our region. This
25 project will ensure that the Columbia River can

1 accommodate the larger fuel efficient ships that
2 increasingly dominate the world fleet. From the Tri
3 Cities to Lewiston to Klammath Falls, this project has a
4 broad base support from businesses, labor unions, farmers
5 and the ports. As previously stated, over 40,000 local
6 family wage jobs are dependent on and another 59,000
7 Northwest jobs are influenced by Columbia River maritime
8 commerce. Due largely to delays in channel deepening, the
9 longshore job losses on the Columbia River have
10 accelerated over the last five years. These job losses
11 have taken \$16 million out of the regional economy. With
12 the Pacific Northwest leading the nation in unemployment,
13 we cannot afford to lose any more jobs. More than 1,000
14 businesses rely on the Columbia River to transport their
15 products to and from world markets. Vitality of these
16 jobs and businesses require access to cost effective
17 maritime transportation. The future success of the
18 Columbia River navigation is directly dependent on
19 deepening the channel from 40 to 43 feet to maintain the
20 vitality of this transportation route and our regions's
21 trade based economy. As the supplemental report explains,
22 the benefit to cost ratio for this project remains strong.
23 Even more importantly, Northwest businesses and farms will
24 gain major regional economic benefits from this project
25 that cannot be included in the Corps' analysis. Let me

1 cite one example of how insufficient market access has
2 negatively impacted the economy and potentially the
3 environment.

4 Grass seed farmers in the Willamette
5 Valley have struggled for years to draw an environmentally
6 sound method of eliminating the grass straw that is left
7 over after harvesting the seed. Recently, innovative
8 commodity trading companies such as S.L. Folen (phonetic)
9 have sold a variety of different forage products to the
10 Japanese dairy industries, including grass straw. During
11 the last two years, the Columbia River lost 25 percent of
12 the direct hauling container carrier service. The
13 carriers that left cited channel depth as one of the major
14 reasons they discontinued service. As a result of this
15 loss, capacity of the Columbia River container freight
16 rates have increased by 150 to \$300 per container. With
17 increasing freight rates from the Columbia River, the very
18 low valued grass straw is having much more difficult time
19 competing in the marketplace with low cost forage products
20 such as rice straw from Thailand, China and Australia. If
21 the grass straw can't be sold in international markets,
22 some have suggested the only alternative is to go back to
23 large scale field burning or dumping grass straw in
24 landfills.

25 Channel deepening is also important

1 for our environment. This project will require dredging
2 just 54 percent of the channel or 3.5 percent of the total
3 Columbia River between the mouth and the
4 Portland-Vancouver area. The remaining areas in the
5 channel are already naturally deeper than point -- 43
6 feet.

7 I will leave the specifics of the
8 environmental debate to the experts. However, I would
9 urge you to consider the environmental impact of not
10 dredging. Ships are the most environmentally friendly
11 method of moving goods between two points. By ensuring
12 that we have sufficient ocean carrier service in the
13 Columbia River, there will be less need to truck or rail
14 goods to or from California or Puget Sound ports. Fewer
15 trucks and trains mean lower emissions and improved air
16 quality.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

19 Next we'll hear from Eric Johnson,
20 then Ken O'Hollaren, then Kent Martin.

21 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you very much.

22 My name is Eric Johnson and I work
23 with the Washington Public Ports Association, which is the
24 steamway trade association representing Portland -- 76
25 Portland districts throughout Puget Sound here in

1 Southwest Washington as well as Puget Sound and Eastern
2 Washington. And I have just three brief points to make
3 tonight.

4 My first point is that support for
5 this project extends way beyond the co-sponsoring ports
6 and the immediate Columbia River communities that you've
7 heard from tonight. Four of the members of our
8 association are co-sponsors of this effort and it's, of
9 course, no surprise to you that we support it as well.
10 But what is often not appreciated is the depth of
11 statewide support for this project. Farming and business
12 communities all throughout the inland Northwest need a
13 deeper shipping channel through this waterway. Thousands
14 of well paying jobs need this project. Everyone has
15 learned about how the ecosystem and the environment are
16 all linked together in one big web and we've all learned
17 about how damage to one part invisibly leads to damage to
18 another part of the ecosystem. But this model is also
19 true of our economic system. Trade jobs by nature are
20 linked together. And when they go away, the invisible
21 threads go away that link them together and we're all
22 damaged. And a lot of the families and the businesses and
23 the working people that depend on this river don't live
24 anywhere near here, but they know they need this river
25 deepened and that's why a representative of the State

1 legislature drove down here tonight to support this
2 project.

3 Which leads me to my second point. I
4 mentioned the ecosystems and the environment. And my
5 second point is that this project offers a lot of
6 environmental benefits and it improves fish habitat. A
7 lot of the opposition to this project or concern about
8 this project has come from people who are worried about
9 the environmental impacts of it. They're mostly worried
10 about salmon. The ports are worried about salmon too. We
11 have a lot of ports who have fishing fleets and we have no
12 interest in a project that hurts fish. But the resource
13 agencies and the independent panel that have studied this
14 have all concluded that this project does not harm those
15 endangered species. And the ports who took on the co-
16 sponsorship of this project have worked very, very hard to
17 make sure that the environmental aspects of the project
18 were improved. We've had years of review and hundreds of
19 hours of meetings and thousands of pages of study and it's
20 been good work because, as you saw tonight in the
21 presentation, we've eliminated ocean disposal, we've
22 decreased the amount of dredging dramatically, we
23 decreased the amount of basalt blasting dramatically,
24 we've greatly increased the beneficial uses of the dredge
25 material for beach nourishment and for habitat

1 restoration. And those new habitat restoration and
2 enhancement features are a significant benefit, I think,
3 to the fish and birds and the wildlife that we share this
4 river with. And I also want to note the efforts -- the
5 strong efforts that the co-sponsor ports have gone to to
6 work with and address the important concerns of the lower
7 river ports, the smaller ports down in the estuary.
8 They've worked hard to address those important concerns
9 and they're to be commended for it.

10 Now, it's easy in this world to assume
11 that because a project is big, it must be environmentally
12 bad. But this project has worked hard to make sure that
13 because it is big, its habitat restoration efforts are
14 also big. And big doesn't have to be bad. And in this
15 case, I would argue that the biggest part of this project
16 is the big opportunity that it presents to help both
17 working people and fish.

18 My final point is brief. Let's quit
19 talking and start dredging. Some people are saying that
20 this study needs -- that this project needs more study and
21 more time. I had this job -- I've had this job for 15
22 years. I remember when we started this project when
23 Congress authorized this study 13 years ago. But
24 additional studies aren't going to change the peer
25 reviewed conclusions about the benefits of this project

1 for our communities and for our region and for the nation.
2 This project is a good deal for workers. It's a good deal
3 for businesses. It's a good deal for the environment.
4 This study has been planned -- this project has been
5 planned and studied longer than the Apollo moon project.
6 We have plenty of data and study to make decisions now.
7 Let's get going. MS. ABEL: Thank you.

8 Ken O'Hollaren, Kent Martin and then
9 Jeff Davis.

10 MR. O'HOLLAREN: Good evening. My
11 name is Ken O'Hollaren. That's O, apostrophe,
12 H-o-l-l-a-r-e-n. I'm the Executive Director of the Port
13 of Longview.

14 As one of the six sponsoring ports for
15 the channel deepening project, the Port of Longview
16 appreciates this opportunity to speak on behalf of the
17 project and particularly pleased that the Corps has chosen
18 Longview as the site for one of its three public hearings
19 on the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. Our
20 port community is proud of our partnership with the Corps
21 and the other sponsoring ports which has produced a
22 quality work product that is the subject of this hearing
23 today. We commend the Corps for considering the
24 additional information and analyses of the issuance of
25 this supplemental report. We believe this project, as

1 presently designed, fully meets the economic and
2 environmental goals of both of Lower Columbia region and
3 the nation.

4 Our advocacy of this project comes as
5 no surprise to anyone in this community. Since the
6 commencement of the reconnaissance study in 1989, we have
7 on many occasions explained the importance of a viable
8 shipping channel not only to the Port of Longview but to
9 all of Cowlitz County. Our local industry relies on water
10 borne transportation for both the importation of raw
11 material as well as the export of finished products. The
12 economic benefits of the Columbia River navigation channel
13 to our area are obvious. Improving that channel through
14 this project only and clearly adds to those benefits.

15 What may not be as well-known is the
16 role the Washington ports have played in ensuring this
17 project meets not only Federal compliance under the
18 Endangered Species Act, but that it fulfills all state and
19 local environmental regulations. Following the denial of
20 state certifications early last year, the Port of
21 Longview, along with the ports of Kalama, Vancouver and
22 Woodland, initiated a project review process of the State
23 Environmental Policy Act and assumed lead agency status to
24 obtain various State approvals. As part of this work, the
25 ports, their consultants and appropriate agencies have

1 diligently worked at better to finding all the impacts and
2 identifying prudent measures to either reduce or mitigate
3 those impacts. As a result of over 31 meetings with the
4 agencies, a series of technical memoranda were written on
5 the key issues that were the basis of the original denial
6 letters from the states. In Volume 2 of the SEIS, you
7 will find technical memos on sand supply, consistency with
8 local critical area ordinances, wildlife and wetland
9 mitigation, dredging and disposal impacts to crab, white
10 surgeon, smelt, fish stranding and royalties to the
11 Department of Natural Resources. These are a critical
12 part of the SEIS and are the basis of the work under the
13 State Environmental Policy Act.

14 While we are still working towards the
15 issuance of the final SEIS, we are confident the
16 investment of time and resources which the ports have made
17 will result in a better project and one in which local
18 communities can know their concerns were addressed. We
19 also appreciate the time and energy invested by the
20 citizens of both Washington and Oregon in reviewing the
21 SEIS and presenting their comments. In addition to these
22 steps, the ports have supported the efforts of the
23 Columbia River Channel Coalition to find new beneficial
24 uses for dredge material for down river communities.
25 These efforts have resulted in the replenishment of the

1 Puget Island sand pit for Wahkiakum County and the
2 initiation of the Benson Beach demonstration project at
3 Fort Canby State Park which will hopefully become part of
4 a long-term solution to minimize ocean disposal and reduce
5 beach erosion along the Long Beach peninsula. We also
6 support the use of dredge material for ecosystem
7 restoration as part of this project, which not only
8 eliminates the need for ocean disposal during
9 construction, but improves fish habitat in the estuary.

10 Thirteen years of study, refinement
11 and extensive public involvement have resulted in a
12 project which meets the goals and expectations for our
13 Lower Columbia communities and needs to move forward now.
14 We encourage the Corps to finalize the supplemental report
15 so that a record of decision can be made and construction
16 started.

17 Thank you very much.

18 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

19 Kent Martin, then Jeff Davis, then
20 Lanny Cawley.

21 MR. MARTIN: Ladies and gentlemen, my
22 name is Kent Martin, M-a-r-t-i-n.

23 I just returned from the four months a
24 year or so that I spend in Alaska because of 50 years of
25 incremental "This won't hurt salmon." This is where I

1 have to go to make the bulk of my living now. I'm a
2 commercial fisherman from Skamokawa, Washington.

3 On page 6-34, the notion seems to be
4 that salmonids are not present in the water column. If
5 the depth is greater than 20 feet, then the port dredging
6 operations would not affect them. This is nothing short
7 of ludicrous. There is and has been for, perhaps, 100
8 years an entire technology of diver net fishing on the
9 Columbia complete with the elaborate snag removal
10 activities, much of it in water depths in excess of 30
11 feet. That wouldn't exist if there weren't fish there to
12 catch. Some of the best fishing is on the ebb tide at
13 depths ranging from 30 to 60 feet when fish sound to avoid
14 the swifter top current.

15 With regard to the proposed disposal
16 area in the Miller sands-Pillar rock area, this is an
17 active and very productive fishing ground that was in use
18 before the dawn of the 20th century. Fishermen who can
19 demonstrate their use of maintenance of this area of the
20 drift right should be appropriately compensated for any
21 losses that may be due to spoiled disposal.

22 Which leads to my third point. It is
23 indeed curious how the Columbia River seems to stop at
24 Longview when the need arises. It is so the Columbia
25 River and its residents of the lower 60 miles do not

1 exist. It is with this kind of blank radar screen that
2 one can talk of the proposed deepening project having no
3 significant negative economic impacts on low income
4 populations. Even a cursory review of Columbia River
5 communities below Longview indicates serious poverty
6 issues relating to fisheries dependent economies.
7 Supporting statistics are readily available and it amazes
8 me that they were left out of this study. The last half
9 of the century -- the last half century I have seen
10 communities devastated. Some of them even disappeared.
11 Names like Brookfield and Frankfort and Clifton, they're
12 just names on a map anymore because of the shortsighted
13 rush to develop the Columbia basin and the kind of
14 existential thinking that I hear. I see nothing but
15 negative values for residents of the Lower Columbia and
16 the fisheries that sustain those communities if this
17 channel deepening project is allowed to proceed based on
18 the kind of faulty and incomplete economic data that I've
19 seen here.

20 Thank you.

21 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

22 Jeff Davis, then Lanny Cawley, and
23 then Matt Van Ess.

24 MR. DAVIS: Good evening, Colonel and
25 Corps staff. My name is Jeff Davis, D-a-v-i-s, and I'm

1 here representing the 285 members of the International
2 Longshoremen Warehouse Union and the over 1400 members
3 that exist on the Columbia River. For the sake of
4 simplicity and time, I'll read a prepared statement that
5 I'll submit later.

6 The ILW supports proceeding with the
7 channel deepening project because we recognize the
8 importance of the international stake on the Columbia
9 River region. The Lower Columbia River is the second
10 largest grain export handler in the world. Over 13
11 million -- billion, pardon me -- \$13 billion in cargo
12 move over the river each year and the ILW is a significant
13 partner in handling that cargo efficiently and
14 effectively. Local 21 members here in Longview have a
15 nearly \$6 million payroll from the Kalama grain facilities
16 alone and an over \$12 million payroll all in told. These
17 figures don't include any of the ancillary jobs that are
18 also created by this movement of cargo such as truckers,
19 scalers, state grain inspectors, port staff, buyers and
20 the agents of the more than 1700 longshoremen from other
21 ports in the area. This is the most important economic
22 development in the opportunity and in the region. We see
23 the ships moving on this river and the coming generations
24 of these ships are much larger with deeper drafts. To
25 compete, these grain elevators and other shippers must be

1 able to accommodate this new generation of ships. It is
2 of vital importance to keep this existing trade that comes
3 here from eroding. And the last thing we want to see is an
4 economic back water in the area.

5 As you look forward to the future,
6 there is a need to plan for transportation and shipping to
7 be sure that we provide current and future workers with
8 the opportunity to have quality jobs. This is about more
9 than the ILWU. This is about major economic bases in our
10 community and we are committed to protecting these jobs
11 that are here on the Lower Columbia River. Thank you.

12 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

13 If the phones going off haven't
14 reminded you, you might turn your phones off for the rest
15 of the evening.

16 Next we'll hear from Lanny Cawley,
17 then Matt Vann Ess and Ted Sprague.

18 MR. CAWLEY: Thank you, Colonel,
19 Laura, Ron, others for allowing us to give testimony. My
20 name is Lanny Cawley, C-a-w-l-e-y. I am the Executive
21 Director of the Port of Kalama.

22 Port of Kalama is one of the
23 nonFederal port sponsors of the channel deepening project
24 and is so because the Port of Kalama depends on the
25 Columbia River to accomplish its mission of providing jobs

1 and enhancing the well-being of residents of the Kalama
2 port district.

3 Why is this so? The gentleman that
4 just spoke, I'd like to -- to tell him about the
5 experience that this area had in the early 1990's with the
6 spotted owl crisis when the unemployment rate went much
7 further into the 40 percent figure than it is now. The
8 port's missions during that time were to create employment
9 and the ports in this county became very active to work
10 towards creating that employment. On average, the Port of
11 Kalama provides over 1,000 family supporting jobs for
12 residents not only of Kalama and Cowlitz County but also
13 for families in greater Southwest Washington and in
14 Oregon.

15 And I thank you for this opportunity
16 to provide comment on the Draft Supplemental Feasibility
17 Report and the EIS for the Columbia River Channel
18 Deepening Project. I also have been involved with this
19 since 1989. It's been a long time. We've been very
20 patient and we believe it's time to move on with it as
21 well. I speak today representing the Board of
22 Commissioners of the Port of Kalama and the staff of the
23 Port of Kalama who have been online with the channel
24 deepening project all along and they want me to deliver
25 the message that we are very pleased with the progress the

1 Corps of Engineers has made to find alternative dredge
2 material disposal sites for the channel construction
3 project. I've made testimony in the past about supporting
4 beneficial use of sand. I've made testimony in the past
5 about the economic benefits of the channel deepening made
6 without harm done to other economies. I have made
7 testimony in regard to supporting the efforts to reduce or
8 eliminate ocean disposal for the crab fishery. And we are
9 thrilled to see that you have, in fact, eliminated ocean
10 disposal during the channel deepening project. And not
11 only will that protect the crab fishery, but you've also
12 determined to make beneficial use of that sand through
13 habitat restoration, which is very commendable and we're
14 very supportive of that.

15 The Port of Kalama knows about the use
16 of beneficial sand in the past. Ten years or more the
17 Port of Kalama has used sand to create jobs for people
18 that have been displaced by our economic woes. I'll just
19 give you one brief example and that is the steel mill that
20 we have located at the Port of Kalama. The Port of Kalama
21 took a big risk, spent about \$15 million to build a marine
22 terminal site. And the return for that risk was a
23 corporation who provides 260 jobs, \$10 million annual
24 payroll, and an increase of the tax base of approximately
25 \$1-1/2 million, I believe, in that range. Certainly, a

1 beneficial use to dredge material.

2 The Port of Kalama has also been
3 active in supporting the effort to place sand on Benson
4 Beach. We all know that it's an alternate -- one of the
5 many alternates, maybe, but it's certainly a significant
6 alternate to ocean disposal of dredge material. Many of
7 us have been involved in that and have put money into that
8 as well as the Corps. We thank the Corps for putting
9 money into that demonstration project this year.

10 Finally, I'd like to point out an
11 example that was a follow-up of one, I believe, that Arch
12 made and this is a recent one, just two weeks ago --
13 actually, it was a little bit less than two weeks -- where
14 two ships back to back at the -- excuse me -- the Port of
15 Kalama elevator owned and operated by Kalama Export. They
16 had two large vessels leave the port with grain headed for
17 Pakistan -- for both Pakistan and Afghanistan. I believe
18 those ships left with 62,000 tons, but because they didn't
19 -- they weren't able to fill because of the 40-foot draft
20 restriction, they did go up to Puget Sound to pick up
21 another load which would take their draft up at least
22 two-and-a-half feet. The operator, Steve Oaks, who has
23 also testified before would have been here to talk about
24 this tonight but wasn't able to. He wanted me to tell you
25 that the nominal value of that was probably around a

1 quarter of a million dollars. That is not an unusual
2 thing in the Port of Kalama since we have had max vessels
3 regularly call there. We need to have the channel
4 deepened and we would like to see it gotten on with.

5 Thank you very much.

6 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

7 I'm thinking that some people may be
8 having a little trouble hearing this. Let me just adjust
9 this a little bit.

10 Now, is that too loud? Is that
11 better?

12 Okay. Fine.

13 So let's hear from our next speaker,
14 Matt Vann Ess, then Ted Sprague, then Peter Huhtala. MR.
15 VAN ESS: Good evening. My name is Matt Van Ess. It's
16 V-a-n E-s-s. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

17 My name is Matt Van Ess. I'm the
18 Executive Director of CREST, the Columbia Estuary Study
19 Task Force. Crest is a council of governments representing
20 local jurisdictions, cities, counties and ports
21 surrounding the Columbia River estuary in both Oregon and
22 Washington. Again, thank you for the opportunity to
23 comment on the Draft Supplemental Integrated Feasibility
24 Report, the Environmental Impact Statement of the proposed
25 deepening of the Columbia and Lower Willamette River

1 Federal navigation channel, the deepening of six turning
2 basins of the designation of new upland, estuary and ocean
3 disposal sites, and the ecosystem restoration features,
4 including the project, those lots here.

5 At the direction of CREST council,
6 CREST staff analyzed and provided comments on the draft
7 and final EIS's and it's continued to track this proposal.
8 Based on our review of the draft and final EIS's, it was
9 CREST's finding that the project could not be done as
10 proposed without resulting in negative impacts to the
11 natural resources and the economies of the communities
12 surrounding the Columbia River estuary. CREST also found
13 that the proposed project violated local regulations,
14 State and Federal law, including NEPA, which is the Clean
15 Water Act, Coastal Zone Management Act and Endangered
16 Species Act. We were right. Coastal zone consistency and
17 water quality certifications were denied by both states
18 and the National Marine Fisheries Service withdrew their
19 biological opinion. The project was simply denied, the
20 necessary approvals to move forward. End of EIS process.
21 End of project. Well, sometimes no is just -- doesn't
22 mean no, does it?

23 CREST's initial findings also found
24 accumulative estuarine impacts will result from the
25 project, specifically cumulative impacts to Dungeness

1 crab, smelt, sturgeon, salmonids, the estuarine food web
2 and shoreline habitat. These impacts must be avoided and,
3 if unavoidable, may give.

4 So that was then. So what has changed
5 since the project was denied? Reconsultation effort was
6 conducted by the project sponsors, the Corps and the
7 services. The outcome: From a lower river community
8 standpoint, the project is now worse. The bottom line is
9 we have a serious map problem when it comes to dredging
10 and disposing. The current practices on the river and the
11 planning leading up to this point has left us in a
12 situation where we don't have capacity, we don't have
13 acceptable places or uses for the material, even for
14 maintenance of the existing channel of the project -- at
15 the mouth of the Columbia River project, much less
16 deepening. Ocean disposal has not been eliminated. We
17 avoided ocean disposal for maybe a few years depending on
18 the outcome of this supplemental process, but it's still
19 part of the project. I just wanted to say that a lot
20 earlier this evening. I just wanted to make that clear.
21 Ocean disposal has not been eliminated.

22 Our research shows that Rice Island
23 and Site E for the ocean disposal site at the mouth of the
24 river are the largest dredge material disposal sites in
25 the history of dredging the Columbia. Rice Island is

1 reaching capacity and Site E has its own suite of
2 environmental and safety issues that must be addressed
3 before continued use. Rice Island is reaching capacity.
4 It's something we really need to address. There is no
5 long-term solution for this problem. The result is that
6 we get estuary dump sites that have not been used for
7 disposal previously. Now they're ecosystem restoration.

8 CREST is working with the ports, with
9 the Corps, State agencies and other stakeholders and both
10 governors' offices on expanding the concept of beneficial
11 uses of dredge material. This is a concept that everyone
12 supports -- we've heard that tonight -- and we appreciate
13 the hard work that it's taken by everyone involved to get
14 projects like Benson Beach, the Puget Island sand pit and
15 the Bradwood commercial reuse site off the ground this
16 summer. We've got a lot more to do in this area, a lot
17 more to do. There's no funding for Benson Beach next
18 year. It's my understanding we don't have funding to
19 continue that project.

20 We also support -- CREST also supports
21 the potential to use dredge material for the purposes of
22 restoring habitat. Unfortunately, the two projects
23 presented involved dumping and their labeled restoration
24 will result in permanent alteration for the degradation of
25 the estuary. CREST has stated in early forums that

1 beneficial uses such as restoration needs to be further
2 explored on an experimental basis with a strong monitoring
3 component similar to the Benson Beach project that was
4 conducted this summer. Millions of cubic yards dumped
5 over two years during construction at Lois Island
6 embayment is not experimental. It's not restoring
7 valuable habitat. In fact, it's creating shallow water --
8 by creating shallow water, the Corps is proposing to
9 create the one habitat type that has actually grown in the
10 past century. We have over 4,000 acres of shallow water
11 than we did a decade ago -- or a century ago. So we have
12 an excess of a habitat type that we're creating.

13 What else has changed? Well, the --

14 MS. ABEL: Mr. Van Ess, you'll need to
15 conclude.

16 MR. VAN ESS: Has it really been five
17 minutes?

18 MS. ABEL: Yes.

19 MR. VAN ESS: Wow.

20 What else has changed? The Willamette
21 River's fate. Actually deepening the Willamette is still
22 preauthorized. We need to deal with that. We need this
23 preauthorization changed. Sediment volumes have changed.
24 Again, we have a math problem. Adapted management is part
25 of the process now. CREST is going to request now and

1 will be requesting during our DOC (phonetic) and DOE
2 (phonetic) comments on water quality certification that
3 the State agencies be equally involved in any proposed
4 adaptive management framework that is used to attempt
5 project approval.

6 MS. ABEL: Thank you, Mr. Van Ess.

7 MR. VAN ESS: Thank you.

8 MS. ABEL: Can you submit your written
9 notes?

10 MR. VAN ESS: I'll be submitting my
11 written comments. Thank you.

12 MS. ABEL: Thank you very much.

13 Ted Sprague and then Peter Hulitala,
14 and then I have someone whose first name I can't read.
15 The last name is Rogers. You were 12th on the sign-up
16 list. Let's see who that is.

17 Go right ahead, Mr. Sprague. MR.

18 SPRAGUE: Good evening. I'm Ted Sprague. I'm the -- oh,
19 sorry. S-p-r-a-g-u-e. I'm the President of Cowlitz
20 Economic Development Council and I appreciate the
21 opportunity to comment tonight. I also appreciate the
22 work that you've done in finding solutions for this
23 economic issue and also for the environmental issues that
24 you faced on this project. At the Cowlitz Economic
25 Development Council, I represent over 200 members that are

1 private members. We are not for profit group and we've
2 been in existence since 1979.

3 Unfortunately, Southwest Washington
4 has been leading the area, the country in unemployment for
5 the past two years. Washington and Oregon itself have
6 been number one and number two in the United States in
7 unemployment for the past 10 consecutive months. We look
8 to probably retain those titles of number one and two in
9 this coming month. It's not a race we want to finish
10 first in, but, unfortunately, we have been. I look at
11 this project as a job retention project. Additionally,
12 Cowlitz County alone has lost over 4,000 jobs in the past
13 two years. Leading the way with Longview Aluminum, we've
14 lost 950 high paying jobs in that firm alone. The current
15 unemployment rate over 10 percent. And one of the things
16 that is so important -- it's been mentioned earlier -- is
17 the thousands upon thousands of jobs that are not only
18 directly related to the Columbia River maritime trade, but
19 also those that are indirectly related to the trade. I
20 won't go into those. You heard that already.

21 Additionally, I recently returned from
22 a trade mission to Japan and Korea with Governor Lock in
23 which we heard again and again the importance of import
24 and export trade to the states of Washington and Oregon,
25 specifically into Washington. That is only going to

1 increase in its importance. And if we do not get on the
2 channel deepening project, we will remain stagnant and,
3 eventually, begin to fall behind in that important reign.
4 We cannot afford any additional job losses in this region.
5 We simply can't. We need to get going on this project. It
6 has been studied since 1989 and a lot of good work has
7 been done. I appreciate your work and I hope you can
8 continue on with this project in the near future.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

11 Peter Hulitala, mystery person Rogers,
12 and then I think we might have another sheet coming up
13 too. If anyone is coming in that wants to speak that has
14 not signed up, you can do that over by the front door.
15 Thank you.

16 Go ahead.

17 MR. HUHTALA: Hi. My name is Peter
18 Huhtala. That's H-u-h-t-a-l-a. And I'm the Executive
19 Director of the Columbia Deepening Opposition Group.
20 Thanks for the chance to comment tonight. I want to cover
21 a couple matters and then I'll read a bit from my written
22 statement.

23 First of all, I'd like to, once again,
24 ask for a bit of extension on the comment period for a few
25 reasons. One, there hasn't been a hearing scheduled at all

1 in Portland, Oregon, specifically, and I think -- and I
2 know for a fact there's a whole lot of people in the
3 Portland area very interested in this project. There's
4 also quite a few lower river fishermen, especially some of
5 the ocean guys and salmon people that are getting back
6 from Alaska that really haven't had a chance to look at
7 the documentation and get ready to testify and I think
8 they're important. Third, there's a matter of errata that
9 was just distributed dated August 26, materials that
10 should have been included in the DEIS that weren't, and I
11 expect that the review period should be extended possibly
12 because of the late release of that material. And,
13 finally, on the -- this matter of this -- these technical
14 review panels that have looked at the Corps' costs and
15 benefits back at the beginning of August, the report from
16 the technical review panel has yet to be released and I'm
17 sure we're all waiting for that. But most important --
18 most relevant, I think, is the public should have a chance
19 to take a look at that. I think the -- on both the costs
20 and benefits. We may learn something that -- really
21 important that the public -- members of the public may
22 want to -- you know, however they really feel about the
23 project they want to share. So I suggest actually a
24 two-month extension of the comment period -- or at least
25 two months since the errata was released.

1 We've heard a bit about jobs and I
2 think I'll talk on that. I really would like to
3 understand what this project means for jobs, really,
4 because we hear these 40,000, 59,000 figures. What does
5 that really mean? And based what I read, the Corps
6 expects the same number -- pretty much the same number of
7 transits of the river whether the channel is deepened or
8 not. However, the technical review panel seemed to
9 suggest that -- the benefits of this action suggested a
10 high probability that fewer container ships would call on
11 Portland if, in fact, the channel were deepened. I'd like
12 to understand what that means. Fewer transits, I presume,
13 would reduce longshore jobs. On the other hand, we may
14 see increased tonnage because of the deeper channel and
15 maybe moving the more tonnage would increase jobs. I
16 would like to see a full analysis that, you know --
17 basically, we're all aware that thousands of jobs relate
18 to maritime progress in this river system, although almost
19 all of these jobs would not be affected by channel
20 deepening.

21 What I do know is that many jobs would
22 be lost in -- due to environmental degradation and reduced
23 fishing opportunities. When we have reduced fishing
24 opportunities -- I come from a town that's built on
25 fishing and logging. The impacts of the salmon and crab

1 fishery would not only hurt the fisheries but would reduce
2 employment in processing and supply and related services.
3 So it seems -- from where I'm standing, it seems like we
4 have a net loss of jobs should we go forward with this and
5 I'd really like that made clear and -- so that we can get
6 past the rhetoric and really come to understand what this
7 means. With that said, I'll engage in a little rhetoric.

8 Many people have worked for 10, 12, 14
9 years to make this project a reality. And -- and I think
10 most people are realizing this probably isn't going to
11 happen. Lots of good work has been done. And we can use
12 some of the -- some of the good work that's been done.
13 The Columbia will continue to be a gateway in
14 international trade. Its ports can be proud as they roll
15 with the dynamic changes of congress, but this is not the
16 river of one industry. Some love it for recreation, some
17 for its electricity, some drink the spirit of its use,
18 others just make a living pulling its fish. Welcome to a
19 paradigm shift. Americans value special places like the
20 Columbia River estuary. This is no longer the northwest
21 passage with a waterfall. It's critical habitat for
22 salmon and people alike. The projects --

23 Anyway, I'll wind this up. Again, I
24 want to speak to appreciation for the -- the support for
25 beneficial uses of dredge material and I want to continue

1 to work with the Corps in finding real useful beneficial
2 uses. I certainly don't think the Lois embayment or the
3 Miller-Pillar sites are beneficial uses whatsoever, but we
4 all have the challenge, whether this project goes forward
5 to not, to find good uses for that sand and move forward
6 in a positive manner.

7 MS. ABEL: Thank you. I apologize for
8 mispronouncing your name.

9 MR. HUHTALA: It's happened before
10 once.

11 MS. ABEL: Our next speaker is -- I
12 cannot read the first name -- Rogers. Is that person
13 here?

14 MR. ROGERS: Yes.

15 MS. ABEL: Sorry.

16 After that will be Brent Foster and
17 Paul Vik.

18 MR. ROGERS: Do you want me to spell
19 my first name?

20 MS. ABEL: At least say it for us.

21 MR. ROGERS: My name is Lonny Rogers
22 -- Captain Lonny Rogers. I'm a Columbia River pilot.

23 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

24 MR. ROGERS: I'm the Treasurer and the
25 acting Vice-president of 46 river pilots who direct the

1 ships up and down the Columbia River.

2 I'm here to speak for Captain Phil
3 Massey who would normally be here this evening. He
4 couldn't come, so they asked me to stand in for him. I'm
5 happy to do so. Most of these remarks are Phil's remarks,
6 but I added a few of my own, so bear with me.

7 First, I would like to comment on the
8 practical aspects of a deeper channel as it relates to
9 safety, efficiency and to bank effects of ship handling.
10 A deeper channel not only allows for the passage of
11 larger, more economic ships but, also, there is an
12 enhanced margin of safety for ships that presently call on
13 our ports. For example, tankers that call on Portland
14 often arrive at drafts of approximately 36 feet. This
15 provides a minimum bottom clearance on some sections of
16 the route that are approximately four feet. A 43-foot
17 channel would almost double the normal tanker bottom
18 clearance. Tanker hull design generally makes them more
19 difficult to steer with less water under them. Additional
20 water greatly improves their handling characteristics.
21 This is particularly true when two deep ships with widths
22 of over 100 feet are meeting in a 600-foot wide channel.
23 The hydrodynamic effects created between two ships can be
24 extreme and a deeper channel will greatly reduce those
25 hazards. Simply put, the more water, the more safety and,

1 therefore, the less chance of casualty to the vessel and
2 to the environment.

3 A deeper channel will stop the slide
4 of Columbia River ports into second class port states
5 which may have been brought on by years of channel
6 deepening wrangling. Second class ports get a diet of
7 second class ships, older, less reliable, more polluting
8 and poor weight characteristics. We have a terrific
9 safety record on the Columbia River, but the ship that
10 lost power and steering and crashed into the new dock at
11 Kalama was an old tramper on its last legs. We know that
12 older, less efficient container ships and car carrier ship
13 hulls can create more weight problems and that more modern
14 ships generally avoid this by improved hull design. We
15 know that older ships generally have less efficient
16 engines which tend to pollute the air at higher rates than
17 more modern ships. We prefer not to have these obsolete
18 ships making the bulk of our ship traffic.

19 To those of us who are concerned about
20 bank erosion, the fact is that larger ships don't
21 necessarily cause or increase bank erosion. Long time
22 observers should know that most bank problems are due to
23 the relentless effects of the river due to high water
24 periods and the tides more than the momentary effects of a
25 passing ship. However, in places where ship passage is

1 exacerbated, the natural erosion, newer ships will be an
2 improvement. Because of fuel costs and the need for
3 quicker transits, ship owners have concentrated on
4 building ship hulls which are more slippery and more
5 efficient. Those improvements greatly reduce the
6 displacement swells which we all find so objectionable.

7 Second, as the Columbia River
8 demonstrates to the world that it is truly open for
9 business, just remember the fact that the most efficient
10 way to move cargo, especially bulk cargo, is to and from
11 the furthest inland point of distribution possible. It is
12 because of the inland ports of the Columbia River provide
13 that uniqueness -- that is, the head waters of deep draft
14 commercial navigation -- that we are here tonight. We
15 must make the best use of this opportunity to remain
16 environmentally and economically healthy. A strong
17 commitment by you will not only enhance our infrastructure
18 but also our communities. We must continue to invest --
19 I'm sorry. We must continue to invest in our future by
20 attracting these new state of the art ships -- state of
21 art ships. I respectfully submit full ahead. Thank you.

22 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

23 Next we have Brent Foster, Paul Vik
24 and then I believe it's Vinton Ericksen.

25 Go right ahead.

1 MR. FOSTER: Good evening. My name is
2 Brent Foster. I'm an attorney with Columbia River Keeper.
3 Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight.

4 Columbia River Keeper has a number of
5 significant concerns about the proposed dredging project
6 and more specifically about the supplemental EIS. We're
7 concerned because this project would basically strip mine
8 a river that's already struggling to maintain many of its
9 native species at mere survival levels. At a time when
10 massive restoration is needed, when massive improvements
11 in water quality are needed, this project would appear to
12 continue a history of degradation. We appreciate the
13 restoration projects. We appreciate the fact that these
14 have entered into the project proposal. But we're
15 concerned that in light of the Corps' history of managing
16 the Columbia River more like a navigation highway and more
17 like an industrial powerhouse than a river, that these
18 mitigation measures are not going to compensate for the
19 impacts that this project will have either on habitat,
20 water quality or the viability of salmon. The
21 supplemental EIS does not adequately assess the effects
22 that this project is going to have on salmon or a host of
23 other native species such as the Pacific Lamprey. These
24 species are important not only now but they've been
25 important for almost 10,000 years to the humans who have

1 lived here.

2 The supplemental EIS also fails to
3 answer adequately the question of what's going to happen
4 with the decades of toxic contaminations such as PCB's and
5 other substances which get stirred up as a result of
6 dredging. These will end up in downstream communities.
7 They will be reup into the water column. They will be
8 bioaccumulated by fish, which are used by a host of people
9 who rely on fish, not only for purposes of food but as
10 well as recreation, for religious and a host of other
11 purposes. The impacts of dredge spoils in both the
12 terrestrial habitats as well as the aquatic habitats has
13 not been adequately described in meeting the requirements
14 of NEPA, the Clean Water Act or the Endangered Species
15 Act.

16 We're also fundamentally concerned
17 about the economic assumption which have gone on -- gone
18 into the -- forms the basis of this project. We're highly
19 concerned about local jobs. We're very sympathetic to
20 high unemployment rates both in Washington and Oregon and
21 we strongly support efforts that are going to maintain and
22 even expand union jobs such as the ones which are
23 responsible for working at the docks. However, there is a
24 host of people, a host of families and a host of jobs
25 which have been affected by the management and will

1 continue to be affected by the management on the Columbia
2 River. There are literally hundreds, if not thousands, of
3 fishing families which today continue to exist upon with
4 the assistance of the federal government and through
5 welfare, food stamps, you name it, because of the result
6 of the crashing of the Columbia River salmon, which can
7 be, in many ways, directly attributed to the action past
8 and continuing of the Corps of Engineers. Tribal members
9 have been unable to carry out some of their most basic
10 rituals which surround -- which surround and are based on
11 salmon because of the loss of salmon which has been, in
12 many ways, caused by not only -- not only Corps damn
13 management activity but also just the running of the river
14 for navigation.

15 Because of the string of reports from
16 across the country that have raised serious questions as
17 to how the Corps performs its cost benefit analysis and
18 even the re -- we appreciate the reanalysis of the cost
19 benefit numbers that have been released as a part of this
20 EIS. However, we think that an independent cost benefit
21 analysis would be highly beneficial and is important not
22 just to justify this project but in order for the Corps to
23 regain credibility that it has lost not only in Congress
24 but throughout the country.

25 This supplemental EIS is also flawed

1 because of its failure to adequately evaluate the indirect
2 and accumulative effects from exotic species that are a
3 well-known and well-recognized and significant indirect
4 effect from shipping. Despite countless invasions by
5 ballast water, some of them extremely dramatic in the
6 Great Lakes, San Francisco and elsewhere, there's still no
7 effort in the Columbia River to even have a team or an
8 effort that will quickly respond to treat and control an
9 exotic species invasion if it occurred today. If the
10 zebra mussels came in today, there's still no detailed
11 plan. There's no funding in place to actively address
12 such a threat. The EIS should fully address adverse
13 environmental effects that are going to result from
14 bringing bigger ships in that can carry more ballast water
15 and discharge even more ballast water than is currently
16 being discharged into the Columbia. Because of these
17 concerns and many others that are addressed in our
18 comments, we still don't believe this project -- we don't
19 believe this project complies with NEPA, the Clean Water
20 Act, Coastal Zone Management, ESA, and a host of other
21 State and Federal statutes. Equally important is we
22 simply don't believe that there's the evidence to show at
23 this point that the project is worth either the
24 environmental or economic costs.

25 Thank you for your time.

1 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

2 Paul Vik, Vinton Ericksen and Warren
3 Banks.

4 MR. VIK: My name is Paul Vik, last
5 name V-i-k. I'm a resident of Puget Island. 57 years I've
6 lived there. I live on a waterfront lot on East Sunny
7 Sands, what used to be your disposal site, river mile
8 43.8. This is a piece of property that -- a piece of a
9 farm that my granddad purchased in 1913 and before the
10 island was diked. I also owned 15 acres of the Vik
11 property that you have your eye on for upland disposal
12 site.

13 Over the years, I have seen a number
14 of problems with ship wakes, erosion, damage to moorage
15 facilities, that kind of thing. And there has been
16 difficulty in collecting for any kind of liability on
17 these things, whether it be a catastrophic type of event
18 or it be the normal wear and tear that each ship goes by
19 and causes you 10 cents in damage. And we're told that
20 each ship is responsible -- ship owner is responsible for
21 the wake damage that the ship might cause. How do you
22 collect 10 cents from a ship owner? So then over the
23 years, we've seen beach nourishment and the land that I
24 have has been protected by beach nourishment. And the
25 Ohrberg beach property on the area on the lower end of

1 Puget Island and the river fronts on the Oregon side
2 across from us there, a little grove, those kinds of
3 places, and we have come to feel that -- that -- I know
4 that the reason that the sand was put there was not to
5 protect us, but we have felt that is a form of protection
6 and we have -- we have been happy with it. And when this
7 43-foot channel project was proposed, we thought that now
8 we're going to get sand. They're going to have to have a
9 place to put the sand. We were shocked to find out that
10 that's not part of the proposal for a number of reasons.
11 And this is what we would like to have is some sand. Not
12 every year, but maybe every five, six, eight years, ten
13 years, something like that.

14 Now, the -- Kent Martin mentions about
15 salmon in the deeper parts of the river. Kent was a year
16 ahead of me in school back in the '60's back in high
17 school. And we were yelling at our kids and among the
18 yelling at your kids, if your dad had a drift right in the
19 slim drift in the Skamokawa -- that was 90 feet deep in
20 those days -- you were at the top of the heap. But my dad
21 didn't have a drift right there.

22 So the -- another kind of amusing
23 thing I noticed in the -- in the supplemental impact
24 statement was that there will be no ocean dumping in
25 Wahkiakum County and I was certainly relieved to learn

1 that.

2 Anyway, the matter of liability is my
3 main concern. Nothing has changed in the -- in the
4 supplement. And I've written a lot of letters, been to a
5 lot of meetings, spoke at these hearings, and you've made
6 it easy because all I have to do for written comments is
7 the letters are in the computer. We'll change the dates
8 and send them in because -- the comments are still valid.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

11 Vinton Erickson, Warren Banks and then
12 J. Michael Zachary.

13 MR. ERICKSON: Good evening, Colonel
14 and ladies. My name is Vinton Erickson spelled
15 E-r-i-c-k-s-o-n. I'm a farmer in Vancouver, Washington.
16 I am representing the Washington State Farm Bureau here
17 tonight. I'm also, for what it's worth, a county
18 president for Clark and Cowlitz County Farm Bureau. I'd
19 like to speak on a positive note. I think most everything
20 here has been very positive and I don't need to rehash
21 everything that's been said. A few negative words, but I
22 guess you have to have some of that.

23 I guess my major concern would be if
24 we -- and I've lived here 73 years myself in the same
25 house. I guess I haven't gone too far, though I worked

1 for Uncle Sam for a couple years during Korea time. But I
2 guess I'm very concerned, though, that transportation has
3 changed a lot over the years. In other words, the horse
4 and buggy thing to the trucks or the ships on the -- in
5 the water. And whether -- if we still stay back in the
6 horse and buggy days, we're going to go nowhere. And it's
7 very important, I think, to use the transportation that we
8 have on the Columbia River. Right now we -- you know,
9 we're losing some big ships. And it seems kind of stupid
10 to think that in the world travel today in shipping that
11 the big ships can't come in -- come in on the Columbia
12 River, which is one of the major rivers that we have on
13 the West Coast, that they can't come in and fill up
14 completely. And to think of all the extra things that have
15 to be done to go to the next port, have to go to Seattle
16 or wherever, San Francisco or wherever they have to go to,
17 you can almost relate that to a trucker going across
18 country. He could have a Tallase Ford (phonetic) or if he
19 has a big rig. He gets to the site and he comes back and
20 they say, "I can't give you a full load. You'll have to
21 go 500 miles to the south to finish it out." It's about
22 -- to me, it's a no brainer what we're trying to do. I
23 know the port has worked hard on it and I know the work
24 you folks have done is great when we can make something of
25 it. I'd like to see it go ahead. Thank you.

1 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

2 Warren Banks, then J. Michael Zachary,
3 then Allen La Tourette.

4 MR. BANKS: Good evening, Colonel and
5 members of the Corps, staff. My name is Warren Banks.
6 I'm the Executive Director of the Columbia River bar
7 pilots, an organization of 20 Columbia River bar pilots,
8 and I'm speaking on their behalf.

9 Since 1846, the Columbia River bar
10 pilots have been an integral part of the river highway
11 known as the Columbia River. The river is a key part of
12 the transportation infrastructure in the region and points
13 east. The ships have grown in size and draft. The
14 Columbia River has been deepened over the years in order
15 to maintain the economic viability of the businesses and
16 individuals who depend upon it. We are now at another
17 crossroads. In order to maintain the competitiveness of
18 the Columbia River for all its commercial users, the
19 channel must be deepened 43 feet. In our view, not to do
20 so would erode the ability of the Columbia River to offer
21 competitive transportation to its users. This would have
22 a negative economic ripple effect on the region that is
23 nearly impossible to calculate.

24 Two illustrations come readily to
25 mind. First, some ships will not -- will find it not

1 economically feasible to call on Columbia River ports as
2 they will not be able to utilize their capacities.
3 Indeed, this is happening to some extent now. And river
4 infrastructure has exhausted its nonstructural
5 alternatives. Secondly, as fewer ships call on the
6 Columbia River ports, the cost of doing so will be spread
7 out over fewer ships thus making alternative ports a more
8 competitive option.

9 Washington is the most trade dependent
10 state and Oregon ranks sixth as the most trade dependent
11 state in the country. Thousands of businesses in our
12 region rely on the Columbia River system for international
13 trade. The Columbia River is highly important to many
14 parts of Washington state, Oregon, Idaho and other states
15 as well. It is no accident that the Columbia River is the
16 number two green -- excuse me -- exporting highway in the
17 world.

18 Obviously, of concern to us is the
19 protection of the environment and ecosystems. Our job is
20 to pilot ships in a safe, efficient and reliable manner.
21 Safety includes protection of the environment. We are not
22 experts in the types of environment and ecosystem
23 discussions which have surrounded this project. However,
24 we support all efforts that would resolve all outstanding
25 environment and ecosystem issues.

1 It appears that by law, the cost
2 benefit study conducted by the Corps is conservative in
3 both costs and benefits. For example, it does not take
4 into consideration a multi-port analysis. Among other
5 things, such a study takes into account the additional
6 cost a current shipper would incur if the shipper did not
7 have access to the Columbia River highway. These benefits
8 are not in the current cost benefit analysis done by the
9 Corps. Nor does the analysis take into consideration the
10 additional cost to be borne by the shipper or recipient of
11 goods if it has to add additional days on to a schedule to
12 get a product to or from a port not on the Columbia River.

13 In summary, we view the channel
14 deepening project as critical to the continuing viability
15 of large scale maritime commerce on the river which enable
16 shippers and importers to get their goods to market in a
17 manner which allows them to be competitive.

18 Thank you for this opportunity to be
19 here tonight.

20 MS. ABEL: Thank you.

21 J. Michael Zachary, then Allen La
22 Tourrette and then Dave Hunt.

23 MR. ZACHARY: Good evening. My name
24 is Mike Zachary, Z-a-c-h-a-r-y.

25 In last week's journal "Commerce

1 Weekly," it discussed the coming of the 10,000 to 12,000
2 TVU -- that's 20-foot equivalent -- vessel coming on
3 board. While the probability of this size vessel plying
4 the Columbia is remote, the cascading effect that these
5 vessels will have in the world's container fleet will have
6 a significant impact on the ports of the Lower Columbia
7 River.

8 I've been earning my living in
9 maritime industry for more than 20 years as an engineer
10 and as a consultant. I've been directly responsible for
11 more than 62 strategic master plans for deep water ports
12 throughout the world. I've designed, constructed and
13 provided operational analysis of more than 300 maritime
14 terminals worldwide. Every one of those terminals require
15 not only road and rail access but also water access, the
16 three legs of the tripod.

17 The deepening of the Columbia should
18 be no different than the dredging required for the Port of
19 New York/New Jersey, the Port of Oakland, the Port of
20 Houston, the Port of Miami or any port in the United
21 States that is serving as a maritime facility for the
22 movement of cargo and people. The fact of the matter is
23 the fleet of container vessels and the bulk vessel fleet
24 is growing in terms of size of the vessel. As the 5,000
25 to 7,000 TVU vessels come online, they, in fact, replace

1 the smaller 3500 to 5,000 TVU vessels on the same route.
2 These vessels will, in turn, replace the smaller vessels
3 presently calling on the ports of the Lower Columbia
4 River. The same holds true for both vessels as we heard
5 about the grain. This cascading effect is with which I
6 open my comments. I also concur with the bar -- excuse me
7 -- the river pilots -- the captain's comments that if the
8 ships aren't able to cascade, you will get the second and
9 third tier level ships.

10 Point, the larger vessels require
11 deeper channels. Cargo is like water. It will flow to
12 the Port of least resistance. At this point in time, it
13 is easier for cargo to flow to Seattle, Tacoma, Oakland or
14 the San Pedro Bay ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.
15 Both the containerized cargo increasing at an annual
16 growth rate in excess of 7 percent and containerizable
17 cargo -- that is cargo that didn't use containers in the
18 past but now does -- that's increasing at 4 or 5 percent
19 per year. It won't be long before all these ports have
20 reached a capacity and the least resistible path will be
21 the Columbia River.

22 A good example: What's happening in
23 the Port of New York and New Jersey and the Port of Long
24 Beach? They're going to spend more than \$2 billion to
25 raise two bridges to do nothing more than allow the bigger

1 vessels transit their ports. As taxpayers, that's your
2 money and it's my money. I would just as soon see my tax
3 dollars spent here at home to protect my ports from
4 becoming obsolete.

5 Another good example, the Port of San
6 Francisco was in the early 1970's the largest container
7 port on the West Coast. In 1998, it did not move one
8 single loaded container. Two of the three legs of the
9 tripod, the highway and rail access legs, were deemed
10 inadequate by the maritime community and the port couldn't
11 do anything and the cargo disappeared. Please, don't let
12 that happen to the water access leg to the Lower Columbia
13 ports. Without that access, needing a deeper channel, the
14 cargo that moves to the Lower Columbia will go elsewhere
15 and our ports will die.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. ABEL: We only have two more
18 people left to speak, so we're going to go ahead and
19 complete that.

20 Allen La Tourette and then Dave hunt.

21 MR. LA TOURETTE: Hello. My name is
22 Allen La Tourette, L-a T-o-u-r-r-e-t-t-e, and I represent
23 Steelscape. We're located on the north Port of Kalama.
24 It's been mentioned a few times -- Mike -- that's the one
25 where the ship crashed into the dock there.

1 Some of the comments earlier by the
2 river pilots representative and Mr. Sprague, Steelscape
3 and myself, we support the deepening of the channel and
4 for the various reasons. One, we do care about our
5 people, our community, environment and, utmost, we pride
6 ourselves on safety. And I've been aboard a few of these
7 older ships and, believe me, they're not very safe. And
8 we talked about some of the environmental impacts should
9 something go awry at the wrong time in one of those
10 vessels. I think the environmental impact would be far
11 greater than anything that we can imagine and the risks
12 are very great there. The newer ships definitely are
13 safer, more efficient. It's going to be vital to the
14 future of the economy here 10, 15 years down the road as
15 these older ships are retired. We won't have any other
16 options but to provide for these larger ships to come
17 through and that's -- the trickle down economy is just
18 tremendous.

19 We recently purchased a facility in
20 the bay area in Richmond, California and we operate
21 another facility out of Rancho Cucamonga in Southern
22 California. I'm the transportation manager and I have to
23 deal with moving product in and out of those facilities
24 and infrastructures to support the shipping is reaching
25 capacity there. This is a prime opportunity and a local

1 community that can support that and we can take advantage
2 of it. And as long as we can do that and minimize any
3 negative impacts, we're in support of it.

4 That's all I have. Thanks. MS. ABEL:
5 Thank you. Dave Hunt.

6 MR. HUNT: My name is Dave Hunt. I
7 serve as the Executive Director of the Columbia River
8 Channel Coalition and I have a letter that was passed on
9 to us by someone who couldn't be here tonight, the
10 President of the Washington State Labor Council. I'll
11 just read part of that and then I'll submit the full thing
12 into the record for your use. It's from Rick Bender, the
13 President of the Washington State Labor Council.

14 "On behalf of the Washington State
15 Labor Council and its 450,000 affiliated union members, I
16 want to thank you for providing this opportunity to
17 comment on the Draft Supplemental Feasibility Report and
18 EIS for the Columbia River channel deepening project.
19 It's vitally important to the economic and environmental
20 health of our region. At this point it is clear that this
21 project can and should move forward in order to benefit
22 the Columbia River's economy and environment. The
23 Columbia River navigation channel must be deepened in
24 order to maintain the vitality of the transportation route
25 and our region's trade based economy particularly during

1 these difficult economic times. This project has broad
2 base support from labor unions. Over 40,000 local family
3 wage jobs are dependent on and another 59,000 Northwest
4 jobs are positively influenced by Columbia River maritime
5 commerce. I urge you to complete the necessary steps to
6 insure that the Columbia River channel deepening project
7 moves forward so that we all may begin to realize the
8 benefits of its completion."

9 Since the card is not up, though, I
10 thought I also might take this opportunity to really
11 clarify several issues on the public record that have come
12 up tonight because I think it's important that we have
13 clarity on these issues as you move forward.

14 First of all, the concerns that have
15 been raised related to fewer jobs. If there was any
16 potential of fewer jobs, this project would not be so
17 strongly supported by the Washington State Labor Council
18 and the Oregon AFL-CIO. I think that is self-evident,
19 that that concern is just not founded. In terms of the
20 lack of concern for the lower river, I think there has
21 been a lot of concern. And at one point it was stated on
22 the public record that there is no concern for anything
23 that is down river from Longview. Clearly, there are
24 challenges related to lack of rail, lack of freeway, lack
25 of land that is developable in some lower communities, but

1 I think if you just look at the work that has been done by
2 the Corps, by the services, by the port sponsors, by
3 elected officials like some of those represented here
4 tonight in Senator Patty Murray and Congressmen Brian
5 Baird, there has been a clear commitment to address
6 concerns in the lower river. One concern that was raised
7 was that there is not money set aside next year for Benson
8 Beach. And, in fact, I think it's important to note that
9 the Senate has passed an appropriations bill that -- the
10 appropriations committee has funding. To do a second year
11 of demonstration project at Benson Beach would be strongly
12 supported. But additional work on Puget Island and with
13 the lower port communities and with the three ports on the
14 Oregon side working together, I think there is a clearly
15 demonstrated concern for lower river concerns, even when
16 they really have nothing to do with channel deepening in
17 many cases.

18 Concern about the Willamette being
19 part of this project, I think it needs to be clearly
20 stated on the record that the Willamette River is not
21 funded, is not permitted, and those -- the funds are not
22 being sought and the permits are not being sought. This
23 is about the Columbia River.

24 Concern raised about ocean disposal
25 still being in the project. I think it is also important

1 to note on the record, as we read the supplemental report,
2 that ocean disposal is eliminated. Ocean disposal for
3 construction of this project is eliminated if this
4 proposal moved forward as it is in the supplemental
5 report. And we are very supportive of that and
6 appreciative of the good work of the Corps and the
7 services to make that happen.

8 Concern that this project won't
9 happen. I think the exact opposite is clear. Huge
10 progress has been made through this supplemental report
11 and other ways. Concerns have been addressed and the
12 construction of this project is clearly warranted at this
13 point and clearly in sight.

14 Concern about lack of time to comment
15 on this project. I think -- I really appreciate that the
16 Corps bent over backwards. I think I'm correct in saying
17 that you proactively extended what's normally a 45-day
18 comment period into 60 days. And I think that was wise
19 since this is an important project, but that -- I think
20 that provides lots of adequate time to comment.

21 The final comment I would make is I
22 think this really is a choice for us: Are we going to
23 move forward or are we going to fall back? And if you
24 look at every element of this project, whether it's
25 related to cost effective transportation, whether it's

1 related to access of businesses, access for products,
2 whether it's related to jobs, whether it's related to
3 accessing federal dollars in sort of economic development
4 in our region, and whether it's related to ecosystem
5 restoration, none of those will occur unless this project
6 goes forward. And in order to really continue moving
7 forward, we need this project. If we don't have it, then
8 every one of those areas, trade, business, development,
9 jobs, access to Federal money and ecosystem restoration,
10 we're going to fall back. And so our coalition would
11 certainly encourage you to keep moving forward.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. ABEL: Thank you. We've come to
14 the end of the list of the people who signed up for oral
15 testimony tonight. I want to thank you all for your
16 thoughtful comments here and I want to turn the meeting
17 back over to Colonel Hobernicht.

18 COLONEL HOBERNICHT: Well, I want to
19 thank you all for coming and I know you're all busy. It's
20 getting late here, 8 o'clock, so this concludes the
21 meeting. Thanks for coming.

22 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
23 concluded at 8:00 p.m.)

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COLUMBIA RIVER CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

-- REVISED --

DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL INTEGRATED FEASIBILITY REPORT
AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Public Hearing
September 10, 2002
Astoria, Oregon

-- -- --

1 ASTORIA, OREGON;
2 TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2002
3 6:04 P.M.

4 .
5 COLONEL HOBERNICHT: Thank you for
6 coming today. My name is Richard Hobernicht. I'm the new
7 district engineer for the Portland District, U.S. Army
8 Corps of Engineers. This is our second visit to the lower
9 river since the beginning of this process. I recognize
10 some of you from our Warrenton meeting in July. For those
11 of you I have not met, please take a moment later to
12 introduce yourself. I'm looking forward to visiting each
13 of the communities on the lower river in the weeks and
14 months to come. This public hearing, like the one last
15 week in Longview, will be run with the aid of a
16 professional moderator. I will have some introductory
17 remarks in a few minutes, but at this time I'd like to
18 turn the meeting over to Charles Wiggins to get us
19 started.

 MR. WIGGINS: Hi. My name
20 is Charles Wiggins. And thanks very much for coming to
21 this public meeting. I'm a professional mediator and
22 facilitator and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has asked
23 me to be the moderator for tonight's meeting. I'm not a
24 staff member of any agency. I don't have any interest in
25 the outcome today. My only concern is that we run a fair

1 and impartial hearing -- meeting tonight so that all of
2 you will have the opportunity to hear from the Corps of
3 Engineers about their proposal and, more importantly, for
4 them to hear from you about your comments regarding this
5 particular project. I know you have many opinions and
6 many important points to make and I want to assure you
7 that we'll provide the best process possible so you can
8 make those points heard to government officials.

9 Let me make sure that we're all at the
10 right place. This is a place in which the Army Corps of
11 Engineers is going to give an overview of the status of
12 the proposed Columbia River Channel Improvement Project
13 and to listen to what you say about that, so if that's not
14 why you're here, you might want to think about where you
15 should be. If that is what you want to do, then you're
16 certainly in the right place.

17 We're going to give you an opportunity
18 first to hear briefly from the Corps of Engineers about
19 the status of the improvements to the existing 40-foot
20 Columbia River Federal navigation channel and also the
21 document that's being prepared -- it's called the Draft
22 Supplemental Integrated Feasibility Report and
23 Environmental Impact Statement. They have prepared this
24 and hope that you will feel free to give your comments
25 both orally and in writing should you choose to do so.

1 All of your oral testimony will be transcribed by our
2 court reporter and will be made a part of the record here.
3 If you're providing written comments, you can either leave
4 them at the back of the room -- they will be collected at
5 that time -- or you can submit them to the Army Corps of
6 Engineers. I believe there's an address where you can
7 submit that in the materials for today. And if not, you
8 can talk to anyone from the Army Corps and get the address
9 of where you can submit those materials. The materials
10 will be accepted by the Corps at any time through
11 September 15th, any time through September 15th. So you
12 have some time after tonight's hearing to prepare written
13 materials and submit them, if you'd like.

14 Let me suggest just a couple of
15 administrative details. We're going to start today with
16 some brief comments from Colonel Richard Hobernicht.
17 You've already met him. He's the district engineer for
18 the Portland District, which we're in now, of the U.S.
19 Army Corps of Engineers. And then he's going to introduce
20 Laura Hicks, who is on the Army Corps staff, to give you a
21 brief presentation about where we are and what the status
22 is of this project right now.

23 We've scheduled this meeting to end at
24 9 o'clock. We have this room until 9 o'clock, so that's
25 our deadline. Each individual who would like to speak

1 will be given five minutes to make your comments to the
2 panel of Army Corps representatives here. We'll probably
3 take a break at some time to give everybody a chance to
4 stretch or do whatever else you need to do and then we'll
5 resume back here. There is a drop off box, I guess, at
6 the back for written comments.

7 Let me discuss just several ground
8 rules for this meeting that I'd like to have adhered to.
9 It's been my experience that meetings run well and you get
10 heard and the Army Corps will have the opportunity to
11 listen if we follow these and so I'd ask for your -- for
12 your participation. First, people will be called upon to
13 give written testimony in the order in which you signed up
14 on the sheets that were outside. If anybody in here would
15 like to give written -- or oral testimony, you can do so
16 at any time before the conclusion of the -- of the
17 session. Go out, sign your name on the list and you'll be
18 -- you'll be heard in the order in which you signed up.
19 If there are any elected public officials in the room,
20 they'll be recognized first. I don't know whether there
21 are. If you would identify yourselves -- if there is one
22 and you want to speak now, that's great. Otherwise, we'll
23 take everyone in order.

24 Ground rule number two: My hope is
25 that everyone will treat one another with respect. It's

1 clear that we have divergent opinions about this
2 particular subject. We're -- I'm hopeful that we'll
3 recognize the right of everyone to their opinions and to
4 be heard. So in order to do that, I'd recommend that we
5 try to keep side conversations and comments to a minimum.
6 One of the things that's tricky in this room is that
7 there's no microphone and our court reporter will struggle
8 if there's a lot of noise in the room. We want to make
9 sure that she gets the material down verbatim and I'd like
10 to make sure that I run a meeting that's as fair to all of
11 you as is possible.

12 I'll call three names and that will be
13 the first person to speak, the second person to speak and
14 the third person to speak. If you'd form a line right
15 about here so we have three people, one speaking and two
16 ready to go, it would really expedite this as much as
17 possible.

18 Remember too today that we're not
19 after a consensus. We're not going to take a vote. This
20 is a meeting in which you're being given an opportunity to
21 speak to the Corps about matters that we know are
22 important to you and important for the Corps to hear as
23 well, so please respect that opportunity that all of us
24 have. Because of time constraints and because of the
25 structure of this meeting, there will be no responses to

1 the direct public testimony. The responses will be
2 reflected in the final report that will be issued. Five
3 minutes is the time limit. That time is your own. You
4 can't -- this is not the British Parliament, so you can't
5 give your time to anyone else. Everyone in the room who
6 wishes to speak will have five minutes. And if you're
7 speaking as the representative of a group, we would
8 appreciate it if you would identify that group. And
9 there's no double dipping, so you can't speak for five
10 minutes as the representative of a group and then come
11 back and speak as an individual, if you would, please.

12 So what will happen to all of your
13 comments? The Corps will review the comments that are
14 submitted in writing. It will review the transcripts from
15 the public testimony. They'll consider all of the
16 information that you give for the improvement of the
17 Columbia River Federal navigation channel, specifically
18 the Draft Supplemental Integrated Feasibility Report and
19 Environmental Impact Statement, and then it will issue its
20 findings, including all of your comments, as a part of the
21 final record of decision. Let me run through just a
22 couple of administrative details and then turn the meeting
23 back over to Colonel Hobernicht, if I could.

24 The bathrooms are located directly
25 across the hall. There's a -- there's an open doorway.

1 And if you go through there, the bathrooms are to your
2 left and to your right. I really appreciate all of you
3 coming. This is an important meeting and I hope that we
4 will all learn a lot from it. I'd like to now ask Colonel
5 Hobernicht to make some initial remarks.

6 COLONEL HOBERNICHT: A lot of people
7 just came in in the last five minutes. We have plenty of
8 seats up here, so please come on up. Take a seat.

9 Tonight we're here to exchange
10 information with you about the Columbia River Channel
11 Improvement Project and take your formal testimony on the
12 project. As you are probably aware, the Corps just
13 completed a revised and economic analysis for the project
14 and added several new environmental restoration
15 components. This was contained in the supplemental
16 project report that we released earlier this month. I'd
17 like to point out that this is a draft report and over the
18 60-day comment period, we've asked you to share with us
19 your thoughts about this report. Your comments are
20 important to us and we will review them all. If you have
21 information you know or feel we have missed, please let us
22 know before September 15th so we can consider it before we
23 make this report final.

24 Around the room, you will find
25 representatives from the states of Oregon and Washington.

1 Please raise your hand. States of Oregon and Washington
2 back there. Is NOA Fisheries here? U.S. Fish and
3 Wildlife just stepped out. U.S. Fish and Wildlife
4 Services, port sponsors and the Corps of Engineers.
5 Please talk to the agency representatives here tonight to
6 understand how we've gotten to where we are today and
7 where we still need to go in the weeks and months to come.

8 In addition to the oral testimony that
9 will be captured by the court reporter, we'll accept your
10 written comments, if you prepared any. There's a box.
11 Where is the box? Matt's going to get the box. It will
12 be near the door for you to place them in. Matt has the
13 box back there. That's Matt with the box right behind
14 you.

15 This is the last of three public
16 hearings we scheduled in response to the draft
17 supplemental report. In addition to this session, two
18 more public hearings were scheduled along the lower river.
19 The first public hearing was held in Vancouver on July
20 31st. The second hearing was held in Longview on
21 September 5th.

22 With that, I would again like to thank
23 you for coming out tonight. I know each of you is busy
24 and I appreciate you taking the time to participate in
25 this process. I will be here through the entire session.

1 Feel free to come up and talk with me after we've
2 completed taking testimony or during the breaks. If you
3 have a question I cannot answer, I will get you in touch
4 with the right person to make sure you get your question
5 answered tonight.

6 Before we begin taking your testimony,
7 I'd like to introduce two people off to my left, Laura
8 Hicks and then Marci Cook. Marci is a member of my
9 environmental resources staff and is responsible for
10 ensuring this project meets the requirements of the
11 National Environmental Policy Act. Laura is the project
12 manager for the Columbia River Channel Improvement
13 Project. She has a short presentation before we get
14 started.

15 Laura.

16 MS. HICKS: Thanks, Colonel.

17 Can you guys all hear me? I'm going
18 to advance the slides from here and speak, if you don't
19 mind.

20 As the Colonel said and as many of you
21 know, this project starts at river mouth three on the
22 Columbia River, goes all the way to the Portland-Vancouver
23 area, river mile 106.5. It also includes the first 12
24 miles on the Willamette River. This project has been
25 authorized in the Water Resource Development Act of 1999.

1 The Willamette portion of the river is being deferred
2 until the Super Fund clean up actions are basically
3 understood and that the Corps understands what the region
4 would like to do with the contaminated sediments in the
5 Willamette and until we know what a proper disposal plan
6 would look like. So that portion is kind of tabled for
7 now. The construction is deferred and this is very much
8 just focusing on the Columbia River portion.

9 Every project with the Corps that
10 starts has to have a congressional study resolution. We
11 received ours in August of 1989. With that, the Corps was
12 directed by Congress to look at the feasibility of
13 deepening the Columbia River, to report back to Congress
14 within one year with our findings and whether or not it's
15 within the federal interest to continue into what we term
16 a feasibility study. The Corps completed our recon in one
17 year. We moved into a feasibility study. That's this
18 thing that we're looking at today. We did that in April
19 of 1994. We produced a draft feasibility report and EIS.
20 The first time we came out and did these public meetings,
21 we were doing them in the Portland area, Longview and out
22 here. We did them in October of 1998. We came back out
23 with a final feasibility report in August of 1999. We
24 sought Oregon Coastal Zone Management consistency. We
25 received a biological opinion from U.S. Fish and Wildlife

1 and National Marine Fishery Service in December of 1999.

2 The Corps then had the pieces
3 necessary to complete a Chief of Engineer's report and
4 receive our authorization. The following year in August,
5 National Marine Fisheries Service had new information that
6 related to the endangered species on the Columbia,
7 including things like contaminants in fish tissue,
8 information on the velocity, bathymetry and flow
9 conditions for salmonids. They asked us if we could look
10 at that information, so in August of 2000, they withdrew
11 their biological opinion.

12 Following that, then we received
13 denials from both the state of Washington and the state of
14 Oregon for water quality. We, basically, then, had to go
15 back, reconsult with National Marine Fisheries Service.
16 We added U.S. Fish and Wildlife to the mix. And in
17 January of this year, then, we decided to supplement the
18 document that's out for public review. We also decided to
19 take the integrated feasibility report that conforms to
20 what the Corps needs to move forward through Congress and
21 the NEPA portion, the EIS, and also included all of the
22 information necessary to comply with the Washington State
23 Environmental Policy Act. That portion of what's in our
24 document is being head up by the Washington ports and the
25 Port of Longview is the lead agency for that.

1 So in May of this year, after about 18
2 months of reconsulting with National Marine Fisheries
3 Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, we received a new
4 biological opinion for aquatic species from both those
5 agencies for nonjeopardy opinions.

6 This kind of shows us the history of
7 the different times the Corps has come out and sought
8 public opinion, public testimony for our project. We
9 started with a scoping meeting in November of 1994. We
10 came out to the region, Portland, Longview and Astoria,
11 and we asked folks to look at this, what issues are
12 important, and we received information for our NEPA
13 document. We came back out in January of '97, November of
14 '98. We're here tonight to take your testimony, your
15 concerns as relates to the project.

16 And then we also tried something new
17 in this project where we hosted 17 environmental round
18 tables where we invited different stakeholder groups to
19 sit with us and talk about the different issues that
20 related to their particular interests. We've had salinity
21 workshops, wildlife mitigation workshops, and OSHA dredge
22 material working group meetings with resource agencies,
23 both Federal and State, and stakeholder groups.

24 As the Colonel said, we came out of
25 here in July -- July 29th to kind of just share

1 information, to try to address any concerns. What the
2 Corps has heard through all of these different public
3 meetings typically down here is that we don't respond,
4 we're not very proactive, so this time we designed the
5 public process to come out first when we release the
6 report, try to have one-on-one time, address any issues
7 and concerns, have staff down here to help discuss
8 different questions that you may have, and then today to
9 receive testimony. So this is more of a listening mode.
10 The Corps doesn't typically respond tonight.

11 We also had during the first week of
12 August a cost benefit technical panel that we convened.
13 And you probably all read with the Delaware River project
14 from our Philadelphia District concerns over cost
15 analysis, so we decided to put together a technical panel
16 comprised of four economists, four cost engineers type
17 people, and they reviewed all of the information that we
18 have that's in the document that's out for public review.
19 We received their findings and they were posted to our
20 website today, so the report from this panel is now
21 available if you go to the Corps' website. We're trying
22 to keep our processes transparent as possible. And so if
23 you look at the website, you'll see kind of the
24 information the panel came up with and how that panel was
25 convened and conducted.

1 As the Colonel said, our public
2 comments are going to end on the 12th of September. We've
3 now changed that to the 15th of September and so we'll
4 accept comments up to that date.

5 As most of you know, this project is
6 kind of dual purpose, if you will, and includes both
7 navigation improvement as well as ecosystem restoration.

8 And so what changed? In a nutshell,
9 the things that we think are noteworthy are -- we've done
10 since 1999, three years of data collection on smelt. We
11 worked in conjunction with ODFW and WDFW to do research
12 and data collection for us. We're in the midst of doing
13 three years now of data collection for white sturgeon as
14 it relates to some of our deep water areas. That will
15 probably be ongoing for sturgeon. We've done extensive
16 explorations within the Columbia River and looked at areas
17 that we thought were basalt areas that would have to be
18 blasted to be removed from the channel. After the
19 explorations, all but one area has been eliminated. Those
20 areas are all deeper than the dredging prisms, except at
21 Warrier Rock. We also went back and looked at our recent
22 typographic surveys and redid the quantity calculations
23 for the sandy material in the river and this time we used
24 December of '01, January of '02 typographic surveys. We
25 have additional information that sponsoring ports have

1 worked with with Pacific Engineering International and the
2 Corps has contracted with Patel (phonetic) to try to help
3 us get a better handle on Dungeness crab. We reconsulted
4 with the Federal agencies and as a result of that
5 reconsultation, we've added six additional ecosystem
6 restoration features to the project and researched
7 monitoring actions that go along with that and we've
8 revised the cost and the benefits for the project.

9 So when you compare the 1999 documents
10 to the documents that you all have and that you're
11 reviewing, basically, dredging volumes have dropped from
12 18.4 million cubic yards to 14.5. Basalt, as I said, has
13 been reduced from 173,000 yards to 50,000 cubic yards.
14 When we produced a report in 1999, we thought that there
15 was a potential for up to five different utility
16 relocations across the Columbia River from Oregon and
17 Washington and it's been confirmed from the utility owners
18 that none of those utilities will have to be relocated.
19 And as a result of redoing the cost, adding ecosystem
20 restoration and when you looked at NED costs and NED
21 benefits -- those are the ones attributable only to
22 navigation -- the cost went from 154 million in 1999 to
23 132, almost 133 today.

24 And then when you look at the benefits
25 that the Corps uses nationally to try to see where all of

1 the navigation projects kind of stack up across the
2 nation, which projects Congress would fund, which ones OMD
3 will appropriate funds for and go into the President's
4 budget, all of our districts across the nation use the
5 same criteria to do these analyses and under the NED
6 umbrella. So the NED benefits for our project have
7 dropped from \$28 million every year to 18.3 million. And
8 then, likewise, the benefit/cost ratio has been reduced
9 from 1.9 to 1.5. So when you look at, then, the total
10 project, that includes everything from the ecosystem
11 restoration -- not just navigation but just the total
12 picture, the total project costs have gone from 160.9 to
13 \$156 million.

14 So as part of the consultation with
15 National Marine Fisheries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the
16 first three projects on the left were those that were
17 included in the first go around in 1999. All of the
18 others were added as a result of this last consultation
19 that we had with National Marine Fisheries and Fish and
20 Wildlife. What the Corps tried to do this time was to
21 work more of an ecosystem approach with basically an
22 emphasis for the ESA. We looked at areas as it related to
23 function, form and value for those species and we tried to
24 be as site specific and identify areas throughout the
25 project where we would recommend restoration components.

1 Last time when we completed our biological assessment and
2 biological opinion, there was basically an agreement
3 between the Corps and National Marine Fisheries that said
4 the Corps would try to restore up to 4500 acres
5 independent of channel deepening in the lower river using
6 our other authorities. So this time we're starting over.
7 We tried to be site specific. We tried to identify areas
8 and it was not an emphasis on total acreage. We also
9 tried to put restoration projects on more publicly owned
10 lands so that we can make sure that there was an assurance
11 that those properties would be there when we're ready to
12 do the restoration.

13 Okay. So this represents pretty much
14 the lower river, the piece that most of you commented on
15 the last go around. In the middle, you can see the
16 Columbia River Federal navigation channel. The areas in
17 red are those areas that would be removed with the
18 deepening, taken down three feet, and the areas in blue
19 are those areas that are sufficiently deep and would not
20 require dredging. The last go around, the plan was to
21 dredge off the tops of each shoal in those areas in red
22 and take them to the deep water ocean disposal site.
23 Planned today, what's in the document, is to take that
24 same material from the areas in red, place it in a
25 temporary sump -- that's that area that's kind of a

1 goldish in color, number one -- during construction and
2 then pipeline the material from the temporary sump into
3 the area we call the Lois Island embayment. The goal
4 would be to create almost 400 acres of marsh shallow water
5 habitat. And the pipeline portion could only be done
6 during the end water work period, so between November and
7 February.

8 This is aerial photography of what
9 that area looks like in conjunction with the 1935 CREDDP
10 atlas. And so you can see that that area in 1935 had zero
11 minus six bathymetry, 12 feet of water, much shallower
12 than it is today. As a result of liberty vessels in World
13 War II, this area was dredged out to hold them and it was
14 taken down to between minus 18, minus 24, and this
15 bathymetry is taken from the 1982 CREDDP atlas.

16 So what the Corps did, we went back
17 out this year to confirm the bathymetry in that area and
18 you can see there's still some pretty deep areas in that
19 area and the whole goal would be to bring it back to what
20 it was back in '35.

21 The other piece that's new in here --
22 we had it in our draft document. We took it out for the
23 final. We're putting it back in after consulting with
24 NMFS and Fish and Wildlife -- is a series of five pile
25 dikes that would be placed between Miller Sands Island and

1 Pillar Rock. These areas would be used to create shallow
2 water habitat. They would be filled with the maintenance
3 of the 43-foot channel and so the most downstream end --
4 we would fill between pile dike one and two first. We
5 figured it would take up to three years to fill that area
6 up to where the historic bathymetry was. And then we'll
7 do a series of census information, sampling data
8 collection for fish and organisms to look at how well the
9 area recovers, what fish use is and how good that actually
10 works on the Columbia between pile dikes two and three.
11 And so it's thought that, then, if we use the Lois Island
12 embayment during construction of this area during the
13 first 10 years of operation and maintenance with the
14 43-foot channel, at that point we would take any other
15 material from years 11 on out to the deep water disposal
16 site. So that's what's in the document that you're
17 looking at today.

18 This kind of shows what that
19 Miller-Pillar area looks like when you compare the 1935
20 bathymetry with the 1982 bathymetry from the CREDDP atlas.
21 And that area is mostly, as fishermen know, deeper today
22 than it was and it's a pretty active erosion area.

23 Also, we've added Tenasillahe Island,
24 kind of a series of measures that we would take. The
25 first one would be what we're calling an interim measure.

1 Then we would work to see if we could delist Columbian
2 white-tailed deer and then we would go back to Tenasillahe
3 do some long-term measures. And I'll show you those.

4 Part of our channel deepening project
5 -- the sponsors, the ports in our case, are going to have
6 to buy part of Howard-Cottonwood Island for dredging
7 material disposal, so that area in yellow shows where we
8 placed dredge material. They're going to purchase the
9 entire island that is privately held -- it's a small
10 portion from DNR that they're going to buy -- all the
11 private land on the island and then the areas not used for
12 dredge material would be available for the reintroduction
13 of Columbia white-tailed deer. So the deer would be
14 airlifted over to the island with the goal of trying to
15 sustain three distinct populations with so many of each
16 one. And then if they're sustained, those deer could
17 actually be delisted from the Endangered Species List.

18 And so what the Corps would do for the
19 interim measure on Tenasillahe, we'd first go out, do a
20 hydraulic study, look at the sloughs and the drainage
21 within the island, look at them providing fish passage
22 through the island, and making sure that if there -- the
23 tidegates are open up that we don't interfere with the
24 management of the Columbian white-tailed deer. The
25 hydraulic survey shows that this can be doable if we work

1 then to retrofit the tidegates for fish passage. At the
2 same time, we're working to delist Columbian white-tailed
3 deer. Then we would come back to Tenasillahe and actually
4 breech the flood control dike around the island and open
5 that back up to help benefit fish as well as Columbian
6 white-tailed deer.

7 Another action that we added to the
8 project was trying to create riparian habitat at Bachelor
9 Slough, which is right in the Portland-Vancouver area near
10 the Richfield Wildlife Refuge. Here, after we test the
11 material within the slough, if it shows clean of
12 contamination, we would then use that silty material to be
13 placed upland within the refuge to try to create riparian
14 habitat that will also benefit the salmonids.

15 Okay. So the next step for the Corps
16 is that once we receive all of the oral and written
17 testimony, we'll work to respond to those comments. We'll
18 then produce a Final Integrated Feasibility Report and
19 Environmental Impact Statement. We're in the process of
20 seeking water quality certification from both states
21 again. We're also applying again for coastal zone
22 management consistency determination. When we receive
23 those pieces, we would then be able to produce a record of
24 decision on our NEPA document. And then we would see if
25 we could get our project then into the President's budget

1 for funding.

2 So that's basically in a nutshell
3 what's changed in the document. We'll start the public
4 testimony. I'm going to turn it back over to our
5 facilitator. And thank you all for coming.

6 MR. WIGGINS: Thanks, Laura.

7 Laura, could you give the reference to
8 the Corps' website for anyone who doesn't have it? Do you
9 know it right off the top of your head?

10 MS. HICKS: Matt can.

11 MR. RABE: It's on the handout.

12 MR. WIGGINS: It is on the handout?

13 Great.

14 Okay. I will call your names. I'll
15 call three now to come up in the order in which you signed
16 up to speak. I'll call the name of who's up, who's next
17 and who's third in line. I've asked the Corps to assign
18 someone to be a time keeper and that person is Mark
19 Sepulla (phonetic), who's sitting up here with me and our
20 court reporter. He will be working under my direction
21 this evening. He'll set the stopwatch for five minutes
22 when I tell you to start. When there is one minute left,
23 he'll hold up a card that tells you you have one minute,
24 looking very much like that card. And when your time is
25 up, he'll hold up a card that tells you your time is up,

1 very much like that card. I'll also be keeping an eye on
2 the time, as well as on your comments, but it allows me to
3 be more focused on what you all are saying to in this
4 testimony, so I'd appreciate it if you'd follow that. At
5 the end of your time, if Mark holds up the last card,
6 would you please finish your thought so that we can move
7 on. I'm hoping that we can do that so everybody will be
8 heard. Because the meeting is transcribed, I would ask
9 that everyone when you -- when it's your turn to speak, if
10 you would please state your name and spell your last name
11 so that we'll have an accurate record of it. And, also,
12 if you are representing an organization or an agency, if
13 you would disclose that as well. That would be
14 appreciated as well. We're now ready to
15 start public comment. Are there any elected public
16 officials that would like to speak at this time?

17 For those of you, by the way, in the
18 back, there are seats up here. We can bring seats back to
19 you or you can just stand where you are, whatever you'd
20 like to do.

21 COLONEL HOBERNICHT: We've got plenty
22 of seats up here. We're going to be up here for
23 two-and-a-half hours, so -- would you like a seat back
24 there?

25 MR. WIGGINS: Do you want seats back

1 there? Anybody want seats back there?

2 COLONEL HOBERNICHT: We've got plenty
3 of seats up here.

4 MR. WIGGINS: I'm a university
5 teacher, so I know nobody wants to sit in the front row.

6 Okay. Our speakers will start with
7 Warren Banks, followed by Bruce Holte, and then John
8 Westerholm. So if the three of you would come forward.
9 And, Mr. Banks, you're first, anywhere that's comfortable
10 for you right there.

11 Please, if I ask you to speak up,
12 don't take offense. We want to get this as accurately as
13 possible.

14 MR. BANKS: Good evening, Colonel and
15 members of the Corps staff. My name is Warren Banks,
16 B-a-n-k-s. I'm Executive Director of the Columbia River
17 bar pilots located here in Astoria. There are 20 bar
18 pilots, several of whom are here tonight.

19 Thank you for providing this
20 opportunity for public comment on the Draft Supplemental
21 Feasibility Report and EIS for the Columbia River Channel
22 Deepening Project. Since 1846, the Columbia River bar
23 pilots have been an integral part of the river highway
24 known as the Columbia River. The river is a key part of
25 the transportation infrastructure of the region and points

1 east. The Pacific Northwest economy is closely linked to
2 trade with the Pacific Rim as evidenced by Washington
3 being the most trade dependent state, with Oregon ranking
4 sixth in the nation. Thousands of businesses in our
5 region rely on the Columbia River system for international
6 and domestic trade. The Columbia draws its cargos from
7 many parts of Washington state, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and
8 other states in the Midwest as well. Importance of a more
9 competitive Columbia River system has far-ranging
10 ramifications.

11 We are now at another crossroads. In
12 order to maintain the competitiveness of the Columbia
13 River for all its commercial users, the channel must be
14 deepened to 43 feet as river infrastructure has exhausted
15 its nonstructural alternatives. Deepening will enable the
16 river to accommodate the larger fuel efficient ships that
17 increasingly dominate the world trade fleet. In our view,
18 not to deepen the river would erode the ability of the
19 Columbia River to offer competitive transportation to its
20 users. This would have a negative economic ripple effect
21 on the region that is nearly impossible to calculate.

22 Two illustrations come readily to
23 mind. First, some ships will find it not economically
24 feasible to call on Columbia River ports as they will not
25 be able to utilize their capacities. Indeed, this has

1 been happening to some extent now. For example, container
2 service is critical to our high value export-related
3 businesses. The reality of the main haul trade in the
4 Pacific Rim with our largest trading partners is that
5 we're serviced by ships between 3500 and 5,000 TEU
6 capacity, which are 900 plus feet long and have load
7 drafts between 42 and 46 feet. When the channel is
8 deepened, ships containing up to 6,000 TEU will be able to
9 call. Deepening will result in an estimated 20 percent
10 increase in capacity of many of the ships currently
11 calling and expand the numbers of those able to call.
12 This increase in capacity results in conservative per
13 container savings of 15 percent.

14 Similarly, the Pamex (phonetic) bulk
15 carriers that call on the Columbia River ports could be
16 loaded with another 6,000 tons or an increase of between
17 10 and 15 percent in capacity. This will reduce per ton
18 cost between 10 and 15 percent as well.

19 Currently, the 40-foot channel is
20 limiting our effectiveness to compete with the bulk cargos
21 in which we now have important market shares and is
22 limiting our ability to attract new cargos. Due to the
23 nature of the international charter market, which is a
24 very good example of supply and demand dynamics, if we can
25 make the river more economically productive for our

1 carriers, it should drive down current rates and make our
2 products more competitive in the international markets.
3 If we do not deepen the channel, as fewer ships call on
4 the Columbia River ports, the cost of not -- if doing so
5 would be spread out over fewer ships, thus making
6 alternative ports a more competitive option. Further,
7 newer ships, which are larger, would be unable to call.
8 And as aging vessels are taken out of service, there is a
9 real danger that the Columbia River will lose a great deal
10 of its service.

11 Obviously, of concern to us is the
12 protection of the environment and ecosystems. Our job is
13 to pilot ships in a safe, efficient, reliable manner.
14 Safety includes protection of the environment. We are not
15 experts in the types of environmental ecosystem
16 discussions which have surrounded this project. However,
17 we support all efforts that would resolve all outstanding
18 environment and ecosystem issues, many of which have been
19 resolved in this long process. It appears that by law,
20 the cost/benefit study conducted by the Corps is
21 conservative in both costs and benefits. For example, it
22 does not take into consideration a multi-Corps analysis.
23 Among other things, such a study takes into account the
24 additional costs a river shipper -- a current shipper
25 would incur if the shipper did not have access to the

1 Columbia River. These benefits are not in the current
2 cost/benefit study done by the Corps.

3 In summary, we view the channel
4 deepening project as critical to the continuing viability
5 of large scale maritime commerce on the river which
6 enables shippers and importers to get their goods to
7 market in a manner which allows them to be competitive. I
8 urge you to finalize this supplemental report and grant
9 the pending regulatory permits and record a decision to
10 move this important project to completion.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Banks.

13 Mr. Holte and then Mr. Westerholm and
14 then Mr. Wyatt.

15 MR. HOLTE: Excuse me. Pardon me.

16 I've got a cold.

17 My name is Bruce Holte, H-o-l-t-e.

18 I'm President of the International Longshore Warehouse
19 Union, Local 8, in Portland, Oregon.

20 Thank you for providing this chance
21 for public comments on the Draft Supplemental Feasibility
22 Report and EIS for the Columbia River Channel Deepening
23 Project, which is vitally important to the economics and
24 environmental health of our region. At the completion of
25 the biological opinion by the National Marine Fisheries

1 Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the
2 completion of this draft supplemental report, it is clear
3 that the project can and should move forward -- should
4 move forward to benefit the Columbia River's economy and
5 environment.

6 The channel deepening is important for
7 our economy. We must deepen the Columbia River
8 navigational channel from 40 to 43 feet to maintain the
9 vitality of this transportation route in our region's
10 trade based economics, especially during these difficult
11 economic times. Deepening the channel is critical to
12 transportation of the 14 billion in annual maritime cargo
13 and the sustaining businesses, farms and jobs in our
14 region. Deepening the channel will ensure that the
15 Columbia River can accommodate the larger fuel efficient
16 ships that increasingly dominate the world trade fleet.
17 This project has broad base support from businesses, labor
18 unions, farmers, ports and communities throughout the
19 Northwest. Over 40,000 local family wage jobs are
20 dependent on and another 59,000 Northwest jobs are
21 possibly influenced by Columbia maritime commerce. Please
22 state that in the note, 40,000 local families and 59,000
23 local jobs. Over 1,000 businesses rely on the Columbia to
24 transport products around the world. The vitality of
25 these jobs and businesses require cost effective maritime

1 transportation. Without a deeper channel, the farmers and
2 land businesses will be damaged and jobs lost.

3 As the supplemental report estimates,
4 the benefit to cost ratio for the project is strong with
5 18.3 million in annual national transportation savings. I
6 believe the estimate is one point -- the estimate of 1.46
7 benefit for the -- for every dollar in construction cost
8 required is quite conservative. The economic benefits are
9 large and diverse, rural, urban, east and west, Oregon and
10 Washington, throughout our entire region.

11 The Columbia River maritime commerce
12 provides \$208 million in state and local taxes that
13 benefits communities throughout our region. The channel
14 deepening is also important for our environment. This
15 project will require dredging just 54 percent of the
16 navigational channel or only 3.5 percent of the total
17 Columbia River between the mouth of Portland-Vancouver.
18 The remaining areas of the channel are already naturally
19 deeper than 43 feet.

20 An independent scientific panel was
21 convened last year to review the endangered questions.
22 The panel concluded that the deepening project will have
23 no -- will have no measurable negative effects on -- on
24 threatened and endangered fish in the river. The
25 biological opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries

1 and U.S. Fish and Wildlife also demonstrate the
2 environmental protections and benefits of this projects.

3 The channel deepening project will
4 benefit our economy and our environment. I urge you to
5 finalize the supplemental report and grant the pending
6 regulatory permits and record of decision to move this
7 important project to completion.

8 Thank you very much.

9 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Holte.

10 Mr. Westerholm, Mr. Wyatt and -- Mr.
11 Sundit? Is that correct, Mr. Sundit?

12 MR. SUNDIT: Yes.

13 MR. WIGGINS: Please, next.

14 MR. WESTERHOLM: Thank you Colonel and
15 project manager.

16 Well, here we are again. How many
17 times are we going to go through this process? There is a
18 better way, you know. It is called communication and
19 working together. All factions up and down the river are
20 given equal importance and representation, we would have
21 had this problem solved a long time ago.

22 What are we doing here? It is
23 important that mid and lower river activities be given
24 consideration. We are not all tied directly to the urban
25 area, although we realize, of course, its importance.

1 When is big big enough? When is deep deep enough?
2 Compromise can maintain the present infrastructure of our
3 Columbia River commerce system without destroying the
4 natural river and fish and wildlife any more than we
5 already have.

6 Are we going to leave something for
7 the future that is still wild and not completely changed
8 by man? The amended EIS on channel study does nothing to
9 add confidence to river people that we are being
10 considered. Let's give salmon and salmon people on the
11 Columbia River from Astoria to Portland, and don't forget
12 the mouth of the river as well, more reflection on this
13 critical issue. In its present form, the feasibility
14 report and the Environmental Impact Statement, I feel,
15 should be rejected.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr.

18 Westerholm.

19 Mr. Wyatt, Mr. Sundit and then Ms.

20 Manarino.

21 MS. MANARINO: Manarino. MR.

22 WIGGINS: Manarino.

23 MR. WYATT: Colonel, thank you very
24 much. My name is Bill Wyatt, W-y-a-t-t. I represent the
25 Port of Portland.

1 Thank you very much for the
2 opportunity to speak this evening about the draft
3 supplemental environmental impact statement on the
4 deepening of the Columbia River channel from 40 to 43
5 feet. This evening I'm speaking for the Port of Portland,
6 one of the six port authorities which support this
7 project. This is, indeed, a project which enjoys broad
8 regional support and which will benefit businesses,
9 farmers, ranchers and workers throughout the Northwest.
10 In my remarks this evening, I want to cover specifically
11 three areas. First, why should we do this project at all;
12 second, who will benefit; and, third, how to deal with
13 environmental impacts.

14 To anyone who has followed this
15 project, it does not come as a surprise that we have faced
16 the prospect of deepening the channel before. In fact,
17 the Port of Portland came into being in 1891 specifically
18 to create and maintain a 25-foot navigation channel. The
19 last time we deepened the channel was in the mid -- or,
20 rather, in the early 1970's when we deepened it from 35
21 feet to 40 feet. Then, as now, we deepened the channel
22 because we had to keep pace with the changing market and
23 technology of maritime commerce.

24 What if we hadn't? What if we decided
25 in the nation and the region that the expense was too

1 great, the return uncertain and the risk too large? What
2 if the channel remains at 40 feet instead of 43? We can't
3 predict the future, but the past, they say, is prologue.
4 If we had left the channel at 35 feet, it is likely there
5 would be no container service on the Columbia River and
6 anyone wanting to ship via container, whether it be French
7 fries or tennis shoes, would be shipping through Puget
8 Sound paying higher rates, creating more traffic and more
9 pollution. The river system would still have a lease but,
10 most likely, only the smaller vessels which still serve
11 Japan, which is about a third of the current export
12 business. Corn, soy beans, sorgum and barley likely would
13 not be coming down the Columbia at all but would be moving
14 through the Great Lakes and Gulf ports making products
15 produced in Eastern Oregon and Washington even more
16 expensive than they presently are. And, more importantly,
17 without the large volumes of boat cargo, such as wheat,
18 soda ash and pot ash, it's difficult to believe that the
19 railroads would have invested as much as they did in
20 regional rail capacity that is a benefit to all the
21 businesses in the region.

22 I make these points today because the
23 Corps is constrained in how they go about calculating
24 economic benefits. The Corps must look only at national
25 economic benefits and you must make assumptions based on

1 existing businesses, not what might happen in the future
2 and not based on the long-term consequences of leaving the
3 channel at its current depth. But we in the business of
4 international trade must necessarily view this project in
5 another light. Can we maintain affordable access to
6 international markets for regional shippers without
7 deepening the channel? The answer is a resounding no.
8 The maritime industry is moving to larger and larger
9 ships. We either accommodate that and maintain an
10 economically competitive service or accept a slow but
11 certainly decline in the availability and affordability of
12 access to international markets.

13 Secondly, let me touch on two
14 benefits. Certainly, the national economy benefits, but
15 here in the Northwest, all parts of our region benefit as
16 well. The Columbia basin benefits from a competitive
17 wheat business. The Willamette Valley benefits from an
18 agricultural sector with access to international markets.
19 The metropolitan economy benefits from the ability to
20 export finished goods. And the communities up and down
21 the river benefit from port jobs and from the businesses
22 that are served by deep draft ships such as U.S. Gypsum in
23 St. Helens. It's worth it to review the numbers. \$14
24 billion worth of goods flow up and down the Columbia River
25 each year. 40,000 jobs regionally depend on the maritime

1 industry, some of them here in Astoria. More than 1,000
2 companies rely on the Columbia River to transport their
3 goods. As good as those numbers are, they will grow if we
4 remain competitive.

5 Finally, let me touch upon the
6 environmental aspects of this project. The project will
7 ensure best management practices are used to minimize any
8 impacts to threatened or endangered species during
9 construction. The project will incorporate monitoring and
10 research components to contribute further information
11 toward the recovery of the endangered species in the
12 Columbia River. Adaptive management will be used to
13 provide flexibility in the management of the project and
14 to make modifications, if needed. And the project will go
15 above and beyond mere mitigation of its impacts to
16 actually restore and improve habitat all along the river,
17 but especially here in the Columbia River estuary.
18 Oregonians rightfully set a high bar when it comes to
19 making sure their public dollars are well spent and that
20 the environment is preserved. People demand that we not
21 put the environment at risk and this project doesn't.
22 People demand that it deliver value to the region's
23 taxpayers and it will. And, finally, we demand the
24 project of this river benefits not just to one industry or
25 one region but to a broad range of people and places.

1 Nothing we have seen or heard in the lengthy analysis of
2 this project changes that one key conclusion.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Wyatt.

5 Mr. Sundit, Miss Manarino and Mr.
6 Fratt will be third, please.

7 MR. SUNDIT: Colonel, my name is Lee
8 Sundit and I'm an officer with Longshore Local 8 in
9 Portland. And we represent about 650 longshoremen in the
10 Portland area. I'm also speaking for approximately 1500
11 longshoremen that work on the Columbia River here both on
12 the Washington side as well as the Oregon side. We
13 appreciate all the work that's been done. It's been a
14 long, long arduous road and we believe that where we are
15 right now is where we need to be. We think we satisfied
16 the environmental needs that need to be satisfied and we
17 -- we believe we should go forward with the report and
18 let's get on with dredging the river, so to speak.

19 In the last three years, I've also
20 served on our technology committee at the international
21 level. And that technology committee -- what we've done
22 over the three years is we've really studied shipping and
23 the impact that the future has with respect to the overall
24 industry. We collected data. We listened to -- we've
25 employed consulting firms who work in the industry of

1 terminal construction and vessel construction and listed
2 their forecast. And I'm here to say that the steamship
3 industry or ships drive the capital side or the terminal
4 side of the market. It's not the terminal side that
5 drives the ships. What we're seeing in the industry is
6 that for cotton and steel purposes, the vessels are
7 getting larger and larger. The shipping companies are
8 consolidating and they're merging and sharing space.
9 There's fewer and fewer -- what's happening is that, as a
10 consequence of that, the small ships over time are being
11 phased out.

12 Now, in Portland right now we have
13 three major steamship companies who call Portland. There
14 are a number of other steamship companies that do not call
15 Portland. If you're a shipper in Oregon or Washington or
16 along the Columbia River, you have an option -- because of
17 the competition involved, you have an option to ship out
18 of Portland or you have an option to ship, say, out of
19 Tacoma, Seattle or Oakland. Right now the transportation
20 to Seattle, Tacoma, Oakland is subsidized by the steamship
21 industry and it's subsidized because there is competition.
22 Now, if that competition were to dry up because the larger
23 vessels would be unable to call Portland, the steamship
24 people don't care. If they can't call Portland, they're
25 not going to build smaller ships to call Portland. They

1 will call -- dry up and take away the container business.
2 And what will happen is that somebody is going to go away.
3 The steamship people will not subsidize the cargo if they
4 don't have to subsidize the cargo. So the cost of doing
5 business in our area will increase, if that is the case.
6 Dredging is absolutely essential to make room for what's
7 happening in the steamship business relative to the size
8 of the ships. If we don't do it and you want to start a
9 business in Oregon, you want to maintain access to the
10 export market, you're not going to be able to be
11 competitive in business in Oregon or Washington or along
12 the Columbia River.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Sundit.

15 Miss Manarino, Mr. Fratt and Mr.

16 Burton will be next.

17 MS. MANARINO: Colonel, members of the
18 panel, thank you for the opportunity to hear comments from
19 the public.

20 My comments concern this project as a
21 taxpayer and the benefits to taxpayers. I'm very
22 concerned that the benefits of this dredging project have
23 been overstated. There was a congressional general
24 accounting office report recently on a similar project in
25 the Delaware River, 100 miles of dredging, and -- and the

1 report stated that the Corps overstated the annual benefit
2 by 67 percent. Actual benefits would be about \$13 million
3 less or less than half the cost of the annualized
4 dredging. This -- this was due to using things like
5 counting ships that were light loaded and could use the --
6 the channel as it was as though they had to be heavier
7 loaded and so that was the benefit. The "Oregonian"
8 stated in March that their analysis of this project would
9 yield 88 cents for every dollar spent. This -- this
10 doesn't seem to be of benefit to the taxpayers. The
11 shipping lines that -- that would benefit from this are
12 exempt from U.S. antitrust laws. They need to set rates.
13 There's no guarantee that if they can ship fuller, fewer
14 ships and realize a savings, that they will pass this on
15 to Oregon farmers, Washington farmers, Oregon exporters.
16 U.S. taxpayers would pay for the deepening of the river,
17 but the benefits are likely to go mostly to foreign
18 shipping corporations.

19 My other concern is that there's
20 already a fair amount of pollution in the Columbia River.
21 As a fish consumer, someone whose husband fishes, who
22 brings home fish, sturgeon, these fish are already under
23 an advisory. The Washington and Oregon health departments
24 in 1960 -- 1996 advised people to remove skin and fat
25 before eating white sturgeon caught in the Columbia River

1 because of the levels of PCB contamination. These PCB's
2 sink down. They're in the sediments. And dredging is
3 likely to stir them up, make them more available to fish
4 in the river. This doesn't mean that there won't be
5 sturgeon, but it may mean that the sturgeon are not
6 healthy to eat. And so those are among my reasons for my
7 opposition to this project.

8 Thank you very much.

9 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Miss
10 Manarino.

11 Mr. Fratt, Mr. Burton and Mr. Forey.

12 MR. FRATT: Colonel Hobernicht,
13 Project Manager Hicks and distinguished facilitator, my
14 name is John Fratt, F-r-a-t-t. I represent Port of
15 Vancouver, Washington, USA.

16 I have submitted -- my port has
17 submitted written testimony and I will not read that to
18 you here. I'll give you some observations, though.

19 On August 16th, 2002, the Adriatica
20 Graeca, a new ship designed for the grain trade, called at
21 the Port of Vancouver, USA. They loaded nearly 57,000
22 tons of grain, wheat. And I note for you that I wear an
23 Oregon wheat shirt, although I'm a Washingtonian because
24 wheat from Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana come down
25 the river to our two ports, to our three ports, to our

1 four ports. It comes down to our area and this is the
2 foundation upon which we base our marine trade. This
3 magnificent river with a 40-foot channel -- 40 feet is,
4 roughly, this ceiling three times to give you an idea.
5 This magnificent channel has allowed us to help the United
6 States government in its balance of trade problem, but
7 most of all, it helps the farmers, the grain growers.

8 Some facts for you. The number one
9 state in tonnage put through the state of Washington is
10 Nebraska. We, in the Pacific Northwest, are reaching into
11 the interland and we're doing it because this river, this
12 magnificent river, has a 40-foot channel, you know, three
13 times what this ceiling is. And what we're asking to do
14 is deepen that river by three feet, the existing channel.
15 We aren't dredging a new channel. We aren't proposing
16 that we do that. We are dredging the existing channel
17 three feet. And that's Columbia River sand. Out there in
18 that channel, that sand is course grain fine material.
19 It's not the fine that you get in the slick areas where
20 there might be contamination.

21 This is not a difficult project,
22 although I've been working on it actually since 1986,
23 before I met Laura Hicks. I've been working on this with
24 the ports to think through this, what is the best way to
25 go. We determined that three feet was what we needed.

1 The ship that called at the Port of
2 Vancouver left an additional 6,000 tons on the dock. That
3 was tonnage that could have gone on if we had a 43-foot
4 channel. In point of fact, in a commodity flow forecast
5 we're having what's called by the economists leakage.
6 We're losing products to British Columbia, to other areas.
7 We no longer have them in our market share. This is
8 something that needs to be done.

9 I have one minute left. I would like
10 you all to enjoy that minute going home earlier. I thank
11 you very much. The Port of Vancouver thanks you.

12 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Fratt.

13 Mr. Burton, Mr. Forey and Mr. -- is it
14 Weiss, W -- Paul --

15 MR. VIK: Vik.

16 MR. WIGGINS: Say it again, please.

17 MR. VIK: Vik, V-i-k.

18 MR. WIGGINS: Vik. Thank you very
19 much.

20 MR. BURTON: Colonel, staff and for
21 all of you, I would like to say thanks for allowing me to
22 speak. My name is Mike Burton. I am the Assistant
23 Director of the Oregon Economic and Community Development
24 Department. One of my roles is central policy development
25 and administration to ports. And in that role, I'm here

1 to speak to you about the Department's involvement related
2 to the channel deepening project.

3 The Department has been observing the
4 project since the beginning. I've been involved since
5 '99. The Department supports the project. The Department
6 supports particularly the cost/benefit analysis and our
7 understanding of the Supplemental Environmental Impact
8 Statement. The Department believes that if the
9 cost/benefit analysis is in error, it's in error
10 conservatively. Since this and the previous cost/benefit
11 analysis, although appear to look better, are both
12 snapshots in time. Between those two cost/benefit
13 analyses -- and I'm particularly speaking to the benefit
14 side of the equation -- I believe the benefit side is
15 understated because in between those two are two shipping
16 companies that announced their intent for -- and one did
17 pull out of shipping through the Columbia system. After
18 the second cost/benefit analysis was conducted, one of
19 those lines announced they will continue to serve the
20 Columbia market.

21 Additionally, the State feels that the
22 Corps could look at state benefits. That's of much
23 interest to us as well as the national benefit. I
24 understand that you can't, but the State believes that
25 there are benefits that aren't shown -- don't show in the

1 cost/benefit analysis that the State values. The State
2 supports the project for reasons you've all heard already.
3 I will submit my testimony in writing. I'm not going to
4 touch on most of those points. I would like to just cut
5 to the chase and say that for the reasons you've heard the
6 Department believes that without deepening the channel,
7 trade on the Columbia River is threatened, is likely to
8 diminish. That will have impacts on Oregon producers, the
9 Oregon economy and all of us as consumers because costs
10 will rise. We believe that it's in the interest of the
11 state of Oregon to see that the project commence and I
12 support you and your report in that effort.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Burton.

15 Mr. Forey, please, and then Mr. Vik
16 and Mr. Duyck. Is that correct? D-u-y-c-k.

17 MR. FOREY: I'm BJ Forey. I'm a land
18 owner on Puget Island at about mile 40 of the Columbia
19 River.

20 While I'm not totally against the
21 dredging deeper of the river, we need mitigation to the
22 erosion that continues. And we're feared that deepening
23 would only increase our amount of erosion and we need the
24 Corps and the State and the ports to help slow this down
25 since it benefits the ports to have a deeper channel. But

1 those of us who are property owners, are we to go away and
2 fall into the river for the ports or can they support us?
3 We have problems at mile 43 and we have problems at mile
4 40 and we have mile -- problems at mile 37 where we need
5 the help of the Corps of Engineers and the port on the
6 river.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Forey.

9 Mr. Vik and then Mr. Duyck and then
10 Mr. Beasley, please.

11 MR. VIK: My name is Paul Vik, last
12 name V-i-k, and I'm from Puget Island. I own waterfront
13 property, what used to be the beach nurseman side of mile
14 43.8. And I also own a little bit of the land that -- 200
15 acres that are slated for where you have your eye on for
16 an upland disposal site on Puget Island. And my initial
17 thought was that I wouldn't speak tonight. I started
18 attending meetings about this issue in January of '97 and
19 there are lots of people in this room who I know what I'm
20 whining about and they've heard it all, but I've been kind
21 of the lead loud mouth in this issue and people from Puget
22 Island -- there's people here from Puget Island. I got a
23 reputation to uphold, so --

24 I can make a good speech when I'm
25 upset. And I'm not upset anymore. I'm just kind of

1 disappointed, but -- I'm not abandoning my position, but
2 you asked what we thought back in '97. You had round
3 tables and hearings and comment periods. And over the
4 years, I've seen damage from ship wakes and both
5 catastrophic and daily wear and tear and the problems with
6 getting compensated for that sort of thing. Now, there's
7 4,000 ship calls a year above Puget Island at this time
8 and each one does 10 cents worth of damage as it drove by
9 there. If 2,000 ships go by twice, that's 4,000. You
10 have \$400 worth of damage a year. And how do you collect
11 that? They say we have to collect from the ship owner.
12 And how do you collect that? There's no way to do that.
13 And I look upon it as government subsidized hit and run.

14 Now, I have a little scenario here
15 that I think should be considered. I don't mean this as a
16 threat or a promise or anything, but you asked the river
17 pilot do you do -- why do you have to do 17 knots past
18 Puget Island, he will explain about hydrodynamic
19 characteristics and ship handling don't handle good at
20 slow speeds and so forth and I understand that. And there
21 may be pilots here who object to the 17 knot figure. But
22 as a kid, my dad had a Columbia River bow kicker much like
23 this one across the road over here that's selling fish and
24 chips. I'd run it between jetties. I timed it carefully
25 and I know it went 17 knots and, in those days, there were

1 ships I couldn't keep up with. And, incidentally, I made
2 that test one summer when my dad was in Alaska.

3 And now, then, if you asked him,
4 "Well, do you go 17 knots up the Willamette River?"

5 And they say, "Of course not."

6 "Well, why not?"

7 "Well, we're in a harbor."

8 "Well, how do you control it, then, if
9 you have control of the harbor?"

10 And they say, "We have tugs alongside
11 it."

12 Well, now, in light of the Rich
13 Passage Decision in the Washington State ferries, which
14 went in favor of the land owners, I'm afraid that if
15 something isn't done to compensate or repair the damage --
16 and in Puget Island, we are looking for beach nourishment
17 like you used to do. And not every year, but maybe every
18 five, six, eight, ten years -- somebody is going to go to
19 court and they're going to ask "Where does the harbor
20 start? Is there a legal definition of a harbor?" And it
21 might just happen that they rule that the harbor starts at
22 McKenzie Point (phonetic) and you start the tugs alongside
23 from down there. Now, I don't want that and I am not
24 really against the channel and I'm not insisting that the
25 ships even slow down at Puget Island. I just want the

1 damage repaired, so the beach nourishment will go along
2 way to placating my concerns on that. We have one man
3 here who spent a lot of money on -- he's here tonight. He
4 spent a lot of money on a sheet pile bulkhead. And
5 there's pilots here. You know where that is. And he used
6 to have sand rebuilt there every so often and it wasn't a
7 problem. Today the erosion is a major problem. So this
8 is what we're asking for.

9 We thought when the channel -- we
10 heard about this deeper channel, we thought "Oh, boy, now
11 we'll get it because -- get sand because they'll have to
12 have a place to put it." We found out there's no plans
13 for it. We hear that the NMFS doesn't approve of it. We
14 hear that it's expensive because it doesn't stay there and
15 it erodes away. We hear that they can't do anything on
16 private property, those kind of things. And so for
17 whatever reason, if we don't get -- get the problem taken
18 care of, I'm afraid somebody is going to take this to
19 court and I'm just wondering if you're prepared for that.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. WIGGINS: Thanks, Mr. Vik.

22 Mr. Duyck, Mr. Beasley and then Ms.
23 Caplan.

24 MS. CAPLAN: I'm not going to speak.
25 I'm Ms. Caplan.

1 MR. WIGGINS: Okay.

2 MR. DUYCK: My name is Tom Duyck. I'm
3 a farmer in the Willamette Valley here and I'm
4 representing the Oregon Wheat Growers League tonight.
5 Thank you, Colonel and everybody else for giving us the
6 opportunity to testify.

7 You must deepen the Columbia River
8 navigation channel 43 feet to keep the viability of our
9 transportation route of the region, the trade based
10 economy, especially during these difficult times. Over 40
11 percent of the grain that's exported in the U.S. is
12 currently going through the Columbia River channel or the
13 Port of Portland or Washington or Columbia River channel.
14 The deepening of the channel is critical. It creates, as
15 previous people testified, 14 billion in annual maritime
16 cargo that's being shipped here, so it's a viable trade
17 deficit that we have presently going on.

18 The project has broad base support
19 from businesses and labor unions, farmers, ports.
20 Everyone in the Northwest will benefit from the deepening
21 of the project. Viability of these jobs and businesses
22 require cost prospective maritime transportation. Farmers
23 and businesses will be damaged and jobs lost if we don't
24 make the channel deeper. You'll have less ships calling
25 the port because of that or, as previous persons

1 testified, that we'll have -- they won't be able to load
2 them or short loaded ships are going on now. Northwest
3 businesses and farms will have a regional economic
4 disadvantage if the project is not completed. It cannot
5 compete with the other ports. Economic benefits are large
6 and diverse. If we deepen it, rural and urban, east and
7 west, Oregon and Washington and throughout the region will
8 benefit, including Idaho, Montana, Colorado. Nebraska is
9 shipping stuff here now through the economic benefits of
10 the Pacific Rim, which is a major customer of things.
11 There's so much coming down the Lewiston with barge
12 traffic and rail and the Columbia River ports.

13 The project only requires dredging 54
14 percent of the navigation channel. The remainder of the
15 channel is already over 43 feet deep. The supplemental
16 reports on the project extensive environmental review is
17 important for mitigating both environmental impact and to
18 ensure that the river is better off than it is before.
19 Being in the ag. and natural resource industry, we try to
20 make our lands better than it was when we took it over to
21 try to improve it and try to improve the way of life,
22 because if we don't protect our land and the environment,
23 why -- the ag. and natural resource industry, why we
24 cannot make a viable living without protecting it, so
25 we're stewards of the land here and trying to protect the

1 ecosystem that's going on.

2 As they stated here, the estuaries of
3 the Columbia River -- they're trying to protect the
4 ecosystem and enhance it as they enhance the channel
5 deepening project. Significant to report is the
6 beneficial use of plain sands birch on the Columbia River
7 and the work to protect the crab and other ocean habitats
8 and the report demonstrates how the goal can be achieved.

9 The channel deepening project will
10 benefit our economy and the environment. With that, why
11 we try to keep erosion and the land, use stuff while they
12 work with the people or land owners to try to protect the
13 erosion on their land along the river as we try to protect
14 the erosion on the lands along small streams in the ag.
15 and natural resource industry.

16 We urge you to finalize this
17 supplemental report and grant pending regulations, permits
18 and record of decisions to move this important project to
19 completion.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. WIGGINS: Mr. Duyck.

22 Mr. Beasley.

23 MR. BEASLEY: Good evening, ladies and
24 gentlemen. My name is Dale Beasley, B-e-a-s-l-e-y. I
25 represent the Columbia River Crab Fishermen's Association.

1 This evening I've heard a lot about
2 the economic benefits that this channel deepening would
3 bring to the region. And I would hate to see these
4 economic benefits denied these folks, but I'm also here to
5 remind you that there are some negative aspects to this
6 deepening and those negative aspects happen to be of my
7 industry, the crab fishing industry. And I've never
8 brought this up in public testimony before, but I think I
9 will tonight. I just decided to do it tonight after
10 listening to Mr. Vik when he says, "We've got subsidized
11 hit and run here." Our industry is going to face a little
12 bit of this subsidized hit and run also. But we've got
13 one hammer that Mr. Vik doesn't have. And I've never
14 reminded anybody of this ever in all of the years that
15 this has been going on. And there has to be some State
16 matching fund money to this channel deepening for it to go
17 ahead. And the Washington State legislature on three or
18 four separate occasions has put some encumbering language
19 on these funds and said they can spend that money when the
20 crab industry is protected. And I'm going to remind you
21 here tonight as the crab industry, I don't think we've
22 been protected. I look at this SEIS related to ocean
23 disposal and I don't see any difference in the FEIS. This
24 SEIS related to ocean disposal is a discredit to the
25 public process to the point of almost being scandalous.

1 We haven't addressed the problems to our industry. The
2 responsible public and agency concerns have not been
3 addressed. We've been brought up in the FEIS. We've
4 submitted our comments. All you have to do is go back and
5 read it. We've submitted at least 100 and some pages
6 total of comments. They're applicable to this FEIS.

7 In response -- in 2000, the Corps and
8 EPA received numerous response requests for an SEIS on
9 ocean disposal. In June of 2000, a couple of friends of
10 mine gave me a letter they got back from the Corps. Their
11 name is Fred and Nancy Holm. They're owners of a local
12 eating establishment. And they said that the ocean
13 disposal -- the Corps told these folks, just ordinary
14 members of the public, that the task force was currently
15 reviewing all of the ocean disposal issues and the final
16 decisions on the ocean site will incorporate the concerns
17 of that group. Fred and Nancy are still waiting for that
18 review. That letter was dated June 8th, 2000.

19 In this report, the public has been
20 grossly misled and this needs to be corrected. Public
21 health and safety issues at Site E are still not resolved.
22 We have excessive wave amplification on the 10 percent
23 agreement in the last two or three years in the interim
24 expansion of Site E. And I think we're at that point
25 again this year. I haven't had a change to analyze it,

1 but as I come across this just this morning, I was between
2 buoy seven and buoy three and I looked at my bathometer
3 and it said 42 feet. And I says, "It's supposed to be 42
4 feet here." So I took my GPS I had if I'm going to be
5 checking this and I said, "If there is a discrepancy in
6 the chart I have today, I'll be going back out to put down
7 a string with a weight and I'll put it down." I'll
8 measure the string and weight so there won't be any
9 discrepancy on the 42-foot depth.

10 We have some adverse impacts to
11 commercial resources that are going to be caused by this
12 subsidized hit and run and these have not been properly
13 evaluated. We don't know how many crabs are at the deep
14 water site. We don't know how many crabs used to be at
15 Site E. We don't know what's going to happen there when
16 we start dumping on this ocean disposal site. And until
17 we start finding this out, the crab industry is not going
18 to be protected as the Washington State legislature
19 requested in the expenditure of those funds. And we've
20 had quite a bit of time to start dealing with this. The
21 "M" word hasn't been addressed. In fact, we've been
22 called daily to discuss it, the "M" word. That's
23 mitigation for those damages to curb our resources.

24 There is some positive coming, though,
25 that I see on the horizon. Thanks to the Washington

1 coastal communities and the up river Washington coast,
2 we're starting to look at some alternate beneficial use
3 for the part in MCR7. This last year we had the Benson
4 Beach project that was highly successful by Netco
5 (phonetic), a dredging company, and I'd really like to
6 thank those people who worked long and hard to make sure
7 that that happened. And I would like --

8 MR. WIGGINS: Mr. Beasley, I hate to
9 say this -- MR. BEASLEY: Please
10 conclude. I'll just make it short.

11 In short, this SEIS related to ocean
12 disposal is S-O-S, same old stuff, not even repackaged.
13 All the Corps and the EPA things in this information
14 material in this present package baffles me. I heard a
15 rumor that this ocean study could even bolster some crab,
16 but they cannot legitimize this public process because the
17 deadline is September 15th and those studies aren't done
18 yet.

19 MR. WIGGINS: Mr. Beasley --

20 MR. BEASLEY: I'll get drummed out. I
21 only had one more sentence.

22 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, sir.

23 The next on the list are Ms.
24 McDonnough followed by Mr. Whiting and Mr. Van Ess. Ms.
25 McDonnough.

1 MS. McDONNOUGH: My name is Christi
2 McDonnough, M-c-D-o-n-n-o-u-g-h. I'm the coastal planner
3 at CREST, the Columbia River Estuary Study Task Force.
4 CREST is a local by state council of governments and we
5 represent local jurisdictions, including the cities,
6 counties and ports down the Columbia River estuary in both
7 Oregon and Washington.

8 This project as proposed in the
9 supplemental EIS does not leave the estuary ecosystem
10 better than before. In fact, the project results in the
11 continued impacts and additional degradation to the
12 estuarine and near shore ocean environment. The final
13 SEIS emphasized the use of previously existing estuary
14 dredge material disposal sites. The disposal plan
15 presented in the supplemental EIS labels estuary dump
16 sites as restoration and fails to address long-term
17 protection of ocean resources, particularly Dungeness
18 crab. The bottom line is we have a serious math problem
19 when it comes to dredging and disposal. The current
20 dredging and disposal situation on the Columbia River has
21 left us in a position where we don't have sufficient
22 capacity or acceptable disposal locations for the dredge
23 material necessary for the maintenance of the existing
24 channel, not to mention the additional material that is
25 supposed to be dredged and disposed during the channel

1 deepening.

2 The MCR maintenance project faces
3 similar challenges, not enough acceptable places to put
4 the dredge material. As well, ocean disposal has not been
5 eliminated. In the context of existing dredging practices
6 on the Columbia, ocean disposal is still the preferred
7 alternative for MCR maintenance material. The
8 supplemental EIS is merely delaying the ocean disposal
9 problem and at the same time creating new problems in the
10 estuary. Section 4 of the SEIS contains a map of the
11 proposed disposal sites and this includes the deep water
12 site.

13 CREST has recently completed an update
14 to the Columbia River estuary dredge material management
15 plan. And based on our research, we learned that Rice
16 Island and Site E are the largest dredge disposal sites in
17 the history of dredging on the Columbia. Furthermore,
18 Rice Island is reaching capacity and Site E has its own
19 suite of environmental, economic and safety issues that
20 must be addressed for continued use. The Corps has no
21 long-term solution for these problems. We are running out
22 of room. The result is that the supplemental EIS proposes
23 to use additional estuary dump sites that have not been
24 previously used for disposal. The Corps is labeling these
25 dumping grounds to be typical for restoration.

1 CREST has been working with the ports,
2 the Corps, state agencies, other stakeholders and both
3 governors' offices on expanding the concept of beneficial
4 use of dredge material. This is a concept that everyone
5 supports and we appreciate the hard work that it has taken
6 to get projects like Benson Beach and residents off the
7 ground this summer. We have much more to do. There are
8 many more beneficial use opportunities on the river that
9 must be incorporated into long-term implementation of
10 disposal practices. Currently, we do not have long-term
11 funding or plans for these types of projects. Without
12 these, our math problems will be exacerbated.

13 CREST also supports the concept of
14 using dredge material for the purpose of restoring
15 habitat. Unfortunately, the two projects presented that
16 involve dumping and that are labeled restoration will
17 result in permanent alteration and further degradation of
18 the estuary. CREST has stated in several forms that the
19 use of dredge material for restoration needs further
20 exploration on an experimental basis with a strong
21 monitoring component similar to Benson Beach. Millions of
22 cubic yards dumped over the first two years of
23 construction at Lois Inlet Island embayment is not
24 experimental and is not restoring valuable habitat.
25 Likewise, the placement of a public field at North Port

1 (phonetic) is not restoring valuable habitat. In fact, by
2 creating shallow water, the Corps is proposing to create
3 the one habitat type that is actually grown over the past
4 century. We have over 4,000 acres more shallow water than
5 we had historically in the estuary.

6 In summary, there are other options
7 available for the disposal of dredge material than those
8 proposed in the SEIS. We need to move beyond channel
9 deepening and work together for beneficial use of our
10 estuary.

11 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Ms.
12 McDonnough.

13 We have completed 14 public comments.
14 We have about eight remaining. I would propose that we
15 take a 10-minute break and come back.

16 For those of you who are interested in
17 giving public comment and have not signed up, I would
18 certainly encourage you to do that. And the list, if
19 you're interested, will be right up here at the front
20 table. My watch says 25 minutes to 8:00. If we can be
21 back at a quarter to 8:00, please.

22 (Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

23 MR. WIGGINS: Okay, folks. Could we
24 get back together again, please.

25 Our first speaker will be Mr. Allen

1 Whiting, followed by Mr. Van Ess, followed by Mr. Warren,
2 please.

3 MR. WHITING: Good evening. My name
4 is Allen Whiting and these are comments that I've talked
5 to before for your listening pleasure.

6 I'm the Western Coordinator for the
7 Columbia River Estuary Study Task Force. My job is to
8 evaluate the potential ecosystem restoration projects of
9 the lower river and the Columbia estuary. CREST is
10 working closely with watershed councils, local community
11 groups and agencies to implement projects on the ground to
12 restore historic habitat areas in the estuary. My
13 comments will focus on ecosystem restoration components of
14 the Columbia River Channel Improvement Project. To that
15 end, I bring the following concerns about each of the
16 proposed restoration projects that are described in the
17 SEIS.

18 I'll start first with the Shillapoo
19 Lake project. The Shillapoo Lake proposal provides no
20 discernible benefits to the native species. The basis of
21 the Shillapoo Lake project is to hydrologically remove any
22 connection between Shillapoo Lake and the Columbia River
23 thereby providing benefits to the river and ecosystem that
24 would be impacted through the deepening project.

25 Second, my comments specific to the

1 Miller-Pillar and Lois Inlet Island embayment. The Lois
2 Island embayment restoration feature proposes to restore
3 357 acres of shallow water habitat through the placement
4 of millions of cubic yards of dredge material.
5 Miller-Pillar involves the placement of 10 million cubic
6 yards of dredge material between a new pile dike field and
7 a highly erosive area near the navigation channel also to
8 create shallow water habitat. Current restoration
9 planning in the Columbia emphasizes passive approaches and
10 restoring needed historic habitat types allowing natural
11 processes to restore habitat. The concern we have is the
12 large degree of uncertainty going into these restoration
13 projects, especially at the scale proposed. Both projects
14 are creating habitat ties that are in excess reported by
15 historical data compiled by CREST. The goal of retaining
16 lost historical habitat types like tidal marsh and swamp
17 through dredge material disposal warrants caution. This
18 may be done with few test plots with a vigorous monitoring
19 design improvement. The monitoring results would help
20 indicate the relative benefit of dredge material disposal
21 and habitat creation. Unfortunately, both of these
22 projects as proposed are too large and provide little to
23 further our knowledge of the beneficial use of dredge
24 material.

25 Third, with respect to the purple

1 loosestrife control program, although an admirable
2 project, provides little benefit to the estuary of the
3 Columbia channel deepening and the endangered species
4 recovery.

5 The next one is Tenasillahe Island.
6 The interim and long-term emphasis in restoration
7 mitigation at Tenasillahe island will definitely provide
8 benefits for listed fish through reconnecting valuable
9 interim tidal marsh habitat to the estuary.

10 Unfortunately, long-term restoration measures that are
11 continued upon the success of the Columbian white-tailed
12 deer are likely to take a decade. Deepening impacts will
13 occur during construction with restoration taking place
14 years after.

15 With respect to the Cottonwood-Howard
16 restoration proposal, this involves acquiring 650 acres of
17 Columbian white-tailed deer habitat. Disposal dredge
18 material for riparian restoration for deer habitat is also
19 included. Based on the success of revegetating Rice
20 Island and other dredge material disposal sites, it is
21 unlikely these disposal sites will provide high quality
22 habitat for Columbian white-tailed deer.

23 The Bachelor Slough project involves
24 dredging 2.7 miles of slough habitat to achieve an
25 elevation of zero feet mean low water and disposing of

1 dredge material through our native forests on disposal
2 locations. It is the National Marine Fisheries Service's
3 finding in the channel deepening biological opinion that
4 juvenile salmonids actually migrate to at least minus six
5 feet mean low water. Consequently, restoring a slough to
6 minus zero is unlikely to benefit these species.
7 Additionally, a site investigation demonstrated a
8 relatively small gain in habitat complexity. Opening a
9 channel at Bachelor Slough, while it may improve water
10 quality, does not benefit physical habitat for most of the
11 channel because it has been diked.

12 With respect to tidegate retrofits,
13 these may be beneficial -- could be beneficial to
14 restoring conductivity between diked areas and riparian
15 estuary. However, these tidegates included are all on
16 private property and, therefore, there's no guarantees
17 that these properties will be completed.

18 I guess I better sum up.

19 With respect to the ecosystem research
20 and adaptive management, although needed, ecosystem
21 research and adaptive management program developed among
22 the Corps and National Marine Services and U.S. Fish and
23 Wildlife Service as the project sponsor in and of itself
24 do not offset the impacts of the deepening.

25 Of the above projects, the only ones

1 that are required by the services are ecosystem research
2 and adaptive manage. Therefore, the idea of leaving this
3 retrofit a better place may never happen because the Corps
4 is not required by the services in the terms and
5 conditions of the biological opinion to complete the
6 restoration project.

7 In summary, the purpose of the ESA
8 consultation was to ensure the endangered species impacts
9 were minimized by the project and how the associated
10 restoration features will specifically benefit the --

11 MR. WIGGINS: Mr. White.

12 MR. WHITING: Okay. One sentence?

13 MR. WIGGINS: One sentence.

14 MR. WHITING: While the other projects
15 will bring minimal benefit in the form of water quality
16 improvements and invasive species removal in a context of
17 a Columbia estuary system, the projects they proposed
18 demonstrate only a little, if any, ecological gain.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Whiting.

21 Mr. Van Ess followed by Mr. Warren and
22 Mr. Hunt.

23 MR. VAN ESS: Good evening. My name
24 is Matt Van Ess, V-a-n E-s-s. I am putting these comments
25 on behalf of myself this evening. CREST will be

1 officially submitting comments. I appreciate the
2 flexibility.

3 Thanks for the opportunity to comment
4 on the Draft Supplemental Integrated Feasibility Report
5 and Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed
6 deepening of the Columbia and Lower Willamette River
7 Federal navigation channel, for deepening of six turning
8 basins, the designation of new upland estuary and ocean
9 disposal sites, and the ecosystem restoration features
10 included the project.

11 At the direction of the CREST council,
12 CREST --

13 MR. WIGGINS: Mr. Van Ess, I'm sorry,
14 could you slow down just a little bit.

15 MR. VAN ESS: I'll try.

16 -- CREST staff analyzed and provided
17 comments on the draft and final EIS's and has continued to
18 track this proposal. Based on our review of the draft and
19 final EIS's, it was CREST's finding that the project could
20 not be done as proposed without resulting in negative
21 impacts to the natural resources and the economies of the
22 communities surrounding the Columbia River estuary. CREST
23 also found that the proposed project violated local
24 regulations, state and federal law, including National
25 Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Water Act, the Coastal

1 Zone Management Act and the Endangered Species Act. We
2 were right. Coastal zone consistency and water quality
3 certification was denied by both states and the National
4 Marine Fisheries withdrew their biological opinion. The
5 project was simply denied, the necessary approvals to move
6 forward.

7 MR. WIGGINS: Mr. Van Ess.

8 MR. VAN ESS: End of EIS process. End
9 of project.

10 CREST's initial findings also found
11 cumulative estuary impacts will result from the project,
12 specifically direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to
13 Dungeness crab, Columbia River smelt, sturgeon, salmonids,
14 the estuarine food web and shoreline habitat. These
15 impacts must be avoided and, if unavoidable, mitigated.
16 And I know the Corps is moving forward with studies.
17 Study is not mitigation.

18 Well, that was then, so what has
19 changed now since the project was denied? A
20 reconsultation effort was conducted by project sponsors,
21 the Corps and the services. The outcome? The project is
22 now worse. The estuary ecosystem of the lower river
23 communities are still negatively impacted through disposal
24 options, not only on crab grounds but now by permanently
25 altering the estuary for disposal.

1 In Longview -- I was at the Longview
2 hearing and I heard from project sponsors that ocean
3 disposal has been eliminated. It's not true. The
4 supplemental EIS merely postpones the use of the ocean and
5 shifts the impacts of dump sites to salmon fishers and
6 permanently alters the estuary.

7 I also heard in Longview that big
8 projects preserve big benefits to fish and wildlife and
9 that the Supplemental EIS outlines plans to leave the
10 estuary a better place. It's not true. The series of
11 ecosystem restoration features taken as a whole do not
12 negate impacts from the actual deepening. With the
13 exception of the long-term Tenasillahe Island proposal, it
14 provides little, if any, positive benefits to the estuary.

15 The deepening project, channel
16 maintenance dredging and, again, channel maintenance all
17 face similar problems. We're running out of acceptable
18 places to dump dredge material. We have a math problem
19 and there's no solution for this. We need one. This is
20 now partially why we're faced with dump sites with
21 restoration.

22 What else has changed since the
23 project was denied? The Willamette River is now deferred.
24 Actually, the Willamette is still preauthorized and is
25 included in the description of the proposed action on page

1 1 of the supplemental EIS. The supplemental EIS lacks
2 detail to support the dredging in the Super Fund sites.
3 This portion of the project -- we need to change the
4 preauthorization to remove Willamette deepening from the
5 project. As the record of decision moves forward, we will
6 also be approving the Willamette.

7 Second, the volume and costs have
8 changed. Our specific question is on the sediment volumes
9 and this over width dredging. We're specifically
10 concerned about the over width dredging. We've asked
11 project sponsors and the Corps about the locations and the
12 volume of the over width dredging locations involved and
13 we do so again tonight. Have the sediments in these over
14 width dredging locations been characterized for chemicals
15 of concern?

16 What else has changed? Adaptive
17 management among the federal agencies and the project
18 sponsors now the project can move forward. CREST is
19 requesting that DOC, the Department of Land, Conservation
20 and Development, Oregon Department of Environmental
21 Quality, Oregon Division of State Lands, the Department of
22 Ecology in Washington, and the Washington Department of
23 Natural Resources be equally involved with any proposed
24 adaptive management framework.

25 What else has changed? The project

1 benefits have. There are our flaws on the benefit side
2 such as light loading and that the need for the deeper
3 channel was seasonal. The fact revealed by the press, by
4 other Corps projects nationally and by the Corps zone
5 economic panel is that multi-national shipping
6 corporations call the shots, shots that the shipping rates
7 are not based on channel depth but based on demand.

8 And a further question is why we're
9 even here tonight. We've also heard nothing about the
10 cost of the projects to the estuarine ecosystem that's
11 critical to salmon recovery in the entire basin. We've
12 also heard nothing about the cost of the projects on the
13 lower river communities. We must move beyond channel
14 deepening, move forward with creative solutions such as
15 increasing beneficial uses of Columbia sediment and
16 expanding meaningful large scale community based
17 restoration of the estuary.

18 Again, CREST will be offering more
19 written comments, as will I personally. I also would like
20 to take this time to ask for a public comment period on
21 the final supplemental EIS. I'm not sure how long that's
22 going to be, but we need time to take into account any
23 changes of the technical reviews of panels on the
24 economics.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Van Ess.

2 Mr. Warren, Mr. Hunt and then Mr.

3 Williamson, please.

4 MR. WARREN: My name is Robert Warren.

5 I'm the Executive Director of CV Resources (phonetic), a
6 community based education of the watershed restoration
7 located on the Chinook River, which is the western most
8 salmon bearing tributary of the Columbia River basin. Our
9 mission is to reestablish the connection between the
10 community's economic wealth and the ecological health of
11 the watershed that's important through hands-on training,
12 community education and implementation of our watershed
13 plan. Our strategy is to take a whole basin -- our
14 restoration strategy is to take a whole basin approach to
15 salmon recovery. As an organization actively engaged in
16 watershed and salmon restoration activities, we are
17 seriously concerned about the implications that channel
18 deepening may have in two specific areas. Number one, the
19 potential impacts on the small rural communities that
20 depend on the natural resources the river estuary and near
21 shore environments provide and, number two, the impact
22 this project will have on efforts to restore the Columbia
23 River estuary and efforts to recover salmon in the greater
24 Columbia River basin. Our confidence in the government's
25 ability to recover salmon to the Columbia River basin is

1 further weakened as we see the outcome of the regulatory
2 review of this project. A successful approach to salmon
3 recovery requires the application of restoration and
4 management strategies that are base and sound ecological
5 principles. In this case, the application of the
6 Endangered Species Act seems to reflect the idea that we
7 can manage species to the brink of extinction but not make
8 the difficult decisions that will lead to full recovery.
9 As an agency tasked with the important responsibilities of
10 recovering listed species approval project that may
11 continue to damage an already degraded critical habitat,
12 we have to wonder what hope we can hold for the recovery
13 of salmon and the subsequent revitalization of the
14 communities that have relied on the river for economic and
15 spiritual assistance.

16 I believe I have witnessed an approach
17 by some federal agencies that have shown an apparent total
18 disregard for the local communities it will likely effect.
19 One hears and reads the words of the importance of the
20 public outreach, coordination, cooperation but often only
21 gets condescending attitude, arrogance and the sense that
22 locals are simply an annoyance that need to be overcome.
23 Often the greater effort is in finding a way around local
24 issues rather than demonstrating a genuine attempt to find
25 a mutually acceptable solution. Two examples are the two

1 restoration beaches that have been discussed,
2 Miller-Pillar and Lois Island. In this case, we are
3 operating in a severely altered estuary and river system
4 that continues to be managed in a way that is not
5 beneficial to efforts to protect and restore natural
6 resources. Until all responsible parties act in a way
7 that is conducive to restoring some semblance of a natural
8 system, we will slowly make any progress in salmon
9 recovery. We also believe that the managing and
10 regulatory agencies should apply the same standard to
11 evaluate the potential impacts on endangered salmon as has
12 been applied when making other management decisions in the
13 Columbia basin. For example, even after decades of
14 studying the impacts of dams on salmon survival, the
15 National Marine Fisheries Service cited insufficient
16 scientific evidence as a reason for not forcing the option
17 of breaching the four lower Snake River dams even though
18 the benefits seem intuitively obvious.

19 The relative state of the science and
20 understanding regarding the impacts of dredging and dredge
21 material management on the estuary capacity to support
22 native species is meager at best and, therefore,
23 inadequate to let the project proceed. We understand and
24 support the need to maintain safe navigation in the
25 Columbia River and understand the Corps' responsibility to

1 achieve this goal. However, we believe that maintenance
2 of the river for this use needs to be done in a way that
3 is compatible with the needs of lower river communities
4 and with salmon recovery efforts occurring in the Greater
5 Columbia River basin.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Warren.

8 Mr. Hunt, Mr. Williamson and Mr.
9 Bronson. Is that correct? Mr. Bronson? Mr. Browning
10 representing -- from Gerhart? No? Then Ms. Baker.

11 Please.

12 MR. HUNT: My name is Dave Hunt,
13 H-u-n-t, and I serve as the Executive Director the
14 Columbia River Channel Coalition, which has a wide array
15 of ports and businesses and labor unions and farmers and
16 others throughout the entire Northwest. We disagree on a
17 lot of things, but when it comes to issues of maritime
18 commerce, when it comes to issues of exporting and jobs
19 and keeping the vitality of our region both economically
20 and environmentally, we have common ground. On behalf of
21 our coalition, we just really want to commend the Portland
22 District of the Corps not only for doing these additional
23 hearings throughout the region, but for taking the
24 Colonel's personal time as he is new to his job and really
25 getting deeply involved with this issue. I think that's

1 significant to this project and we really appreciate that
2 -- that additional effort, especially the extended comment
3 period. There's a lot of time to be hearing as well as
4 additional written comments still to come in through the
5 15th.

6 I, actually, am going to submit into
7 the record three letters of folks that were not able to be
8 here today. I won't read them, but I will just reference
9 them. One is from the Columbia River pilots who pilot
10 ships up and down the river and know how critical this
11 navigational issue is, one from the Washington State Labor
12 Council representing 450,000 jobs -- 450,000 union members
13 in the state of Washington whose jobs are dependent on
14 maritime commerce, and one representing the Columbia River
15 steamship operators who play a critical role in
16 facilitating maritime commerce on the Columbia. I will
17 submit all of those for the record.

18 I think if you think about those three
19 groups, pilots, labor union, steamship operators, some
20 Washington based, some Oregon based, business, labor, the
21 perspective of on the water and on the land, they really
22 bring very different perspectives, but when it comes to
23 these issues, there is common ground. There is a clear
24 recognition that we need this project to go forward for
25 the economic health and the vitality of our region.

1 I think that there are, I think, four
2 issues that I'd like to touch on briefly. I really
3 commend the Portland District of the Corps for doing this
4 project in a way that is directed at all four of these.
5 First, I'd like to commend the Portland District and the
6 sponsors for doing this project in a way that is not the
7 Delaware River. This is not the Willamette River. It's
8 not the Mississippi River. This is the Columbia River.
9 And you all have done this project in a way that is unique
10 to our region, that addresses the unique concerns to this
11 region and it really does stand on its own.

12 Secondly, related to ocean disposal,
13 it has been said that ocean disposal is still a part of
14 this project. As I read this SEIS, it is clear that ocean
15 disposal in this SEIS is not a part of this project, that
16 no ocean disposal will result as a result of construction
17 of this project. And, in fact, it actually enhances the
18 situation as it relates to the annual dredging actually
19 extending out several years beyond what is currently true.
20 It certainly does not answer all the issues of annual
21 maintenance dredging nor can you, I recognize, as part of
22 this particular project. You made progress far beyond
23 expectations, I think, and addressed all the ocean
24 disposal needs connected with this project and that, I
25 think, needs to be clear.

1 Third, relating to ecosystem
2 restoration, as I read this SEIS, it is clear that the
3 ecosystem restoration measures are not mitigation. They
4 are not trying to replace damage that has been done
5 intentionally or unintentionally as a result of the
6 project. These ecosystem restoration measures are clearly
7 above and beyond the impact trying to leave a net
8 environmental gain. So if we look at those ecosystem
9 restoration measures, even if they don't have -- even if
10 some distrust, that they will have huge beneficial gains
11 that has been demonstrated. It's important to note that
12 these are all still net gains. They're still all above
13 and beyond environmental -- any environmental impacts that
14 require prime mitigation.

15 And, fourth, I think it's important to
16 note that the Willamette River is not included in this
17 project. There has been no appropriations for the
18 Willamette River project. There have been no permits or
19 regulatory approvals for the Willamette River project.
20 This is about the Columbia River.

21 I would agree with several who have
22 testified earlier and the coalition will be the first to
23 stand up and say that there are other issues to be
24 addressed. We would argue that they go above and beyond
25 this project. They are unrelated to this project.

1 They're not the Corps' job to resolve alone and there's
2 lots of examples of entities that are working together to
3 solve this, the three ports on the Oregon side working
4 together, the ports on the Washington side, lower river
5 and further up river working together to resolve these
6 issues. The Puget Island sand pit being filled, Benson
7 Beach being nourished, a whole variety of efforts, and I
8 would really urge -- although it is not part of this
9 project, I really would urge the Corps to continue your
10 efforts outside of this project to be partners in
11 resolving these issues because they are important.
12 They're critically important to our region, but they are
13 not a part of this project.

14 I would also note that the
15 congressional staff representatives on both sides of the
16 river, Congressmen Baird, who are represented here today,
17 have been strong partners in that and I would encourage
18 the Corps to do what one person said earlier, which was to
19 move beyond channel deepening -- move beyond channel
20 deepening to implement actual solutions to these issues
21 and don't hold up this project.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Hunt.

24 Mr. Williamson, Ms. Baker and Ms.

25 Beasley.

1 Please.

2 MR. WILLIAMSON: Good evening. I'm
3 Peter Williamson, Executive Director of the Port of St.
4 Helens representing the port district. We are a sponsor
5 of the proposed deepening project. I want to thank you
6 for providing this chance for public comment on the Draft
7 Supplemental Feasibility Report and EIS for the Columbia
8 River Channel Deepening Project which is vitally important
9 to our economic and environmental health of our region. I
10 have written comments and I'm not going to read through
11 all of them. I'll try to hit some of the high spots for
12 you.

13 I want to make two points tonight and
14 that is that this project is important for our economy and
15 it is important for our environment. It's important for
16 our economy because we need to deepen the river to
17 maintain this vital transportation route to the world
18 economy. It supports \$14 billion a year in annual
19 maritime cargo to sustain businesses, farms and jobs in
20 our region. It will accommodate the changing fleet of
21 larger more fuel efficient ships that call on world trade
22 and the project has broad base support from businesses,
23 labor unions, farmers, ports and communities throughout
24 the Northwest. In our port district, for example, this
25 project has the support of Columbia County's largest

1 private employer, Boise, and also the unanimous support of
2 the executive committee and the membership of the St.
3 Helens-Scappoose Chamber of Commerce. That's because over
4 40,000 local family wage jobs in the region are dependent
5 on this project on the river commerce as are 59,000 other
6 Northwest jobs that are affected by this commerce.

7 As the supplemental report estimates,
8 the benefit to cost ratio for this project are strong with
9 \$18 million -- \$18.3 million per year in annual national
10 transportation savings. This is an estimated benefit of a
11 \$1.46 for every dollar in construction cost which is, we
12 feel, quite conservative.

13 Additionally, we will get regional
14 benefits that don't show. For example -- and I'll get to
15 this a little bit later -- one of our new businesses in
16 Columbia County, United States Gypsum, was not included in
17 the original economic benefit analysis. They have a fleet
18 of ships that -- that are as deep as 43-feet and would
19 benefit from the project. Yet economic benefits are large
20 and diverse, rural and urban, east and west, Oregon and
21 Washington and throughout our entire region.

22 The channel deepening is also
23 important for our environment. You've heard the
24 statistics on how much of the river would be dredged and
25 so on and I won't belabor that. What I want to point out

1 again is achieving net environmental gains is a high
2 standard for a project like this, but it is the right
3 standard to apply. Ecosystem restoration will begin
4 first. The project will restore areas not affected by the
5 project. I'll touch again on this later on. There are
6 some restoration projects -- for example, Port of St.
7 Helens -- that aren't counted in the ecosystem restoration
8 tally, if you will, because they're local restoration
9 projects. We're going to remediate a contaminated wood
10 treating facility with materials from the channel
11 deepening. We're going to reclaim a spent rock pit with
12 materials from the channel deepening that under current
13 Oregon and County law doesn't have to be reclaimed and it
14 is the largest single safety issue with Scappoose
15 Industrial Air Park. It happens to be in the north
16 approach to our runway. So there are some benefits that
17 will occur that aren't part of this tally list, if you
18 will.

19 The biological opinions issued by the
20 National Marine Fisheries and U.S. Wildlife Service has
21 also demonstrated the environmental protections and
22 benefits of this project. It is significant that this
23 report detailed beneficial uses for the clean sand dredge
24 from the Columbia River. We must work to eliminate ocean
25 disposal in order to protect crab and other habitat that

1 this report helps demonstrate how this goal can be
2 achieved and, as Mr. Hunt previously said, we, as channel
3 sponsors, have been working on alternatives for ocean
4 disposal and beneficial use of the material in the estuary
5 and near shore areas.

6 The channel deepening project will
7 benefit our economy and our environment. I urge you to
8 finalize this supplemental report and grant pending
9 regulatory permits to move this important project to
10 completion.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Mr.
13 Williamson.

14 Ms. Baker and then Ms. Beasley.

15 MS. BAKER: Good evening. My name is
16 Nancy Baker. I've been asked to read the following letter
17 on behalf of the Port of Willapoo Harbor. It's addressed
18 to the Colonel regarding the Columbia River deepening
19 project.

20 "Dear sir: The Port of Willapoo Harbor would
21 like to go on record in support of the Columbia
22 River deepening project. We believe this is vital
23 to the economy of the entire Pacific Northwest. We
24 cannot, as a region, remain competitive if ships
25 are forced to leave our major ports without a full

1 load due to inadequate channel. This also has a
2 great impact on the economy of the Midwest, which
3 relies upon Northwest ports for shipment of their
4 product. We appreciate your effort to move this
5 project forward. Sincerely, Jim Leeva (phonetic),
6 Manager, Port of Willapoo Harbor."

7 Thank you.

8 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Ms. Baker.

9 Ms. Beasley.

10 MS. BEASLEY: Good evening. Thank you
11 for the opportunity to speak this evening. I found it
12 troubling, to say the least, having presented many
13 concerns and comments on the Corps and EPA projects over
14 the past several years and, basically, receiving only a
15 response of "Your comments have been noted." Therefore,
16 tonight I will refrain from making specific comments at
17 this time.

18 After reading Colonel Butler's change
19 of command speech in July, I have a better understanding
20 of the Corps' response to hearings and meetings like this
21 evening. I would like to read you some of Colonel
22 Butler's words while speaking to his Portland District
23 team members.

24 Quote, Together we withstood public
25 meetings, answered the mail, newspaper articles and

1 responded to people who feel we are not doing the right
2 things. You provided me the tools to be your heat shield
3 from the outside elements trying to negatively impact how
4 we do our jobs, end quote.

5 It was my understanding that the Corps
6 and EPA said it was willing to work with the states,
7 organizations and communities and citizens, yet we have
8 not been treated with reflection or respect we all
9 deserve. It is difficult to deal with a federal entity
10 that ignores public comments of concern and continues on
11 with their checklist to complete the project, hires
12 internal yet so-called independent experts to extend their
13 agenda and bends the truth to hide the bottom line.

14 In the Draft Environmental Impact
15 Statement, the Corps comments to one individual that's
16 quite disconcerting. Quote, The Corps has no legal
17 obligation under NEPA to ensure the scientific integrity
18 of the studies. The Corps is entitled to rely on its own
19 expert study and under no circumstances need evidence to
20 defend those studies with scientific integrity. Even if
21 the comments had produced some evidence that the Corps'
22 experts lacked proper qualifications or relied upon flawed
23 scientific method, that evidence would not discredit or
24 otherwise render the Corps' studies unreliable or the EIS
25 inadequate, end quote.

1 In the past, we have found the only
2 way to resolve issues with the Corps is through the court
3 process. And even with the court stipulation agreement
4 back in 1997, which is still in place, the Corps has
5 ignored the terms and destroyed the facts of that
6 agreement. The Corps is not without this concern since
7 they have been willing to sit down and work through the
8 issues. The current process has been and continues to be
9 an illegitimate process. It saddens me to have to say
10 these things, but it's true. The Corps and EPA should be
11 ashamed of themselves for the skewing of the eco process.
12 We're still waiting for answers to our previous comments.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. WIGGINS: Thank you, Ms. Beasley.
15 That concludes the list of people who have asked to
16 testify.

17 Colonel Hobernicht, would you close.

18 COLONEL HOBERNICHT: I want to thank
19 you all for coming. Everyone is busy. It's late tonight.
20 Again, thank you. Please drive home safely. For those of
21 you who have driven a long ways, that concludes this
22 meeting unless you have any questions of me.

23 VOICE: Someone was going give the
24 Corps' website for the economic analysis that just came
25 out today.

1 MR. WIGGINS: Correct. Matt.

2 COLONEL HOBERNICHT: He went to run
3 and get it.

4 VOICE: Well, let me follow it up with
5 one question, which is the 15th is a Sunday. Could you
6 confirm that you will take comments on the 16th?

7 MS. HICKS: We'll be receiving them in
8 the mail. We'll accept them.

9 MR. WIGGINS: By the way, here's a
10 flyer that has the mail, e-mail and fax data for how to
11 get in touch with the Army Corps regarding this.

12 COLONEL HOBERNICHT: Thank you very
13 much. Good night.

14 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
15 concluded at 8:30 p.m.)

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