



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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January 21, 2013

GPT/BNSF Custer Spur EIS Co-Lead Agencies  
c/o CH2M Hill  
1100-112<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Suite 400  
Bellevue, WA 98004

RE: Gateway Pacific Terminal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Scoping Comments

Dear Co-Leads:

Thank you for providing the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) with this opportunity to comment on the scope of the Gateway Pacific Terminal (GPT) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). WSDA's mission is to serve the people of Washington by supporting the agricultural community and promoting consumer and environmental protection. This includes facilitating the movement of Washington agricultural products in domestic and international markets.

Washington's food and agriculture industry's 2011 value was \$46 billion, employing 160,000 people and contributing 13% to the state's economy. In addition, more than \$15 billion in food and agriculture products were exported through Washington ports in 2011, the third largest total in the U.S. This makes it essential that proposed actions that can impact Washington's food and agriculture industry are carefully assessed to identify any conflicts and necessary mitigation measures.

With respect to the GPT proposal, WSDA's comments focus on including in your analysis, an evaluation of secondary agricultural impacts along any proposed route to the new terminal. This could include an evaluation of wait times for export access to the Port of Seattle; any changes in rail capacity for commodities that normally move by rail to market or for export; changes in export commodity port capacity; or potential impacts to agriculture activities along the planned route. A great deal of the proposed route(s) travel through prime Washington agricultural lands that grow crops sensitive to changes in air or water quality. It is our request that the scope of the EIS cover the entire route of the proposed project, from where it enters Washington State to the final terminal location at Cherry Point.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scoping of this project. We look forward to working with the SEPA/NEPA lead agencies in addressing our comments in the EIS. Please contact Kelly McLain at 360.902.2067 or [kmclain@agr.wa.gov](mailto:kmclain@agr.wa.gov) if you have any questions or would like to discuss any of these comments.

Sincerely,

Dan Newhouse, Director  
Washington State Department of Agriculture

