

**MEETING NOTES**

**OREGON FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (OFAC)  
October 5, 2005, 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Port of Portland, 1<sup>st</sup> floor Commission Room  
121 NW Everett St., Portland, OR 97209**

**Introduction**

Chair Tom Zelenka called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

**Opening Remarks**

Chair Zelenka thanked people for attending and turned the discussion over to Jerry Grossnickle, Bernert Barge Lines.

**Regional Maritime Transportation System Study**

Mr. Grossnickle introduced Glenn Vanselow, Executive Director of Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (PNWA), to speak on the recently completed Marine Transportation System (MTS) study. Mr. Vanselow said funding for the study was provided from the State of Oregon, the U.S. Maritime Administration, and some of the Columbia/Snake River ports. The study was conducted to identify MTS needs for the Columbia/Snake River System and the Oregon Coastal Cargo Ports (OCCP). This was done with the help of Parsons Brinkerhoff Ports and Marine, BST Associates and PNWA. The study looked at navigational, rail and highway needs as they relate to the movement of cargo in and out of river systems and coastal ports, including international trade.

Mr. Vanselow said short- and long-term forecasts show 32-43 million tons of cargo on the Lower Columbia, 8.5-10.2 million tons on the Columbia/Snake River System inland ports and 1.7-2.1 million tons for the OCCP. These numbers could increase with potential new developments such as the proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals in Coos Bay and other locations.

The forecast started with DRI models of international economic growth and trade, and then disaggregated the forecasts to Oregon. Vice Chair Susie Lahsene asked whether the MTS forecasts were consistent with the forecasts BST Associates developed for the lower Columbia River; Mr. Vanselow said they were. Chair Zelenka suggested that at some point OFAC needs to look at how and why we rely on these numbers. Lori Sundstrom, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), added the forecast is predicated on the existence of an adequate transportation system, and asked about system capacity improvements that would be needed to support the forecasted growth.

Mr. Vanselow responded by presenting a list of projects necessary to accommodate existing movement and anticipated growth. For national and regional markets, the MTS study shows that 11 new navigation, rail and roadway projects plus ongoing maintenance of four critical navigational projects are needed for the Columbia/Snake River System and the OCCPs in the near and long term. In the near term (1-5 years), the projects emphasize navigation and rail improvements and maintenance programs. In the 6-10 year timeframe, the projects focus primarily on Interstate Highway 5 and rail capacity improvements to facilitate rising marine-related trade volumes of national and regional origin/destination. Beyond 10 years, major improvements to the I-5 and Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) Columbia River crossings are identified. At the local level, the MTS study identifies three navigation, 10 rail and 9 roadway projects to support marine trade and transportation in the Columbia/Snake River System and for the OCCPs.

Mr. Vanselow showed a chart on infrastructure needs by mode, and emphasized that the needed investment grows over time. In the early years, navigation needs are greatest; in the mid term, rail needs are greatest; and in the long term, roadway needs are greatest.

Mr. Vanselow noted that Appendix 3 of the MTS study discusses Short Sea Shipping (SSS) in the Columbia/Snake River System. The appendix focuses on container barging, which represents 20-25% of Port of Portland container volume. The appendix also discusses ocean going vessels that bring petroleum upriver to Portland; roughly half of this is distributed further upriver by barge. Barge feeder service likely will not replace steamship service lost at the Port. Lyn McClelland, Federal Maritime Administration, noted discussions with the Port regarding funding SSS for some relief from insufficient rail capacity. Mr. Grossnickle cited barge size constraints on the Columbia River due to issues with locks, channels and bridges.

More information on the MTS study is available at the Pacific Northwest Waterways website: [www.pnwa.net/ceder](http://www.pnwa.net/ceder).

Mr. Grossnickle discussed practical considerations in developing short sea shipping in Oregon and on the Columbia River system. He summarized a number of operational and physical differences between ocean-going barging and inland river barging. For example, tugboats tow ocean barges but push river barges; ocean barges generally are larger than river barges; ocean barges generally require deeper draft than do river barges; and containers can be stacked higher on ocean barges than on river barges. He encouraged transportation policy makers to work toward a balanced modal transportation policy and to support federal funding for maintenance dredging, lock and jetty repairs, Columbia River channel deepening, and modification of the BNSF bridge over the Columbia in the Portland area.

### **Commodity Flow Study**

Steve Kale, ODOT, presented data from ODOT's statewide Commodity Flow Study. In 1997, trucks moved 77% of tonnage, with rail at 12%, water at 9%, pipeline at 2% and air at less than 1%. Bob Russell, Oregon Trucking Associations, questioned why the truck numbers varied from figures in the Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP) update and bridge report. Craig Greenleaf, ODOT, cited efforts to standardize reporting. Mr. Russell requested consistency in the reporting of commodity flow data.

Mr. Kale explained the similarities and differences between the statewide and Portland commodity flow numbers. Bridget Wieghart, Metro, wondered whether ODOT's or the Port's numbers should be used for the Portland area. Mr. Kale indicated that ODOT's numbers were developed later and may be more refined than the Port's earlier numbers, but that users of the data would need to decide which to use. Vice Chair Lahsene noted the numbers are getting better each time they are updated; the Port's study was their third and probably will be updated in the next few years.

### **Oregon Transportation Investment Act (OTIA) State Bridge Status**

John Jackley, ODOT, indicated a number of OTIA projects are under construction, and the program is about two years ahead of expectations. Mr. Jackley will provide an electronic status report for distribution to OFAC members. Ms. Wieghart asked for a future presentation on bridge projects regarding phasing, key corridors and traffic mobility. Ms. Sundstrom indicated this is planned for the December meeting.

Martin Callery, Port of Coos Bay, asked about the status of possible surplus bridge funds and reminded the group that House Bill 3415, passed in this legislative session, directs surpluses to be

spent on projects of statewide significance and freight projects. Ms. Sundstrom quoted the Bridge Options Report and indicated funding commitments to date are still only about 20% of what's needed. Vice Chair Lahsene suggested that OFAC could provide input regarding additional projects.

Mr. Jackley announced additional SAFETEA-LU funding for bridge projects; ODOT will propose that the OTC use some of this funding to restore OTIA III bond funds. Ms. Sundstrom reminded the group that bridges continue to age even as the OTIA program proceeds. At best, progress to date has slowed the bridge condition rate of decline.

### **ConnectOregon**

Ms. Sundstrom reported that she, Mr. Jackley and Julie Rodwell, Freight Mobility Section Manager, had made over 50 outreach presentations in just over one month. The public hearing for a permanent rule is scheduled for November 15, and the OTC will be asked to approve a temporary rule at its November 16 meeting. If substantive issues are raised at the public hearing, the temporary and permanent rules will be revised prior to OTC approval. The temporary rule facilitates the project application process, while the permanent rule governs decision-making. To enable public discussion of the recommended project list, a second public hearing will be scheduled in May 2006 with OTC approval of projects scheduled for June.

Mr. Russell indicated some confusion with the focus of SB71, with some people believing it includes highways, which is not the case. It was suggested that the ODOT Regions be kept in the loop regarding submitted projects to ensure integration with ODOT's ongoing efforts. Ms. Sundstrom said the Regions would act as central consultants for project evaluation. Vice Chair Lahsene asked if projects on local roads and/or in private facilities are eligible, to which Ms. Sundstrom replied that any roads not eligible for State highway funds are eligible. She also suggested that pure design work, while eligible, probably would not compete well with projects that are construction ready.

### **Freight Mobility Manager's Report**

OFAC Subcommittee work. Ms. Rodwell mentioned that the OFAC bylaws identify three standing subcommittees. The membership subcommittee has the task of coordinating a recruitment program for new membership and ongoing membership. Once a list of applicants has been established, the subcommittee will review it. A new member information packet will be given to new committee appointees, membership and election telephone questions will be answered, and vacancies will be filled as needed.

The policy subcommittee is responsible to develop policy statements and documents on behalf of OFAC. Currently, the subcommittee has the task of creating one or more problem statements to submit to the ODOT research program before December 15, 2005.

The project subcommittee reviews and recommends freight-related projects to the OTC for the 2008-2011 STIP. The subcommittee also will review proposed *ConnectOregon* projects and provide recommendations to the OTC, in consultation with other groups.

OFAC Elections. The OFAC bylaws call for elections in December of each year. The bylaws state "general members shall have one vote each to cast during attendance at any general or special meeting. Associate members shall abstain from voting." Ms. Rodwell mentioned that new members are expected to be named in November.

Suggested Meeting Schedule for 2006. Proposed dates are

January 11  
April 5

July 5  
October 4

December 6

Locations will rotate and be determined a meeting or two ahead. Members are encouraged to suggest locations and venues. Special OFAC meetings will be scheduled in addition if needed, and subcommittee meetings will be scheduled in between the above dates. If members desire, subcommittee meetings could occur on the morning of the full OFAC meetings (as well as at other times and places). All OFAC members will be notified of the subcommittee meeting dates and locations. Randy Papé, OTC Commissioner/OFAC Liaison, believes future meetings of OFAC should be rotated around the state. A follow-up e-mail survey will be conducted about location once membership stabilizes. Ms. Sundstrom reminded the group that the bylaws call for two meetings per year in Salem.

2008-2011 STIP Freight Projects. The project list developed by OFAC in coming months should consider NHS intermodal connectors and the new freight routes that the OTC approved in August. In addition, the list of projects should list benefits to other modes (as outlined in the criteria). Mr. Grossnickle asked if the Columbia River Crossing was an appropriate project for consideration, to which Ms. Sundstrom replied that it was up to OFAC. An ad hoc OFAC meeting will be held in March 2006 to review the Project Subcommittee's recommendations.

**Roundtable/Agenda Building**

A Commodity Flow Study (CFS) follow-up was requested, including key trends and indicators. Mr. Kale reminded the group that base year data is on the Freight Mobility Section website, while forecast data will be input to the website in the future.

A presentation on the Oregon Association of Nurseries (OAN) transportation initiative was suggested as a future agenda item.

Vice Chair Lahsene offered to present on the Columbia Crossing Task Force and provide subsequent OFAC feedback to the Task Force. She also suggested an update on the Portland-area freight data collection project.

Members want an update on the Linnton Energy Cluster (LEC). Ms. Lahsene asked for leadership regarding LEC as an "industrial sanctuary"; Ms. Sundstrom cited nationwide concerns about these areas (e.g. in Boston). Lynn McClelland offered to contact the Coast Guard to obtain information on security issues near the LEC.

Ms. Wiegart offered to report on a Cost of Congestion analysis which Metro will be using as input for next year's Regional Freight Plan. She also suggested a future freight symposium.

Mr. Kale suggested the Rogue Valley Council of Governments (RVCOG) provide a presentation on their freight study development.

Mr. Greenleaf mentioned the update of freight information in the Transportation System Guidelines, which help MPOs and local governments prepare their Transportation System Plans. He also reminded the group that the OTP update will open for public comment on November 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Oregon Freight Advisory Committee**

Meeting Attendees

October 5, 2005

**FAC Members**

Martin Callery	International Port of Coos Bay
Jerry Grossnickle	Bernert Barge Lines
Ralph Jackson *	Oregon Economic & Community Development Department
Susie Lahsene	Port of Portland
Lyn McClelland	Maritime Administration
Deena Platman **	City of Portland
Gary Roth ***	Oregon Department of Agriculture
Bob Russell	Oregon Trucking Associations
Bridget Wieghart	Metro
John Wilson ****	Oregon Department of Aviation
Paul Zalec *****	Portland & Western Railroad
Tom Zelenka	Schnitzer Steel Industries

**ODOT**

Gregg Dal Ponte	Motor Carrier Transportation Division
Craig Greenleaf	Transportation Development Division
Sherry Gustafson	Freight Mobility Section
John Jackley	Director's Office
Steve Kale	Freight Mobility Section
Julie Rodwell	Freight Mobility Section
Lori Sundstrom	Director's Office
Thomas Picco	Region 1/Major Projects Unit

**Other Attendees**

Scott Drumm	Port of Portland
Glenn Vanselow	Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
Peter Williamson	Port of St. Helens

\* Attending for Michael Burton  
\*\* Attending for John Gillam  
\*\*\* Attending for John Kratchovil  
\*\*\*\* Attending Bob Hidley  
\*\*\*\*\* Attending for Larry Phipps