Columbia River CROSSING

Memorandum

January 26, 2006

TO: Columbia River Crossing Task Force Members

FROM: Henry Hewitt, Hal Dengerink, Co-Chairs

SUBJECT: Evaluation Criteria Recommendation

COPY: CRC Team Members

Attached is the recommended Evaluation Framework for final review and adoption at the February 1, 2006, Task Force meeting. We appreciate all of your hard work over the past few months on this document.

Please take a final look at the framework prior to our meeting. We have attempted to respond to each of the comments received at our last meeting.

Keep in mind that we are focusing on *measurables*, and not *aspirations* for the project. In other words, the criteria define for us what will be measured as we evaluate components and alternatives. As we begin the component screening process, components that enhance an important resource will score higher than those that merely avoid or minimize impacts.

As a group, we have spent portions of several meetings discussing how to phrase the criteria dealing with important community and natural resources. We have struggled with how to phrase criteria to include the words *avoid, minimize,* and *enhance.* The text changes shown in the Step B table retain that language, in a sentence structure that comes strongly recommended by our regulatory agency review group, InterCEP (Interstate Collaborative Environmental Process). We hope to be able to accept that text and move forward, as the terms directly mirror the regulatory requirements that the agencies are responsible for implementing.

Please note two changes in the upcoming meeting schedule:

- **March 22, 2006, Meeting**—this meeting will take place from 4–8 pm, in order to adequately discuss project components and initial screening. As part of that discussion, we will also have a presentation of the results of our safety analyses of the I-5 bridge influence area. Dinner will be provided.

- **April Meeting**—Due to scheduling conflicts, this meeting will be moved to **Wednesday, April 26, 2006**. Please note this on your calendars.

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