

Introductory Model Development Webinar: Columbia and Snake Rivers Focus

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Ecology Staff

Nhi Irwin, *Statewide Resources Section Manager*
Brian Kirk, *Prevention Section Manager*
Jase Brooks, *Legislative Policy Analyst and Tribal Liaison*
Adam Byrd, *Research and Information Technology Unit Supervisor*
Alex Suchar, *Expert Model and Analysis Scientist*
JD Ross Leahy, *Maritime Risk Modeling Specialist*
Rachel Assink, *Washington Sea Grant Hershman Fellow*

Participants

Neil Agren, *Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue*
David Berliner, *U.S. Coast Guard - Waterways Management.*
Amy Boyd, *Cowlitz Indian Tribe*
Eric Branch, *HASA Inc.*
Jess Brown, *Clean Harbors Environmental Services*
Amber Carter, *Amber Carter Government Relations, LLC*
Robin Cocking, *Whitman County Emergency Management*
Bill Collins, *Tidewater Transportation & Terminals*
Sandi Duffey, *Grant County Local Emergency Planning Committee*
Brien Flanagan, *Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt*
Amanda Froberg, *Cowlitz Public Utility District*
Matt Graves, *Port of Vancouver USA*
Dustin Johnson, *Columbia River Pilots*
Sean Kelly, *Port of Longview*
David Konz, *Tidewater Transportation & Terminals*
Stephanie Kranz, *Tidewater Transportation & Terminals*
Rick LaBlond, *Shell Trading N.A.*
Amelia Marchand, *Colville Confederated Tribes Environmental Trust Department*
Michael McCoy, *Americana Health and Rehabilitation Center*
Ross McDonald, *Sause Bros.*
Kristin Meira, *Pacific Northwest Waterways Association*
Kate Mickelson, *Columbia River Steamship Operators' Association*
Robert Mitchell, *Disaster Medicine Project*
Jeremy Nielsen, *Columbia River Pilots*
Don Noviello, *Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife*
Vincent Papol, *NOAA/National Weather Service, Chairman of the Umatilla County Local Emergency Planning Committee*
Rob Rich, *Shaver Transportation Company*
Holly Robinson, *Maritime Fire and Safety Association*
Julie Schlenger, *Snohomish County Marine Resource Committee*

Steve Shaver, *Shaver Transportation Company*
Heather Stebbings, *Shaver Transportation Company*
Cheryl Vezzani, *Millennium Bulk Terminals Longview-LLC*

Liz Wainwright, *Maritime Fire and Safety Association*
Michael Wickstrom, *Walla Walla County Fire District 5*

The following summary notes are not intended to be a transcript but rather a review of the question and answer session that took place at the conclusion of the webinar. Attendee questions and comments are shown in bold text followed by Ecology responses.

How much do you anticipate using the existing DNV-GL model for the Columbia River? (Jeremy Nielson)

JD Leahy: We are planning to build our own model. We will refer to the published work of those who have tackled these sorts of problems already. But we will be building our own unique model – not using a model built by someone else, like for instance the DNV model that you reference.

Is there an estimate of how much oil travels through the Tri-Cities area? (Vincent Papol)

Brian Kirk: Ecology has a lot of data sources regarding the movement of oil, including the advanced notice of transfer system for oil transfers greater than 100 gallons. That can give us some idea of how much oil is being moved. We can combine this with other data sources to infer more info about the movement of oil. We do also get some information from rail and pipeline entities.

Written response: Additional detail on the movement of oil through the Tri-Cities area is available in [Ecology's quarterly reports on crude oil movement by rail and pipeline](#). You can also select the "Oil Trains" tab on our [online mapping tool](#) to see a visual representation of oil movement in the State.

How is the work for this model being funded? (David Konz)

Brian Kirk: When the Washington State Legislature gave Ecology the direction for this work, they funded several full time positions, which is how we were able to hire this team. The legislature also provided in the budget for Ecology some funding for IT infrastructure and computing resources. The legislature clearly indicated their intent that this would be an ongoing capacity within Ecology. As a result, the expectation is that these positions will remain funded beyond the current biennium. Any additional data or computing needs that we may have, beyond what was budgeted when the bill passed, would be additional budget requests that would need to be developed through Ecology's budget process.

Is there a deadline for written comments on these questions? (Amber Carter)

JD Leahy: No, you are welcome to submit your thoughts on these at any time. These questions are pretty open-ended and meant to spark discussion. The process by which we build the model will be ongoing over the next 18 months, and aspects of these questions will be discussed throughout that process. We aren't closing the door to this discussion at the end of this webinar.

Did you identify specific problems with the DNV GL Model? (Jeremy Nielson)

JD Leahy: We are building our own model based on what was directed by the legislature. I do think it's valuable to talk about some of the differences in building a model as part of the work of a public agency, compared to something that is done in the private sector. One of the real strengths of what we are doing is that nothing will be hidden about the work that we do. It will all be publically accessible. One of the challenges with using proprietary tools is that you need to pay for individual analysis and there can be challenges with that. For us, time will remain a constraint, but we won't have to pay for each individual analysis run. These are some of the benefits to having a government agency undertake a project like this.

Does the model include cargo vessels because of their fuels? Or does the model only include vessels transporting oil-based cargos (Sean Kelly)

JD Leahy: Yes, we are using the definition of oil that is in the RCW [RCW 90.56.010 (19)]. It's a broad definition of oil that includes diesel, bunker fuels, and gasoline. Oil spill risk from those types of oil will be incorporated into the model. In addition, cargo vessels over 300 gross tons fall into the category of covered vessels, so that's another reason why they will be included.

Additional comment

Fire Departments in the Tri-Cities have boom trailers for initial spill response and I think a new risk assessment would be beneficial to see if we are capable to meet the need. (Michael Wickstrom)