

SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON CURRENT HABITAT ISSUES

The Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) was briefed by Staff Officer Jennifer Gilden on Habitat issues at the SAS webinar on August 14, 2019. The primary topic of discussion was the Jordan Cove Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Project and Pacific Connector Pipeline Project proposed for southern Oregon and within the port of Coos Bay, Oregon.

The SAS opposes this project and shares the Council's concerns as outlined in the Council letter submitted to the Federal Energy Regulation commission (FERC) in July 2019, and the draft letter to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS).

The effects of the proposed project on the habitat that support salmon along with other environmental factors are of shared concern and adequately outlined in both letters. The SAS would like to take this opportunity to outline additional concerns from the perspective of the fishing industry including safety concerns. Listed below are some of the concerns in no particular order:

1. Bar crossings could be significantly delayed because of the assumed safety buffer/zone around LNG tankers.
 - a. Winter bar crossings by commercial fishing vessels often must be done at high tide. Large ship traffic will also transit at high tide.
 - b. Recreational vessels returning to port could be forced to remain offshore to allow large ship traffic to transit the bar. In rough weather, this is a major safety concern.
2. Congestion at the boat ramp and harbor will increase during large ship bar crossings.
 - a. Delays of up to 30 minutes will result if/or when a security buffer is put in place.
 - b. Fog will further delay and increase the danger of collisions.
 - c. As many as 150 recreational boats cross the Coos Bar during peak fishing periods.
3. Loss of fishing opportunity.
 - a. Security buffers will result in a cessation of boat traffic in the river channel for an unknown period of time.
 - b. Coos Bay has developed into the biggest estuary fishery in Oregon during September.
 - c. Recreational boaters will be forced to cease fishing or move upstream above the LNG terminal to fish, increasing congestion in the upper basin.