

a proposal to establish a new or improved transportation crossing of the Columbia River. This crossing will involve either existing facility improvements or new connections between SR 14 in Washington to SR 35 and/or I-84 in Oregon. The Washington State Department of Transportation has designated this proposed crossing as State Route 35 (SR-35).

A new or improved Columbia River crossing is necessary to effectively accommodate current and future traffic demands, address multi-modal accessibility, enhance movement of freight and other goods, improve public safety, and improve current and future traffic operations.

Alternatives under consideration include (1) no action; (2) multi-modal options; (3) improvements to traffic and toll operations, (4) improvements to the existing bridge; and (5) constructing a new bridge or tunnel at or near the existing location. Potential crossing corridors being evaluated along the Columbia River include: West Hood River I-84 interchange, Second Street in Hood River (using the City Center exit on I-84), the existing bridge crossing, and east of Hood River near Stanley Rock. Design variations being evaluated include adjustments to grade, alignment, and crossing type.

A series of preliminary meetings have already been conducted between various public groups, the project Steering Committee, a Local Advisory Committee, and a Resource and Regulatory agency Committee since this project has been introduced. The ideas presented at these meetings will be incorporated into the environmental process as will all the necessary impacts and alternatives required by the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations.

Letters soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and Local agencies, including private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed or are known to have interest in this proposal.

A public scoping meeting will be held on March 8, 2001, from 5 to 8 p.m. at Fidel's at the Gorge (restaurant), located on SR 14 at 120 East Steuben in Bingen, Washington. On March 8, 2001, a resource and regulatory agency scoping meeting will be held in Troutdale, Oregon, at the Oregon Department of Transportation Maintenance Facility from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. Notification of the public scoping meeting will be published in the local newspaper and through mailed announcements.

In addition, a public meeting will be held prior to completion of the draft

EIS. Public notice will be given of the time and place of all proposed meetings during Draft and Final EIS development. The draft EIS will be made available to the public and all agencies for review and comment prior to all public meetings.

Interested parties are encouraged to provide suggestions and comments in order to ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all potential impacts identified. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA, Washington Division or Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council at the addresses or telephone numbers provided in the Contact Information Section.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: February 14, 2001.

Michael Kulbacki,

Transportation and Environmental Engineer, Olympia, Washington.

[FR Doc. 01-4706 Filed 2-26-01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: Mendocino County, California

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an environmental impact statement will be prepared for a proposed highway project in Mendocino County, near the town of Hopland, California.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: C. Glenn Clinton, Team Leader, Program Delivery Team—North, Federal Highway Administration, 980 Ninth Street, Suite 400, Sacramento, California 95814-2724, Telephone: 916-498-5020.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FHWA, in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on a proposed project to construct a four lane freeway or expressway bypass of the community of Hopland, on Route 101 in Southern Mendocino County. The project limits extend from kp 14.2 to 22.5 (pm 8.8 to 14.0). The project is

needed to reduce operational conflicts, accommodate existing and future traffic demand, reduce travel time, increase safety, improve air quality, reduce noise in Hopland and provide the facility concept identified in the "Inter-regional Transportation Strategic Plan".

Three alignments are being proposed at this time as well as a "No Build" alternative. All of the alignments potentially affect oak woodlands, riparian forest and pre-historic cultural resources. A Public Open House has been held to solicit opinions from the community and a Project Development Team has been formed to determine the scope of the project. There will be a public scoping meeting to discuss the proposed project and another opportunity for public comment on the draft environmental document during the circulation phase of the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS).

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action is addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. The views of agencies that may have interest in the effect of the proposal on historic properties are specifically solicited. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research, Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on February 15, 2001.

C. Glenn Clinton,

Team Leader, Program Delivery Team—North, Sacramento, California.

[FR Doc. 01-4705 Filed 2-26-01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

[Docket Number: MARAD-2001-8952]

Requested Administrative Waiver of the Coastwise Trade Laws

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Invitation for public comments on a requested administrative waiver of the Coastwise Trade Laws for the vessel CHARISMA.

SUMMARY: As authorized by Public Law 105-383, the Secretary of Transportation, as represented by the Maritime Administration (MARAD), is

authorized to grant waivers of the U.S.-build requirement of the coastwise laws under certain circumstances. A request for such a waiver has been received by MARAD. The vessel, and a description of the proposed service, is listed below. Interested parties may comment on the effect this action may have on U.S. vessel builders or businesses in the U.S. that use U.S.-flag vessels. If MARAD determines that in accordance with Public Law 105-383 and MARAD's regulations at 46 CFR Part 388 (65 FR 6905; February 11, 2000) that the issuance of the waiver will have an unduly adverse effect on a U.S.-vessel builder or a business that uses U.S.-flag vessels, a waiver will not be granted.

DATES: Submit comments on or before March 29, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to docket number MARAD-2001-8952. Written comments may be submitted by hand or by mail to the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, Department of Transportation, 400 7th St., SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. You may also send comments electronically via the Internet at <http://dmses.dot.gov/submit/>. All comments will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection and copying at the above address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., E.T., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. An electronic version of this document and all documents entered into this docket is available on the World Wide Web at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kathleen Dunn, U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, MAR-832 Room 7201, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone 202-366-2307.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Title V of Public Law 105-383 provides authority to the Secretary of Transportation to administratively waive the U.S.-build requirements of the Jones Act, and other statutes, for small commercial passenger vessels (no more than 12 passengers). This authority has been delegated to the Maritime Administration per 49 CFR § 1.66, Delegations to the Maritime Administrator, as amended. By this notice, MARAD is publishing information on a vessel for which a request for a U.S.-build waiver has been received, and for which MARAD requests comments from interested parties. Comments should refer to the docket number of this notice and the vessel name in order for MARAD to properly consider the comments. Comments should also state the commenter's interest in the waiver application, and address the waiver

criteria given in § 388.4 of MARAD'S regulations at 46 CFR Part 388.

Vessel Proposed for Waiver of the U.S.-build Requirement

(1) Name of vessel and owner for which waiver is requested.

Name of vessel: *Charisma*. Owner: NAUTECH International, LLC, a Louisiana Corporation.

(2) Size, capacity and tonnage of vessel. According to the applicant: "The vessel is 65 net tons as per the documentation certificate enclosed. Additional measurements are 65 feet in length, 17 feet in breadth and 11 feet in depth noticed by the same certificate."

(3) Intended use for vessel, including geographic region of intended operation and trade. According to the applicant: "The intended use of the vessel is for executing meetings and executive cruises of 12 persons or less. This usage shall have no effect on the coastwise trade of any person as no charters of this type are currently operating in the proposed areas * * *. The geographic area intended is Lake Pontchartrain and connecting inland waters, Mississippi River as well as the Gulf of Mexico (Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi Alabama and Florida Coasts.)"

(4) Date and Place of construction and (if applicable) rebuilding. Date of construction: 1967. Place of construction: Hampshire England, United Kingdom.

(5) A statement on the impact this waiver will have on other commercial passenger vessel operators. According to the applicant: "This proposed operation shall have no effect on other commercial passenger operations. There are no commercially operated executive yacht rentals in the proposed areas of operation. The CHARISMA is an executive yacht. It is the only yacht of this size proposed for charter in the areas indicated. As requested by your item 9 of the MARAD Transmittal we include the following description of existing operators of charter or commercial vessels for hire, none of which are similar in nature to the CHARISMA.

- a. Small open fishing boats for two or three passengers with outboard motors.
- b. Small oar or pole powered skiffs for bayou cruises in controlled wildlife refuges.
- c. Casino boats of 1200 or more passengers.
- d. Specially equipped deep sea fishing boats.
- e. Harbor Tour Operators of certified vessels with passengers of 100 or more.
- f. Government operated Ferryboats for public transportation of passengers and of vehicles.

g. Sailing vessels."

(6) A statement on the impact this waiver will have on U.S. shipyards. According to the applicant: "This waiver shall have no impact on U.S. Shipyards." "No shipyards are currently building Motor Vessels of this size or type for this purpose."

Dated: February 21, 2001.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

Joel C. Richard,

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

[FR Doc. 01-4710 Filed 2-26-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-81-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

[Docket Number: MARAD-2001-8951]

Requested Administrative Waiver of the Coastwise Trade Laws

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Invitation for public comments on a requested administrative waiver of the Coastwise Trade Laws for the vessel SPIRIT.

SUMMARY: As authorized by Public Law 105-383, the Secretary of Transportation, as represented by the Maritime Administration (MARAD), is authorized to grant waivers of the U.S.-build requirement of the coastwise laws under certain circumstances. A request for such a waiver has been received by MARAD. The vessel, and a description of the proposed service, is listed below. Interested parties may comment on the effect this action may have on U.S. vessel builders or businesses in the U.S. that use U.S.-flag vessels. If MARAD determines that in accordance with Public Law 105-383 and MARAD's regulations at 46 CFR Part 388 (65 FR 6905; February 11, 2000) that the issuance of the waiver will have an unduly adverse effect on a U.S.-vessel builder or a business that uses U.S.-flag vessels, a waiver will not be granted.

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