



Hood River – White Salmon

BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Project Director Report
April 6, 2021

The following summarizes Bridge Replacement Project activities from Mar. 14 – April 2, 2021:

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS/LOBBYING UPDATE

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- *TRP has prepared \$5M request via Oregon ARPA funds*
- *Advocating for \$5M via Rep. Bentz in U.S. Transportation Reauthorization Bill*
- *Administration's Build Back Better proposal could be opportunity for \$150-200M request.*
- *Wash. State Senate budget includes \$5M via Sen. King. Boswell working to ensure inclusion in House budget as well.*

FEIS/ROD CRITICAL PATH UPDATE

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- *WSP has updated Land Use chapter based upon Commission discussion last month*
- *Yakama Nation Fishers Meeting was a success. Many new ideas for mitigating impacts were generated*
- *Historic Resources Technical Report is complete and being distributed for comment*

LAND USE IMPACTS TO PORT OPERATIONS

WSP has completed staff edits to the Land Use section of the EIS. Management will be reviewing for accuracy. Ensuring that Port operations is fully considered as a part of bridge replacement is critical. Federal policies related to the protection of recreational resources (ie, marina parking) also requires the Port to acknowledge a *di minimus* effect. That draft letter from ODOT to the Port is also under review.

TRIBAL OUTREACH

The Project Team presented to the Yakama Nation (YN) Spring Fishers Meeting on March 25th. We received an excellent response and members of the tribe talked with the team for about 45 minutes. Shaneka Owens, representing Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), thanked the Yakama for their involvement in the project. Some of the highlights from the discussion included the following:

- Concerns about barge traffic being able to pass one another at the same time transiting under the new bridge. A follow up email to Shaver and Tidewater hopes shed light on how they would likely operate with a wider opening (246' to 450').
- Support for bridge replacement.
- Support for dredging of fishing sites to remove siltation.

- Support for making it difficult for predatory birds such as cormorants to perch on the bridge.
- Support for ensuring lighting does not project down onto river surface.
- Support for continued effort to make Breeze-by exemption for tribal members.
- There was interest in seeing if the project could put effort into helping the Bingen fish processing plant obtain an outfall permit. The current facility cannot be used until an outfall is installed.

In addition, the YN placed the fishers survey on their Facebook page and the Col. Riv. Intertribal Fishing Council (CRITFC) sent the survey via text to 400 member fishers. So far WSP has received over a dozen responses to the survey.

HISTORIC STRUCTURE WORK

The Historic Resources Technical Report (focusing on built structures) is complete and has been distributed for agency review. Elements of the 714-page report have been previewed and recent drone and street-side photography are included as requested. Agencies now have 30 days to review for comment by April 19th.

GOVERNANCE/BSWG UPDATE

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- *BSWG Meeting scheduled for April 13th at 1:30p*
 - *Governance Update*
 - *Finance Plan Criteria Review*
 - *AE/Design RFP Scope Review*
 - *P3 Discussion*
 - *Membership Discussion*
 - *Strategy Principles*

FUNDING & FINANCING UPDATE

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- *Staff has received BUILD planning grant template*

MEETING SCHEDULE

- WSP Weekly Check In, April 5
- Spring Planning, April 6
- Thorn Run Partners, April 6
- Klickitat County Transportation Comm., April 7
- Sec. 106 Cultural Res., April 8
- WSP Weekly Check In, April 12
- BSWG Meeting, April 13
- Mott McDonald, April 15
- Rep. Noble, April 16
- WSP Weekly Check In, April 19
- WSP Engineering Mtg., April 19
- Thorn Run Partners, April 20



EIS UPDATE

BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

APRIL 2021 UPDATE

In December 2003, a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) was published as part of a bi-state collaborative effort. This draft EIS was the first step in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Currently, the Port of Hood River (Port) is advancing the project to complete the EIS effort and position the project for future funding and construction.

What's new on the project?

- EIS Working Group confirmed their support of Alternative EC-2 as the Preferred Alternative.
- Continue preparing responses to public comments received on the Supplemental Draft EIS; all responses will be published in the Final EIS.
- Completion of initial drafts of the combined Final EIS/Record of Decision.
- Report completed for archaeological investigation completed on certain properties in Washington.
- Completed photography of historic properties to document potential impacts from the project.
- Completion of remote sensing investigations on the river near the Washington shoreline to identify potential underwater resources.
- Specific efforts are being undertaken to reach out to Native American tribal members who utilize fishing access sites and fish on the river.

What are the next steps?

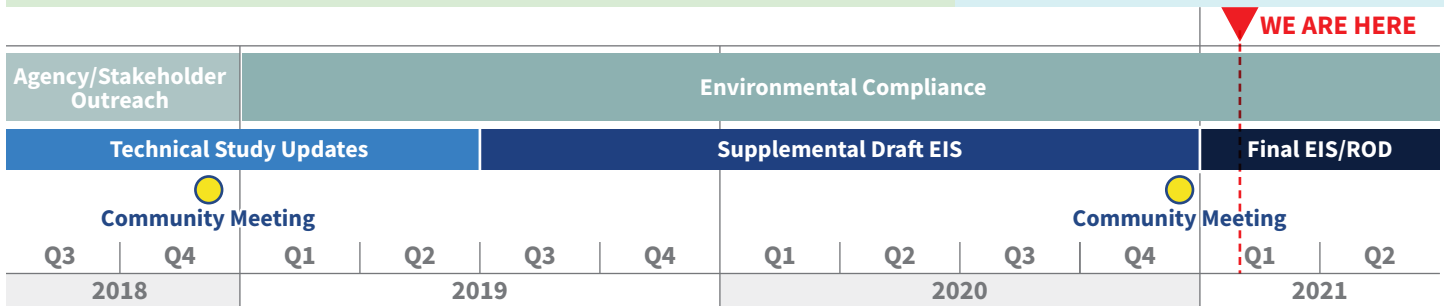
- Final EIS/Record of Decision is underway and is anticipated to be completed by Summer/Fall 2021.
- Continued coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on completion of the Endangered Species Act consultation.
- Continue discussions with the Oregon SHPO, Washington State DAHP, and other parties and tribes to identify potential mitigation measures for removal of the existing bridge.
- Continued consultation with Native American tribes on cultural resources, access to the Columbia River, fishing activities, treaty rights, and other identified interests.
- Prepare to conduct geotechnical investigation in Summer of 2021.



How would bridge replacement benefit the Columbia River Gorge communities?

The Hood River Bridge provides a critical connection for residents and visitors to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. One of only three bridges spanning the Columbia in this region, the bridge is a critical rural freight network facility for agriculture, forestry, heavy industry and high-tech companies with freight originating throughout the northwest. The existing bridge is nearing the end of its serviceable life and is obsolete for modern vehicles with height, width, and weight restrictions and is also a navigational hazard for marine freight vessels. The bridge has no sidewalks or bicycle lanes for non-motorized travel and would likely not withstand a large earthquake.

If project funding is secured, the new bridge would provide a safe and reliable way for everyone to cross or navigate the Columbia River—by car, truck, bus, bicycle, on foot, or on the water. A new bridge would support a thriving economy and livable communities.



To learn more about the project, please visit us at:
www.portofhoodriver.com/bridge

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