

COMMENT SHEET / FORUMLDRIO DE OPINION

Environmental Hearing Audiencia de Efectos Ambientales

May 8, 2008

RETURN BY 11:45, 2008

We encourage you to submit your comments on the environmental effects and proposed mitigation presented in the *Environmental Assessment* for this project.

Por favor describa su opinión y crítica del reporte efectos ambientales y mitigación propuestos para el proyecto de ampliación de la Ruta 522.

You may return this sheet to the sign-in table or mail it later to the address on the other side.

Retorne este formulario durante la audiencia en el escritorio de entrada o envíelo por correo a la siguiente dirección WSDOT. Sus comentarios pueden ser escritos en el español.

COMMENTS COMMENTARIO:

THE NEW BRIDGE REPRESENTS FINALLY A WAY TO RECTIFY DECADES OF FRUSTRATION FOR WALKERS, BICYCLISTS, AND EQUESTRIANS. THERE IS CURRENTLY NO WAY WITHOUT A CAR TO REACH LORD'S HILL PARK FROM THE WEST. NO RIVER CROSSING IS AVAILABLE TO THOSE MEMBERS OF THE GROWING COMMUNITIES IN OUR FUTURE CITY OF MALTBY AREA TO ACCESS THE LARGEST SNOHOMISH COUNTY PARK, A GEN OF OVER 15000 ACRES OF WILD FOREST HIKING AND HORSE TRAILS. OVER 10 MILES SEPARATES THE NEAREST WALKABLE BRIDGES AT SNOHOMISH HWY 9 AND CRESCENT LAKE RD. SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE RECREATION AND TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES ARE A PRIORITY FOR GROWING YOUNGSTERS AND ADULTS TO SHARE HEART HEALTHY AND FITNESS BUILDING OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AND TRAVEL.

DISCUSSIONS WITH LOCAL CITIES, CITIZEN GROUPS, SNOHOMISH COUNTY PARKS DEPT., LOCAL CITY/COUNTY, STATE/CONGRESSIONAL ELECTED OFFICIALS HAVE RESULTED IN PROMISED SUPPORT FOR FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION GRANT APPLICATION UNDER SAFETEA-LU TO SECURE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION FUNDING FOR A LOWER DECK ON THE NEW BRIDGE FOR THE MENTIONED NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION USER GROUPS.

I COMMIT TO SECURING A CONCEPTUAL DESIGN DRAWING TO AID IN GRANT, DESIGN, AND COST CALCULATION DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUR OFFICE AND OUR CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION - REP LARSEN, SEN'S MURRAY AND CANTWELL. THIS FUNDING GRANT PROCESS SHOULD ENABLE 50 YEAR GROWTH TO BE ACCOMMODATED IN THIS PROJECT, FOR EXPANDING PUBLIC DEMAND IN THESE USER GROUPS.

ALSO, ON THE WILDLIFE CROSSING BOX CULVERT, PLEASE INCREASE THE INTERIOR CLEARANCE TO 12 FEET AS THIS IS TO ACCOMMODATE USE BY ELK, WHICH ARE RE-COLONIZING THE FORESTED AREA, AND NEED A CORRIDOR CROSSING BETWEEN LORD'S HILL AND HILLS ACROSS TO THE SOUTH SIDE OF TUALCO VALLEY. THIS BECOMES MORE AND MORE A SAFETY ISSUE IN COLLISION AVOIDANCE AS HABITAT IS RESTRICTED.

Name Nombre (please print) GREGORY D. STEPHENS CELL 206-419-7761

Address Dirección 2426 STATE ROUTE 9 S.E.

City Ciudad WOODINVILLE



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**
Douglas B. MacDonald
Secretary of Transportation

Northwest Region
15700 Dayton Avenue North
P.O. Box 330310
Seattle, WA 98133-9710

206-440-4000
TTY: 1-800-833-6388
www.wsdot.wa.gov

June 4, 2008

Gregory D. Stephens
21926 State Route 9 S.E.
Woodinville, WA 98072

RE: SR 522, Snohomish River Bridge to US 2 Environmental Assessment
Response to your comments

Dear Mr. Stephens,

Thank you for attending the public hearing held May 8, 2008 for the SR 522, Cathcart Rd. (Snohomish River Bridge) to US 2 on the environmental assessment. Since customer input contributes to better transportation solutions the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is particularly appreciates your effort to provide comment. You wrote:

“The new bridge represents finally a way to rectify decades of frustration for walkers, bicyclists, and equestrians. There is currently no way without a car to reach Lord’s Hill Park from the west. No river crossing is available to these members of the growing communities in our future “City of Maltby” area to access the largest Snohomish County park; a gem of over 15 miles of wild forest, hiking, and horse trails. Over 10 miles separates the nearest walkable bridges at Snohomish Hwy 9 and Crescent Lake Rd. Safe and accessible, recreation and transportation opportunities area priority for growing youngsters and adults to share heart healthy and fitness building outdoor activities and travel.

Discussions with local clubs, citizens groups, Snohomish County Parks Dept., local city/county/state/congressional elected officials have resulted in promised support for Federal Highway Administration grant application under SAFETEA-LU to secure design and construction funding for a lower deck on the new bridge for the mentioned non-motorized transportation user groups.

I commit to securing a conceptual design drawing to aid in grant, design, and cost calculation. Discussions with your office and our congressional delegation-Rep. Larsen, Sen’s Murray and Cantwell accommodated in this project, for expanding public demand in these user groups.

Also, on the wildlife crossing box culvert, please increase the interior clearance to 12 feet ht. This is to accommodate use by elk, which are re-colonizing the forested area, and need a corridor crossing between Lord’s Hill and hills across

to the south side of Tualco valley. This becomes more and more a safety issue in collision avoidance as habitat is restricted.”

SR 522 is a limited access highway in the Lord Hill Regional park vicinity, and this classification allows pedestrian and bicycle use. WSDOT must consider trail facilities as part of a transportation solution when they are part of a comprehensive trail plan adopted (or in the process of being adopted) by a federal, state, or local government having jurisdiction over the trail (RCW 47.30). Additionally, without justification, and without legislative approval, WSDOT cannot change the highway classification to accommodate equestrian use. Any plans developed using federal grants for non-motorized/equestrian trails must under go environmental review prescribed by the National (NEPA) and State Environmental Protection Acts (SEPA). When such plans involve the state highway system NEPA and SEPA, require coordination with the comprehensive plans of local governments with jurisdiction. Your trail proposal is more than a matter of funding, it is an issue of timing, and environmental effects. When stepping back to view the larger perspective, the environmental process would need to result in honest support of an expanded equestrian trail system.

As mentioned, federal law requires WSDOT to consider with equal importance, the effects of a proposed transportation project upon recreation resources, wildlife habitat, and community needs. WSDOT consulted with others agencies related to the Endangered Species Act, the area Priority Habitat Species database, and local comprehensive plans. Wildlife records and field studies indicate the likelihood of elk presence at Lord Hill Park is rare. Elk habitat is diminishing at a rapid rate, and there is no expectation of “re-colonizing” in the park.

A private citizen, who kept meticulous records of wildlife observations, was the primary source of information we used to locate the crossing structure. By default, wildlife passage is also provided under the elevated portion of the bridge and approaches spanning the Snohomish River riparian corridor on both sides of the river. The wildlife passage structure will be designed with the openness ratio appropriate for large ungulates and coercion fencing will funnel large mammals toward safe passage through the large structures. Other culverts will be designed in accordance with Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife culvert design guidelines, which provide low flow banks that will attract smaller mammals allowing them safe passage under the highway.

I encourage you to speak with your local legislators and encourage them to fund projects along SR 522. Your interests, whether through community groups or individually, make a real difference as we continue to make improvements to this highway corridor.

You can also get more information about our efforts to improve safety on SR 522 at the project web page <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR522/Widen/>

If you have any other questions, please contact me by phone at 425-225-8744, or by email at edwardd@wsdot.wa.gov .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David L. Edwards". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping "D" and "E".

David L. Edwards, P.E.
WSDOT Project Engineer

MT:mt

cc: Project files

COMMENT SHEET / FORUMLDRIO DE OPINION

Environmental Hearing Audiencia de Efectos Ambientales

May 8, 2008

RECEIVED

MAY 27 2008

WSDOT ORG 410011

We encourage you to submit your comments on the environmental effects and proposed mitigation presented in the *Environmental Assessment* for this project.

Por favor describa su opinión y crítica del reporte efectos ambientales y mitigación propuestos para el proyecto de ampliación de la Ruta 522.

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COMMENTS COMMENTARIO:

After reviewing the Environmental Hearing Handout that I picked up at the May 8th hearing in Monroe, I feel compelled to make my concerns known. According to the handout, my written comments, if submitted by May 23, 2008, will be considered.

My concerns are many with regards to the paragraphs written regarding stormwater, floodplains and, especially, the paragraph on Wetlands, Streams, Vegetation, and Wildlife. The loss of these valuable lands, particularly the trees which benefit everyone, is very disconcerting. But I'll limit my comments to speak for those who can't speak for themselves: the animals.

The handout shows a picture of a "Simulation of Potential Wildlife Crossing." I underlined the word "potential" because I was led to believe from speaking with the state representatives at the meeting that this crossing is a definite project. Needless to say, I'm concerned that it won't be completed at all. And I personally feel there should be more than one crossing. Two would be better and three would be best. Different species of animals don't congregate in the same place. How can they be expected to use just one crossing for all species?? Were any wildlife experts consulted at all? From what I've read, one crossing for many species does not benefit very many. Please consider additional crossings if, in fact, the one does.

Name Nombre (please print) Johann Mesa

Get out in. Thank you.

Address Dirección 14704 123RD Ave SE

City Ciudad Snohomish

State Estado Wa

Zip código postal 98290-6810



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**
Douglas B. MacDonald
Secretary of Transportation

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206-440-4000
TTY: 1-800-833-6388
www.wsdot.wa.gov

June 4, 2008

JoAnn Mesa
14704 123rd Ave SE
Snohomish, WA 98290-6810

RE: SR 522, Snohomish River Bridge to US 2 Environmental Assessment
Response to your comments

Dear Ms. Mesa,

Thank you for attending the public hearing held May 8, 2008 for the SR 522, Cathcart Rd. (Snohomish River Bridge) to US 2 on the environmental assessment. Since customer input contributes to better transportation solutions the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is particularly appreciates your effort to provide comment. You wrote:

“After reviewing the Environmental Hearing Handout that I picked up at the May 8th hearing in Monroe, I feel compelled to make my concerns known. According to the handout, my written comments, if submitted by may 23, 2008, will be considered.

My concerns are many with regards to the paragraphs written regarding stormwater, floodplains, and especially the paragraph on wetlands, streams, vegetation, and wildlife. The loss of these valuable lands, particularly the trees which benefit everyone, is very disconcerting. But I'll limit my comments to speak for those who can't speak for themselves: the animals.

The handout shows a picture of a ‘simulation of potential wildlife crossing.’ I underlined the word potential because I was led to believe from speaking with the state representatives at the meeting that this crossing is a definite project. Needless to say I'm concerned that it won't be completed at all. And I personally feel there should be more than one crossing. Two would be better and three would be best. Different species of animals don't congregate in the same place. How can they be expected to use just one crossing for all species?? Were any wildlife experts consulted at all? From what I've read one crossing form many species does not benefit very many. Please consider additional crossings if, in fact, the one does get put in. Thank you.”

The project will affect some trees and shrubs adjacent to SR 522 in order to widen the road. Disturbance of vegetation is confined to locations needed for construction of the

project. We will assess if there are opportunities to avoid impacting trees as is feasible within this project. According to federal and state regulations, WSDOT will return with a separate project to plant roadside vegetation after this widening project is completed.

Regarding the wildlife crossing, a private citizen, who kept meticulous records of wildlife observations, was the primary source of information we used to locate the crossing structure. By default, wildlife passage is also provided under the elevated portion of the bridge and approaches spanning the Snohomish River riparian corridor on both sides of the river. The wildlife passage structure will be designed with appropriate dimensions for large mammals and fencing will help coerce animals toward safe passage through the structure. Other culverts in the project will be designed in accordance with Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife culvert design guidelines, which provide low flow banks that will attract smaller mammals allowing them safe passage under the highway.

You can also get more information about our efforts to improve safety on SR 522 at the project web page <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR522/Widen/>

If you have any other questions, please contact me by phone at 425-225-8744, or by email at edwardd@wsdot.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



David L. Edwards, P.E.
WSDOT Project Engineer

KT:mt

cc: Project files



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

May 22, 2008

Route:

Mike *hmc*

Pat *PA*

Dave E. *AKE*

Kevin *KW*

COPY TO MARSHA TOLON/1022

Reply to
Attn of: ETPA-088

08-036-FHW

Mr. Brian Hasselbach, P.E., Area Engineer
Federal Highway Administration
711 South Capitol Way, Suite 501
Olympia, WA 98501

RECEIVED
MAY 28 2008
WSDOT ORG 411

Mr. David L. Edwards, P.E.
Washington State Department of Transportation
2802 Wetmore Avenue, Suite 500, MS 139
Everett, WA 98201-3583

Dear Mr. Hasselbach and Mr. Edwards:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has reviewed the SR 522 Cathcart Road Vicinity to US 2 Environmental Assessment (EA). We are submitting comments in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. Thank you for this opportunity to offer comment.

The SR 522 Cathcart Road to US 2 EA is a proposal to widen 4.3 miles of SR 522 from the Snohomish River Bridge vicinity to US 2 in Monroe, WA. In addition to widening the roadway from two to four lanes, the project would also involve building a new bridge across the Snohomish River, constructing a median to separate opposing traffic lanes, modifying the interchange at US 2, adding a roundabout at the 164th Avenue SE intersection, and replacing two stream culverts near MP 22 with large bottomless culverts. One of these culvert replacements will also be designed and constructed to serve as a wildlife undercrossing.

Our comments are provided below:

Ecological connectivity

We commend FHWA and WSDOT for including a wildlife crossing in the project corridor. The wildlife crossing and its associated fencing will improve safety by preventing vehicular-wildlife collisions, which have resulted in human fatalities and serious injuries. It will also help to conserve regional biodiversity by providing highway permeability, habitat and hydrological connectivity where SR 522 bisects the large habitat complex of forest lands, agricultural lands, and river floodplain. In addition to its provision for safety, the commitment to provide a wildlife crossing demonstrates sound environmental stewardship.

Air quality

We also commend FHWA and WSDOT for committing to implement construction mitigation measures to protect air quality (page 4-11). These measures include using lower emission fuels, and maintaining construction equipment. There are additional measures that are easy to implement, such as idling reductions, which could also mitigate noise impacts.

Recommendation: Consider implementing idling reduction practices to mitigate air quality as well as noise impacts.

Environmental analysis and decision making process

The project area for this EA is one segment of the SR 522 project from Woodinville to Monroe that was addressed in a 1994 Final EIS. We understand that changes in environmental regulations, funding, and endangered species listings have made further NEPA analysis and review necessary. However, it is unclear why the environmental update has been prepared in segments as separate projects.

The purpose and need for the 1994 proposed widening of SR 522 from Woodinville to Monroe is reflected in the purpose for this EA. To fully meet that purpose and need, it is necessary to address the full corridor between Woodinville and Monroe. The availability of funding often results in phased construction, but it may not be appropriate to segment the NEPA analysis for this reason. For example, if the full corridor NEPA analysis were updated, it would provide an opportunity to examine improvements in public transportation, multi-modal options, and other Transportation Demand Management strategies to reduce congestion and emissions of greenhouse gases.

Recommendation: Clarify the rationale in the EA for preparing environmental documentation for only one segment of the SR 522 corridor that was addressed by the 1994 Final EIS.

Wetlands

The EA states (page 3-34) that approximately 5.7 acres of wetland and 9.9 acres of buffer will be eliminated as a result of the proposed project. About 3.8 acres of these wetlands and 2.8 acres of the buffers are associated with stormwater facilities. While the EA states that permits will be obtained and mitigation will be performed, it does not provide sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the Clean Water Act, Section 404 requirements.

Based on the wetland and buffer acreages that would be impacted and the impacts to streams, this project may require an individual 404 permit and 401 Water Quality Certification. From the information provided in the EA, we are unable to determine whether the use of wetlands for stormwater detention would be beneficial, or whether alternatives to avoid and minimize these impacts have been addressed. A compensatory mitigation plan should also be discussed.

Recommendation: Have consultation with the Corps of Engineers and EPA to ensure that proposed actions will comply with legal requirements, including the Section 404(b)(1)

guidelines, and to discuss conceptual mitigation plans. Include the missing information identified above in the EA.

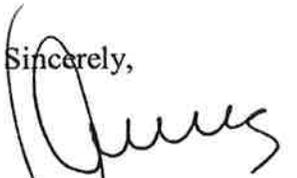
Vegetation

The EA states (page 4-27) that temporary clearing or disturbance of vegetation will likely be limited to an area within 5 to 10 feet of the project footprint, the area of the access road to the Snohomish River, the work area depicted on Exhibit 4-1, and the areas needed for staging. We support these efforts to minimize ground disturbance and clearing of vegetation. However, the dense Himalaya blackberry growth at the eastern base of Bald Mountain and Lord Hill Regional Park may prevent wildlife access to the proposed wildlife crossing. It would be beneficial to remove it and replace it with native vegetation. It would also be helpful to know the location of the staging areas so that any anticipated impacts to natural resources or nearby human activities could be addressed.

Recommendations: Remove the dense stand of Himalaya blackberries at the eastern base of Bald Mountain and replant the area with native vegetation to ensure wildlife can access the wildlife crossing. Identify the areas that will be used for construction staging and the resources and human activities that may be affected.

Thank you for notifying us and providing the opportunity to comment on this Environmental Assessment. We would be happy to collaborate further to address any aspect of the project. If you have questions or would like to discuss these comments, please feel free to contact Elaine Somers of my staff at (206)553-2966 or by electronic mail at somers.elaine@epa.gov.

Sincerely,



for Christine B. Reichgott, Manager
NEPA Review Unit



Washington State
Department of Transportation
Douglas B. MacDonald
Secretary of Transportation

Northwest Region
15700 Dayton Avenue North
P.O. Box 330310
Seattle, WA 98133-9710

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June 5, 2008

Christine B. Reichgott
NEPA Review Unit Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: SR 522, Snohomish River Bridge to US 2 Environmental Assessment
Response to your comments

Dear Ms. Reichgott,

Thank you for your review, comments, and compliments regarding the SR 522, Cathcart Rd. (Snohomish River Bridge) to US 2 on the environmental assessment. Since the input of partner agencies contributes to better transportation solutions, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) particularly appreciates your effort to provide comment. Following are our responses to your comments by category.

Air Quality

Thank you for the suggestion on the use of idling reductions during construction. We will include this method of construction impact mitigation in the instructions to the contractor to implement as practical and feasible.

Environmental Analysis and Decision Making Process

WSDOT originally divided the SR 522 corridor improvements into five stages. Each stage is an autonomous transportation solution, able to operate independently once constructed without displacing a problem somewhere else. With completion of each stage, SR 522 is incrementally widened from Woodinville to Monroe making it a four lane, divided highway. If one stage is constructed before another, traffic operations should continue without congestion or construction issue at another location. Autonomy

of traffic operations is one of the factors in determining independent utility and logical termini under NEPA.

As funding for stages of the SR 522 project became available, the independent utility and logical termini for proposed work was revisited relative to ESA and changes in environmental regulations since the 1994 Final EIS and ROD completion.

This was the case for updating environmental review of stages 2, 3, and 4 (Paradise Lake Road to Echo Lake Road interchanges and widening) in 2003 under a Documented CE. USFWS and NOAA NMFS were consulted as FHWA and WSDOT reviewed whether this action would preclude future alternatives to cross the Snohomish River. As a commitment of ESA consultation, WSDOT coordinated with USFWS, NOAA NMFS, EPA, and local jurisdictions with interest, to determine the best alternative for crossing the Snohomish River. Upfront coordination resolved the matter of potential habitat segmentation for the current SR 522 EA project, and it was not a factor during ESA consultation. The project description in the EA is the same description used in the BA.

Wetlands

ESA consultation identified with certainty the need for an individual Section 404 permit and Section 401 individual certification. This environmental review was not subject to the merger process, and did not require a conceptual mitigation plan to be included in the EA. WSDOT has been coordinating with the Corps of Engineers and Ecology staff regarding compensatory mitigation for wetlands and stormwater detention. We have also met to discuss stormwater pond impacts and reduced drainage design with the goal of minimizing impacts to wetlands. WSDOT will submit Section 404(b)(1) analysis as part of the individual permit. As the lead for the individual 404 permit, the Corps will advertise opportunity for EPA and others to comment. Additionally, the Corps will need to obtain a 401 certification from WSDOE before they can issue their individual permit. WSDOE will follow regulations delegated to them from EPA for the 401 certification, and will allow opportunity for EPA to comment. If, during this process, any issues should arise, WSDOT can work directly with EPA towards resolution.

Vegetation

When the WSDOT roadside restoration project is implemented in areas disturbed for the SR 522 widening project, it will include removal of invasive species within the right of way. We will treat those areas at the eastern base of Bald Mountain and Lord Hill Regional Park, occurring within WSDOT right of way for invasive species and replant with appropriate native species.

WSDOT selects construction staging areas in coordination with the contractor. When selected, the site is reviewed according to Section 106, for hazardous materials, and other applicable potential effects. When construction is complete, WSDOT will assure the construction staging areas are rehabilitated to near the original conditions or better.

Reichgott
4 June 2008
Page 3

Your interests and guidance make a real difference as we continue to make improvements to this highway corridor. You can follow our efforts to improve safety on SR 522 at the project web page <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR522/Widen/>

If you have any other questions, please contact me by phone at 425-225-8744, or by email at edwardd@wsdot.wa.gov .

Sincerely,



David L. Edwards, P.E.
WSDOT Project Engineer

MT:mt

cc: Elaine Somers, U.S. EPA
Project files

SR522EA-CherylB.txt

From: Edwards, David L
Sent: Monday, June 09, 2008 7:09 AM
To: 'cherylrybar@verizon.net'
Subject: RE: Comment concernint the SR 522, Snohomish River Bridege Widening project

Dear Cheryl,

Thank you for your comment. Unfortunately, the current project does not include any work on the existing

Snohomish River bridge other than removing the buttons and striping the lanes to accommodate 2 lanes of

traffic heading towards Monroe. Widening the shoulders on the existing bridge would involve extensive

structural work on the bridge foundation and bridge superstructure which would cost many millions of dollars

that are not available in the budget for the project. If the bridge is ever widened or replaced in the

future, it would include wider shoulders which would accommodate bicycles. The new bridge for traffic heading

towards Woodinville will have a 10 foot wide shoulder.

Please contact me again if you have any additional comments.

David L. Edwards, P.E.
WSDOT Project Engineer
Phone: 425-225-8744
Email: edwardd@wsdot.wa.gov

From: Cheryl [mailto:cherylrybar@verizon.net]
Sent: Friday, June 06, 2008 9:41 AM
To: Edwards, David L
Subject: Comment concernint the SR 522, Snohomish River Bridege Widening project

I apologize for not being able to attend the May 8 meeting or getting this comment to you prior to May 22. My

comment does have an environmental connection - however, it is more selfish in nature.

With any additional roadwork on SR 522, including the bridge, we would like to see a wider shoulder. We live

on Lost Lake Rd. and have considered riding our bikes to work in Monroe - however, there isn't much of a

shoulder going over the bridge. It is only 10 miles from our house to the High School and about 13 miles to

Page 1

the hospital area where I work.

We are not avid bikers - it just seems like a great way to get exercise and would also be a great way to

decrease the number of cars on the road. It seems like there are others beside myself who would consider

this if there was more room on the road - through casual conversation. Our neighbor rides his bike to

Woodinville on a regular basis - his most dangerous spot beside Echo Lake Road (minimal shoulder) is the

overpass on to Highway 9 where he has to watch for cars exiting and then again merging - you'd think people

would be more willing to share the road and support those who make this choice.

I have observed more people biking on SR 522 - probably a reflection of gas prices. We lived in Europe for 5

years (military) and there is a much better system for allowing biking between cities - their bike paths are

actually separate from the highway but often run parallel. It seems to me if it can be done there, it can be

done here. I realize that there is a cost with this extra material but in the long run it is more cost

effective. It is also more cost effective to take this into consideration at the time of new construction.

Please help me be able to bike to work safely!

Thank you for all your work with our transportation issues.

Cheryl Rybarczyk

21821 West Lost Lake Rd.

Snohomish

020



Providing quality water, power and service at a competitive price that our customers value

RECEIVED

MAY 13 2008

May 6, 2008

WSDOT ORG 410011

David L. Edwards, P.E.
WSDOT Engineer
SR522 Snohomish River Bridge to US 2
2802 Wetmore Avenue, Suit 500, MS139
Everett, WA 98201-3583

Subject: NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA) for the SR 522 Snohomish River Bridge (Cathcart Road) Vicinity to US 2 project

Dear Mr. Edwards,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above referenced Environmental Assessment. Snohomish Public Utility District (District) has various overhead and underground facilities in the vicinity of this proposed project. Although specified impacts may not have been identified at the early stage of your design process, the District understands that some impacts to our facilities are unavoidable. During construction at SR2 and SR522, District anticipates possible relocation and interruption of services to our customers in the greater area of Snohomish-Monroe area. Please contact our relocation engineer Erin Burke at 425-783-4745 to coordinate design and relocation issues.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 425-783-4310.

Sincerely,

Christopher Lee, PE
Principal Engineer

cc. Erin Burke



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



Western Washington Fish and Wildlife Office
510 Desmond Dr. SE, Suite 102
Lacey, Washington 98503

In Reply Refer To:
13410-2008-FA-0137

MAY 22 2008

RECEIVED

MAY 28 2008

ENVIRONMENTAL

Mr. Ben Brown
Washington State Department of Transportation
Northwest Region – Environmental Services
P.O. Box 330310
Seattle, Washington 98133-9710

Dear Mr. Brown:

This letter is in response to the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for the State Route 522, Cathcart Road Vicinity to U.S. Highway 2 Project in Snohomish County, Washington. A copy of the EA and supporting documentation, dated April 2008, was received in our office on April 22, 2008. This office appreciates the opportunity to review and offer comment for the EA and supporting documentation.

The proposed action was the subject of a formal Endangered Species Act section 7 consultation conducted over the period January 2007 – February 2008 (FWS Ref. No. 13410-2007-F-0186). On February 25, 2008, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Western Washington Fish and Wildlife Office - Lacey) signed a Biological Opinion concluding section 7 consultation with the FHWA. This office also previously commented on the proposed action as part of the State's Multi-Agency Permitting Team process (email correspondence dated November 15, 2006).

We are encouraged that the WSDOT and FHWA have considered the issues of aquatic and terrestrial habitat connectivity when scoping and designing the proposed project. We wholeheartedly support your efforts to assess fish and wildlife needs as they relate to the proposed highway corridor improvements, and your efforts to identify and consider reasonable and practicable measures to restore and improve habitat connectivity.

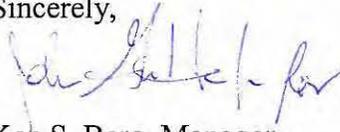
Our comments for the EA are similar to those offered previously during the Multi-Agency Permitting team process, and address specifically your plans for improving terrestrial habitat connectivity and safety (i.e., highway-wildlife interactions and traffic related wildlife mortality):



- The WSDOT and FHWA propose to construct a new combined fish passage and wildlife crossing structure under State Route 522 (MP Vic. 21.97). There are a number of important site and design criteria the proponents should consider and document relative to this proposal (e.g., target species, position in the landscape, adjoining habitat suitability and property ownership, “openness ratio”, need for related barrier or fencing, need for traffic noise abatement or visual cover, etc.). A number of reputable sources provide guidance, tools, and case studies on-line (e.g., <http://www.wildlifecrossings.info/sa014.htm>, <http://www.icoet.net/index.asp>, <http://itre.ncsu.edu/CTE/gateway/home.asp>, http://environment.transportation.org/environmental_issues/construct_maint_prac/compendium/manual/3_4.aspx).
- If you have chosen this location above others along the project corridor, it would be helpful to know what other areas were considered and why this location was chosen instead. [Note: we understand from conversations with the WSDOT (M. MacDonald, pers. comm. 2008), that anecdotal wildlife data collected along the project corridor, landscape/topographical considerations, and the opportunity to address aquatic and terrestrial habitat needs at a single location, all figured into the selection process.] We would encourage that in the future, when documenting decisions about habitat connectivity enhancements, the proponent should provide more information regarding site selection and design criteria.
- Pages 2-24 and 2-25 of the EA identify the tentative and approximate location for more than 1.5 miles of barrier fencing planned in conjunction with the wildlife crossing structure. We advise you to consider carefully what target species the proposed combination of barrier fencing and wildlife undercrossing will (and will not) effectively serve. We suspect that while larger species, and species with large home ranges, may utilize the undercrossing as intended, smaller species will not. This office strongly encourages that the proponents select a barrier fence design that is “permeable” to small- and medium-sized terrestrial wildlife, and which selectively discourages those larger species that are better capable of accessing the wildlife undercrossing. We expect that a selectively permeable barrier fence will best serve the public’s safety needs and the needs of terrestrial wildlife along the project corridor.

If you or your staff would like to discuss these comments, or if this office can be of any further assistance, please contact Ryan McReynolds at (360) 753-6047 or John Grettenberger at (360) 753-6044, of my staff.

Sincerely,



Ken S. Berg, Manager
Western Washington Fish and Wildlife Office

cc:

FHWA, Olympia, WA (B. Hasselbach)
WSDOT, Olympia, WA (P. Wagner)

COMMENT SHEET / FORUMLDRIO DE OPINION**Environmental Hearing Audiencia de Efectos Ambientales****May 8, 2008**

We encourage you to submit your comments on the environmental effects and proposed mitigation presented in the *Environmental Assessment* for this project.

Por favor describa su opinión y crítica del reporte efectos ambientales y mitigación propuestos para el proyecto de ampliación de la Ruta 522.

You may return this sheet to the sign-in table or mail it later to the address on the other side.

Retorne este formulario durante la audiencia en el escritorio de entrada o envíelo por correo a la siguiente dirección WSDOT. Sus comentarios pueden ser escritos en el español.

COMMENTS COMMENTARIO:

1) Place directional signage to Evergreen State Fairgrounds on SR 522 prior to 522/US 2 interchange.

This will guide vehicles to the correct lane prior to entering new Eastbound US 2 off ramp.

Also eliminate vehicles needing to U-turn on US 2 @ Kelsoy.

2) Proposed Stormwater detention at end of Hwy 522 could be mitigated in alternative methods by credits towards other sites. Proposed location appears to be ineffective and not the most creative solution.

Name Nombre (please print)

Address Dirección

City Ciudad

State Estado 522 Widening Project Capital Road Vicinity to US 2
A5-75 Zip Código postal November 2008

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