

DETERMINATION OF NON-SIGNIFICANCE (DNS)

Project title:

State Route (SR) 99 /Aurora Bridge-Pedestrian Fence
Mile Post (MP) 34.17 to MP 34.73

Description of proposal:

This project will add a pedestrian fence to the outside edge of the existing bridge rail to prevent pedestrians from accidentally or intentionally falling over or jumping from the side of the bridge. The fence will run the full length of the bridge on both sides, will be approximately 8 feet-9 inches tall measured from the height of the sidewalk and will have a steel frame that is approximately 4 to 5 inches thick. The fence components will be stainless steel cable, connecting to the bridge by anchoring into existing concrete near the abutments and into existing metal components underneath the bridge.

Proponent: Washington State Department of Transportation

Location of proposal, including street address, if any:

The project is located in the City of Seattle, in King County on the George Washington Memorial Bridge, also known as the Aurora Avenue Bridge, along State Route 99. The project is in Township 25 N, Range 4E, sections 18 and 19.

Lead Agency: Washington State Department of Transportation

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probably significant adverse impact on the environment. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of the completed Environmental Checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

This DNS is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for 14 days from the date of issuance. Comments must be submitted by December 26, 2008

Responsible Official: Kerry Ruth, P.E.

Position/Title: Regional Environmental Programs Manager

Address: P.O. Box 330310, Seattle, WA 98133-9710

Phone: (206) 440-4548

Date: 12/10/08

Signature: 

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), Chapter 43.21C

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), Chapter 43.21C requires all governmental agencies to consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before making decisions. The purpose of this checklist is to provide the information to help you and the agency identify impacts for your proposal (and to reduce or avoid impacts from the proposal, if it can be done) and to help the agency decide whether an Environmental Impact Statement is required. The checklist questions apply to all parts of the proposal, even if they are planned over a period of time. Attach any additional information that will help describe the proposal or its environmental effects. Be prepared to explain answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impacts.

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

**State Route (SR) 99 /Aurora Bridge-Pedestrian Fence
MP 34.17 to MP 34.73**

2. Name of proponent:

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

3. Address and phone number of proponent and contact person:

**Washington State Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 330310
Seattle, WA 98133-9710**

4. Contact person: **Bob Caldwell** Phone: **(206) 440-4907**

Date checklist prepared: **November 25, 2008**

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Washington State Department of Transportation

6. Proposed timing or schedule (include phasing, if applicable):

This proposal is currently scheduled to advertise for bids in August 2009. Construction is estimated to begin in either the Spring or Summer 2010.

7. Are there any plans for future additions, expansions, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

No.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

**Biological Assessment Letter of No Effect (WSDOT)-Pending
Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (WSDOT)-Pending
Spill Prevention Control & Countermeasure Plan –(Construction Contractor)-Pending**

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by the proposal? If yes, explain.

None known.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for the proposal, if known.

**Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board Certificate of Approval (City of Seattle)-Pending
Shoreline Exemption Permit (City of Seattle)-Pending
Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) (Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife)-
Pending
Executive Order 05-05 (WSDOT)-Pending
Noise Variance (City of Seattle)-Pending**

11. Give brief, complete description of the project including (but not limited to) its size, general design elements, and other factors that will give an accurate understanding of its scope and nature. There are several questions in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of the proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page.

This project will add a pedestrian fence to the outside edge of the existing bridge rail to prevent pedestrians from accidentally or intentionally falling over or jumping from the side of the bridge. The fence will run the full length of the bridge on both sides, will be approximately 8 feet-9 inches tall measured from the height of the sidewalk and will have a steel frame that is approximately 4 to 5 inches thick. The fence components will be stainless steel cable. The cable will be anchored to the existing concrete near the abutments and into the existing metal components underneath the bridge.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of the proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township and range, if known. If the proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available.

The proposed pedestrian fence project is located in the City of Seattle in King County on the George Washington Memorial Bridge also known as the Aurora Bridge, along State Route 99, milepost 34.17 to milepost 34.73. The project is located in Township 25 N, Range 4E, Sections 18 and 19.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

- a. General description of the site: (flat, rolling hills, steep slopes, mountainous, other).

The site is flat.

- b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent of slope)?

The steepest slope beneath the bridge is 50%.

- c. What general types of soils are found on the site (e.g., clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.

Soil types beneath and in the vicinity of the bridge are; Till/Hardpan, Sand/Gravel, Silt/Clay.

- d. Are there any indications of a history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

No.

- e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

There will be no fill added to the project site.

- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or land use? If so, generally describe.

No.

- g. About what percent of the site would be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (e.g., asphalt, buildings)?

There will be no additional impervious surface added.

- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:

The contractor will be required to adhere to a Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (TESC) using Best Management Practices (BMP's) as described in the WSDOT Highway Runoff Manual.

2. Air

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (e.g., dust, automobile, odors, industrial, wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities, if known.

During construction there will be a temporary increase in dust particles and engine emissions due to construction activity. There will be no air quality impacts as a result of this project.

- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.

None known.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to the air, if any:

The contractor will be required to adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local air quality regulations. These regulations cover temporary construction conditions such as dust, smoke, and emissions.

3. Water

a. Surface

- 1) Is there any surface water body on, or in, the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

The SR 99 Aurora Bridge spans over the Lake Washington Ship Canal which is located in the north end of Lake Union. The Ship Canal empties into Puget Sound via the Hiram M Chittenden locks.

- 2) Will the project require work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

The project will require work over the water.

- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface waters or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.

No filling or dredging will occur on this project.

- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose and approximate quantities, if known.

The project will not require surface water withdrawals or diversions.

- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100 year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.

The project is not within the floodplain.

- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

No discharge of waste materials to surface water is proposed.

b. Ground

- 1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose and approximate quantities, if known.

Groundwater will not be affected by this project.

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (e.g., domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals...; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses served (if applicable) or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

There will be no waste materials discharged into the ground.

c. Water Runoff (including storm water)

- 1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.

Runoff from rain on the surface of the bridge is collected through an existing drainage system. Water flowing through the drainage pipe empties into the Lake Washington Ship Canal or onto land below the bridge. The proposed project will not change the existing runoff conditions.

- 2) Could waste material enter ground or surface water? If so, generally describe.

There will be no waste materials discharged into the ground. Construction grindings and debris will be contained and disposed off-site.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground and runoff water impacts, if any:

The contractor will be required to adhere to an approved Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan (TESC) designed in accordance with the WSDOT Highway Runoff Manual.

4. Plants

- a. Types of vegetation found on the site.

Vegetation found on the construction site include grasses, black berry vines and deciduous trees.

- b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

Trees with overhanging branches are located near the north abutment and will be trimmed to install the fence.

- c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

There are no listed threatened or endangered plant species known to be on or near the site.

- d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

None required.

5. Animals

- a. Birds or animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.

Pigeons, Cliff Swallows, Peregrine Falcons, and Bald Eagles have been observed near the construction site.

- b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

There are three threatened species that may occur in the general vicinity of the proposed project; they are bull trout, Chinook salmon, and steelhead in the Ship Canal.

- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

No.

- d. Proposed measure to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:

None required.

6. Energy and Natural Resources

- a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove or solar) will be used to meet the completed projects energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

None required.

- b. Would the project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

The project will not affect the potential use of solar energy.

- c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any.

No energy conservation features are included.

7. Environmental Health

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.

The risk of environmental incident is always present during construction. Standard construction methods and traffic control measures will be employed to minimize the risk of an incident.

- 1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

None required.

- 2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

Standard construction practices, safety measures, and traffic control measures will be required of the contractor. Any hazardous waste generated by the project will be handled in accordance with Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Ecology, and local agency regulations.

b. Noise

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (e.g., traffic, equipment, operation, other).

No known types of noise exist in the construction area affecting this project.

- 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short term or long term basis (e.g., traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

During construction, additional traffic noise generated by construction vehicles and the use of pneumatic tools to attach the fence to the bridge structure may increase noise levels temporarily. Construction noise would occur between 6 AM and 8 PM. Upon completion, noise would return to pre-project levels.

- 3). Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

The contractor will be required to adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local noise regulations governing construction activity.

8. Land and Shoreline Use

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?

The site is used as highway right of way. Adjacent land use is residential, commercial, and recreational.

- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.

No.

- c. Describe any structures on the site.

The only structure on the site is the George Washington Memorial Bridge also known as the SR 99 Aurora Bridge.

- d. Will any structure be demolished? If so, what?

No structures will be demolished.

- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

Highway Right of Way.

- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

Transportation corridor.

- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

The master program designation of the site is urban.

h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.
The Ship Canal and associated buffers have been classified as environmentally sensitive areas.

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?
None.

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?
None.

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:
None required.

l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:
None required.

9. Housing

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.
None.

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.
None.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:
None required.

10. Aesthetics

a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

The height of the proposed fence would be 8 feet-9 inches tall measured from the existing sidewalk elevation. Steel is the principal material.

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

Views to and from the bridge would be partially obstructed by the fence. Currently, motorists or pedestrians on the bridge are able to look toward the sides of the bridge and have a nearly unobstructed view above the existing bridge rail. The new fence is designed in a manner to maximize transparency by the use of thin vertical elements, however, due to the height of the fence, there is no way to avoid partial loss of the view from the bridge. From the perspective of an individual looking toward the bridge from off of the structure, the new fence will be recognizable as adding approximately 5' to the height of the bridge. From increased distances, this will be less apparent, due to the large scale of the overall structure and large steel cantilever components below the roadway deck.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

The proposed fence is being designed to minimize visual impacts, and in a style that is compatible with the historic nature of the bridge. The design will be approved by the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board in consultation with the State Dept. of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP).

11. Light and Glare

- a. What types of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

No light or glare will be generated by the project.

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

No.

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

None.

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

None required.

12. Recreation

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

The SR 99 Aurora Bridge is located over the Lake Washington Ship Canal. This waterway is used for fishing, and boating. An adjacent path is used by walkers and bicyclists.

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.
- No.**
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project, if any:

None required.

13. Historic and Cultural Preservation

- a. Are there any places on or objects listed on or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.

The SR 99 Aurora Bridge is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The bridge is also listed as a City of Seattle Historic Landmark.

- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site. If so, generally describe.

The Aurora Bridge is significant as the second longest cantilevered deck truss bridge in the state, and it is locally significant as it provided a motor vehicle crossing on Washington's primary north-south highway, the Pacific Highway. The bridge is also listed as a City of Seattle Historic Landmark and was documented by the Historic American Engineering Record (Haer-No. WA-107).

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:

The pedestrian fence is being designed in coordination with Washington State Dept. of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board and the United States Secretary of the Interior standards. The fence will not be attached to the existing rail and will be removable if it is warranted.

14. Transportation

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

State Route 99 serves the project area.

- b. Is the site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

Metro Transit has routes that cross the bridge. The nearest stop is approximately 100' from the end of the bridge. There are no transit stops on the bridge.

- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?

None.

- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

No.

- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

There is water and seaplane transportation on the Lake Washington Ship Canal but this project will not use either form. Passenger and freight train service is nearby but will not be used by this proposal.

- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.

None.

- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

Traffic control plans will be developed to minimize disruptions to traffic. This will include staging the work to limit work to one side at a time.

15. Public Services

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (e.g., fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

This proposal will not increase the need for additional services. However, during construction, emergency response times could temporarily increase.

- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any:

Flaggers will be used to reduce impacts on public services. State patrol will be used if necessary in an emergency.

16. Utilities

- a. Utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.

Electricity (Seattle City Light, PSE) and telephone lines (Qwest) cross the bridge. Call boxes are also located on the bridge.

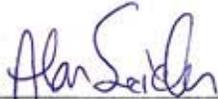
- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

No additional utilities are needed for the proposed project. There will be no changes to existing utilities.

C. SIGNATURE

The above answers are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

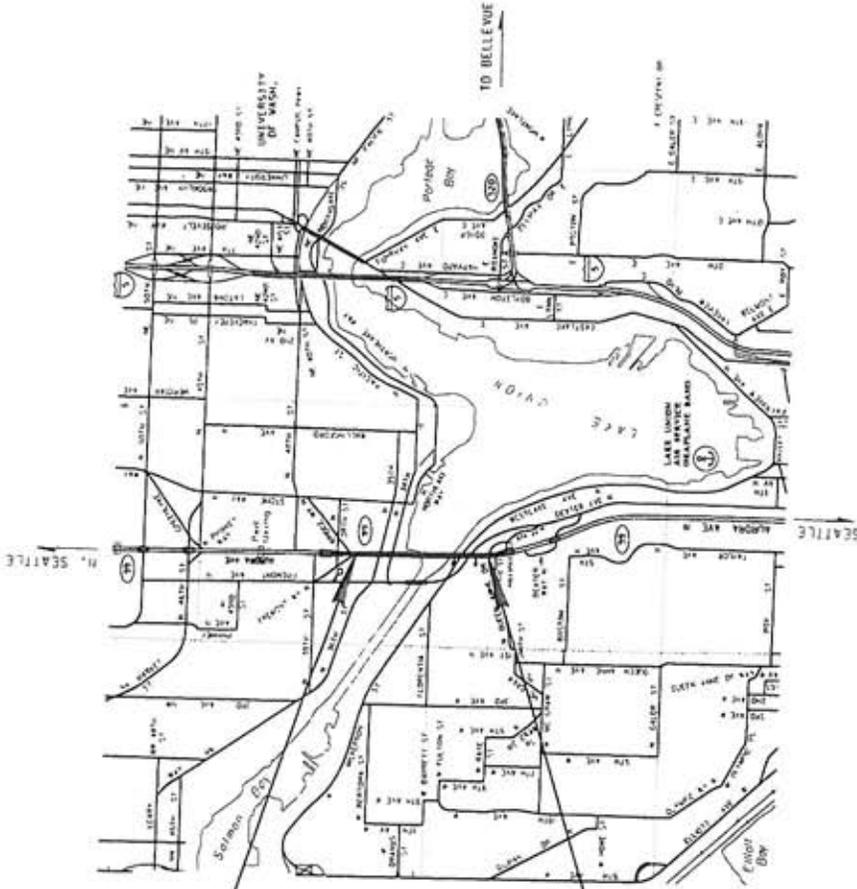


Regional Environmental Documentation Manager

Date submitted: _____

12/3/08

T.25N., R.4E., W.M.
CITY OF SEATTLE



END PROJECT
SR 99 MP 34.73
BRIDGE NO. 99/560

BEGIN PROJECT
SR 99 MP 34.17
BRIDGE NO. 99/560

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