What is scoping?

The purpose of scoping is to gather public input on what issues should be considered and evaluated in the environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Early Pontoon Construction Project.

We would especially like to hear from you on the following topics:

- natural and man-made environmental issues that should be studied.
- ways to avoid, minimize or mitigate the environmental effects of the project.
- alternatives we should study.

WSDOT employees and tour group walking on the pontoons supporting the columns and roadway of the SR 520 Evergreen Floating Bridge across Lake Washington

How did we identify the Grays Harbor property?

The Industrial Development District Parcel #1 at the Port of Grays Harbor meets several criteria for catastrophic failure planning:

- immediately available.
- at least 30 acres in size.
- sufficient capacity to build several pontoons simultaneously.
- consistency with local land use plans.
- waterfront access.
- access to deep water.
- no known cultural resources.
- no known chemical contamination.
- a 2007 labor study indicated that the region could provide enough skilled workers to complete this project.

Map of the property being evaluated at the Port of Grays Harbor

What preliminary investigations have we completed so far?

We have conducted preliminary investigations to help us determine the suitability of this location for the project. We wanted to find out what we would encounter when developing this property. Our crews:

- determined potential for historic and cultural resources at the property.
- tested for environmental contaminants.
- identified wetlands and habitats.
- gathered soil and sediment samples.

Crews gathering core samples

The samples were carefully identified and then surveyed in the lab for potential evidence of historical and cultural resources

What alternatives will we evaluate?

We will evaluate three build alternatives and a no-build alternative. The no-build alternative assumes that the property would remain undeveloped and retain its existing features.

The three build alternatives are:

- casting basin.
- barge launch.
- barge slip.

Why are we studying a "no-build" alternative?

- evaluating a no-build alternative is required by the National Environmental Policy Act.
- the no-build alternative establishes a baseline for comparison with the other alternatives.

Aerial photo of Industrial Development District Parcel #1, the 40-acre property in Hoquiam proposed for the Early Pontoon Construction Project

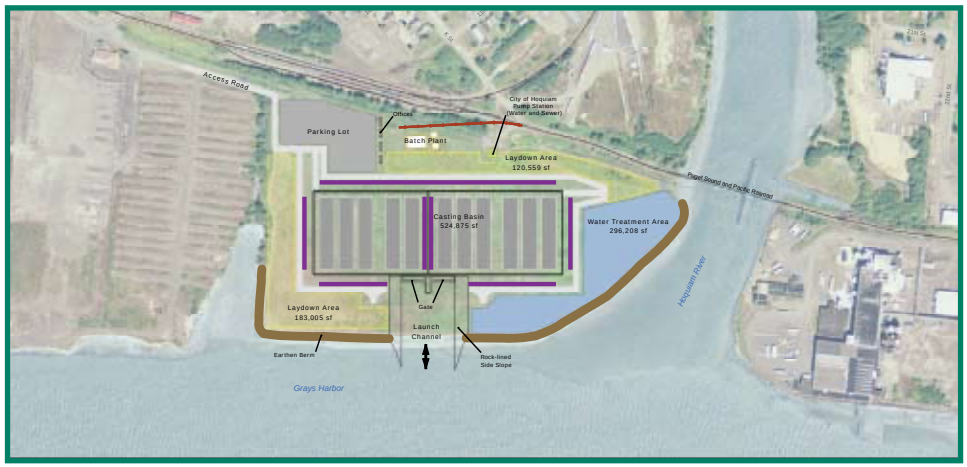
How would we develop and use the site in the casting basin alternative?

Prepare site

1. Excavate a 28-foot-deep work area (or basin), drive piles, and pour a concrete slab at the bottom.
2. Stabilize the sides of the basin with concrete walls and seal off from open water with a gate.
3. Construct the support facilities.

Construct and launch pontoons

4. Construct multiple pontoons within the basin.
5. Fill the basin with water once the pontoons are complete and ready to launch.
6. Open the gate and use tugboats to tow the pontoons to one or more moorage locations in Grays Harbor.
7. Drain the basin and repeat the process for other pontoons.



A concept of the casting basin alternative at the proposed project location

How would we develop and use the site in the barge launch alternative?

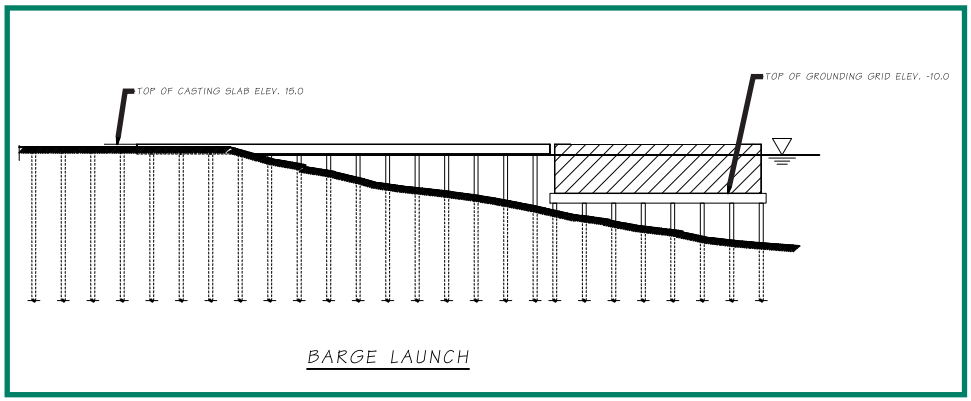
Prepare site

1. Drive piles and construct a work area on a concrete slab at ground level.
2. Construct a pier from the work area into Grays Harbor.
3. Construct an underwater grid of piles at the end of the pier to support the barge.
4. Construct the support facilities.

Construct and launch pontoons

5. Construct multiple pontoons.
6. Load the pontoons onto a barge submerged on the grid.
7. Tow the barge to deep water and re-submerge, allowing the pontoons to float off the barge.
8. Tow the pontoons to one or more moorage locations in Grays Harbor.
9. Move barge back to the construction facility and repeat the process for other pontoons.

A concept of the barge launch alternative at the proposed project location



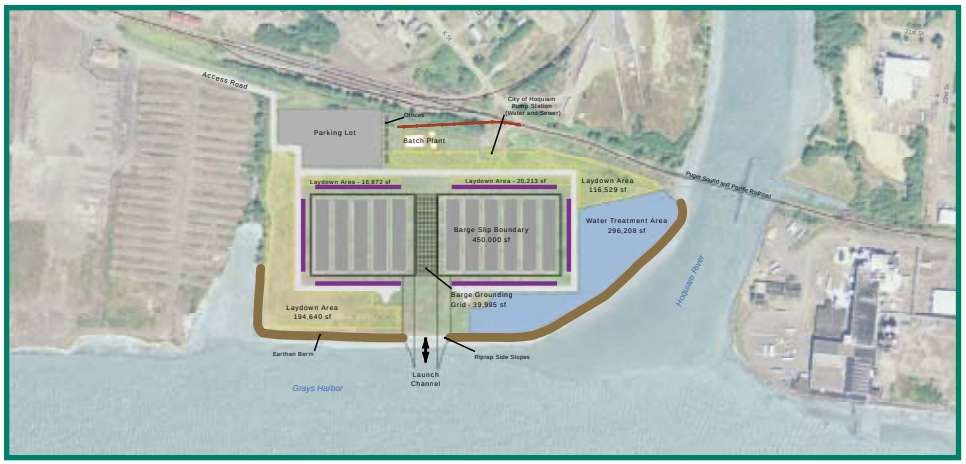
How would we develop and use the site in the barge slip alternative?

Prepare site

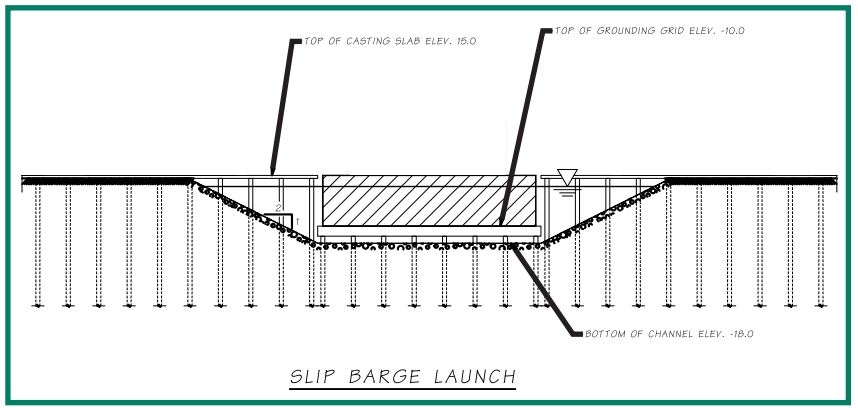
1. Drive piles and construct two work areas on concrete slabs at ground level.
2. Excavate a channel between the two work areas.
3. Build an underwater grid of piles in the channel.
4. Construct the support facilities.

Construct and launch pontoons

5. Construct multiple pontoons.
6. Load pontoons onto a barge submerged on the support grid.
7. Tow the barge to deep water and re-submerge, allowing the pontoons to float off the barge.
8. Tow the pontoons to one or more moorage locations in Grays Harbor.
9. Move barge back to the construction facility and repeat the process for other pontoons.



A concept of the barge slip alternative at the proposed project location



What support facilities are needed for all build alternatives?

Each of the construction alternatives would require the following support facilities:

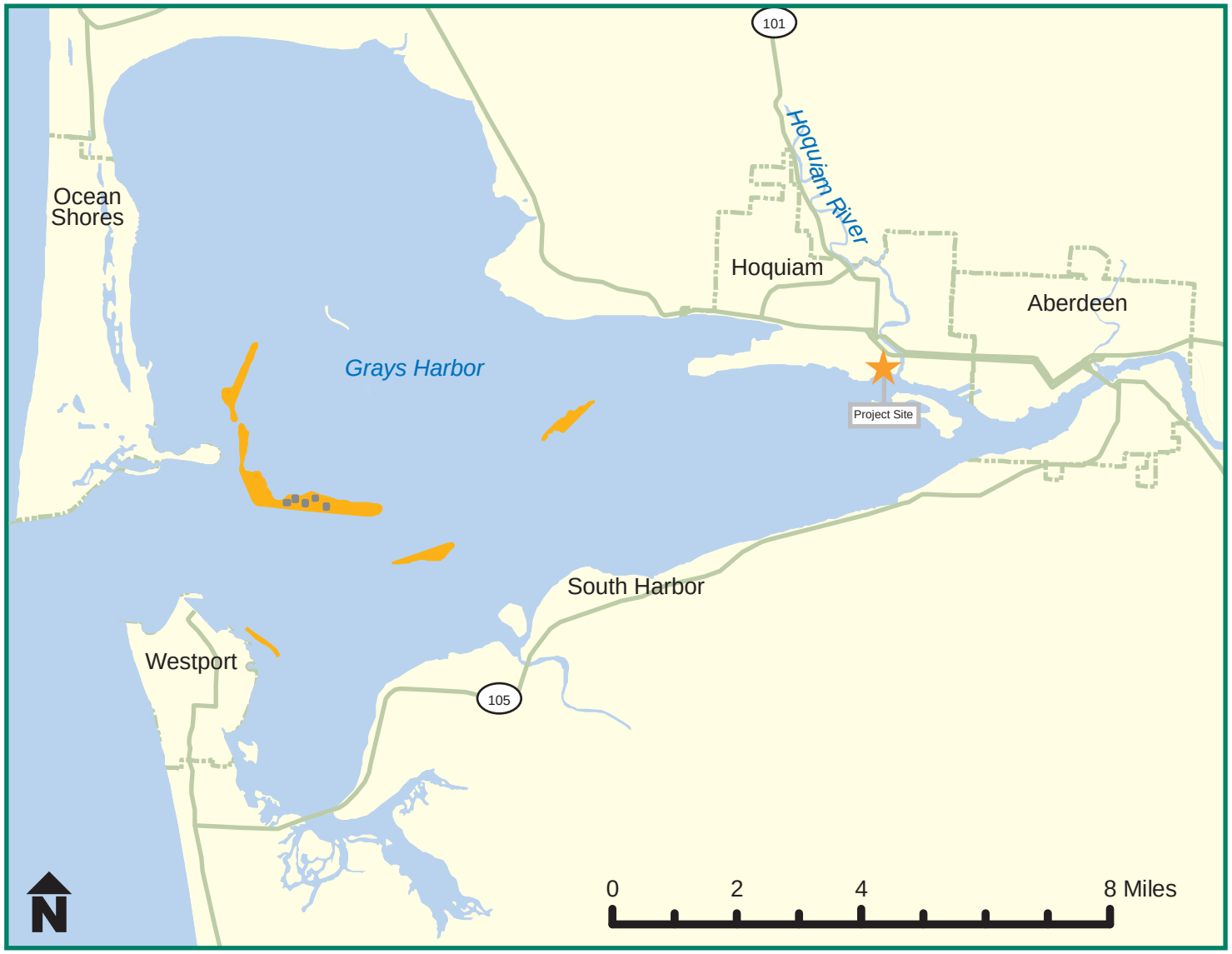
- access roads.
- parking lot.
- office.
- concrete batch plant.
- laydown area.
- water treatment area.
- rail spur from existing rail line.

Concrete batch plant:
where sand, gravel, cement, water and other materials are turned into concrete

Laydown area:
staging area for construction equipment

Water treatment area:
where water is collected, treated and released

Where will we store pontoons?



We will study potential locations to store pontoons in open water at Grays Harbor. Pontoons could also be stored at the project site.

Key:

- Project Site
- Potential open water moorage locations
- Size of four-pontoon rafts in relation to possible moorage locations

What environmental topics will we study?

We will evaluate the following topics in the EIS:

- air quality
- construction effects
- economics
- energy
- environmental justice
- fisheries
- geology and soils
- hazardous materials
- historical and archaeological resources
- indirect and cumulative effects
- land use
- mitigation
- navigable waterways
- noise
- public services and utilities
- recreation
- social elements
- transportation
- Tribal fisheries and cultural resources
- visual quality
- water resources
- wetlands
- wildlife




What areas are you interested in?

How can you comment on this project?

The comment period for our scoping process is **January 3 to February 1, 2008**.

You can give us your comments in the following ways:

- fill out a comment form and drop it in the comment boxes, or mail it to the project office.
- talk to the court reporter and have your comments recorded.
- e-mail your comments to pontoons@wsdot.wa.gov.

We will consider your comments as we move forward with design and planning. We will compile all the comments in a scoping report and post it on our Web site. We will also include a summary of the response to the comments in the draft EIS.

Public meetings provide opportunities for the public to provide input

Is there another way to acquire pontoons?

We are exploring other ways for obtaining pontoons. We are looking at opportunities to work collaboratively with the contracting community. Contractors can help us identify:

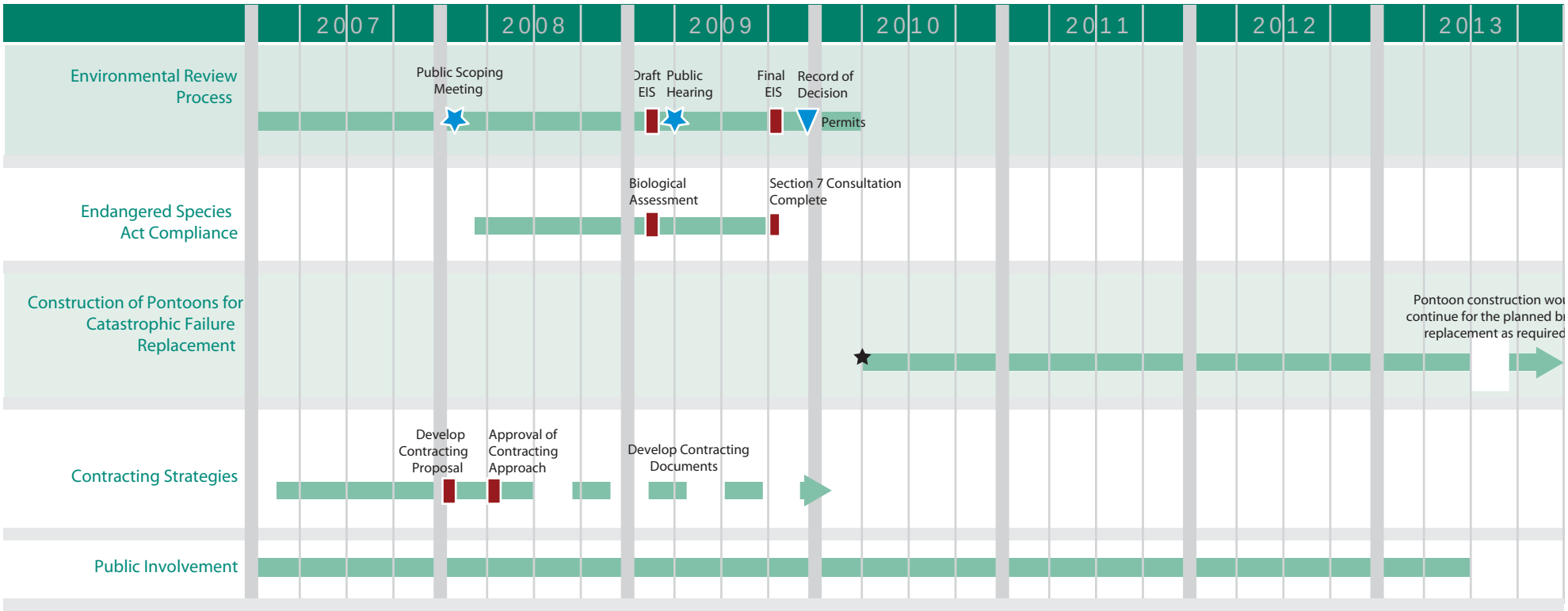
- innovative construction techniques.
- alternate contracting approaches.
- potential cost and schedule savings.

When a contractor is selected, they will have the opportunity to use a location reviewed through the environmental process, or propose other options for pontoon construction.

How can I do business with WSDOT?
All WSDOT projects are open for bid and are advertised on our Contract Ad and Award Web page: ***www.wsdot.wa.gov/biz/contaa***

WSDOT trucks on the way to a project site

Project Schedule for Early Pontoon Construction



★ Depending on funding availability

What is the Early Pontoon Construction Project?
What is the SR 520 Project?

Early Pontoon Construction Project
The Early Pontoon Construction Project focuses on the need to restore the existing SR 520 bridge in the event of a catastrophic failure.

Waves batter the pontoons of the SR 520 bridge over Lake Washington during a winter storm

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project
The SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project is evaluating the long-term needs of the SR 520 corridor from I-5 to I-405.

Our plans for early pontoon construction do not limit our choices for the final design for the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project.

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project corridor (highlighted in red)

Why is WSDOT pursuing this project?

The purpose of the project is to expedite construction of pontoons to restore the SR 520 Evergreen Point Bridge in the event of a catastrophic failure. The pontoons would be of the size and type necessary to restore the existing bridge.

Why is this project needed now?

- Evergreen Point Bridge is vulnerable to windstorms.
- Evergreen Point Bridge is a key regional transportation link.
- building pontoons for the Evergreen Point Bridge can take three to five years.

The SR 520 floating bridge is battered by waves during the February 2006 winter windstorm

If the pontoons are not used for an emergency recovery of the SR 520 floating bridge, they can be used to:

- replace the Evergreen Point Bridge in any configuration currently under consideration; or
- replace or repair other WSDOT floating bridges.

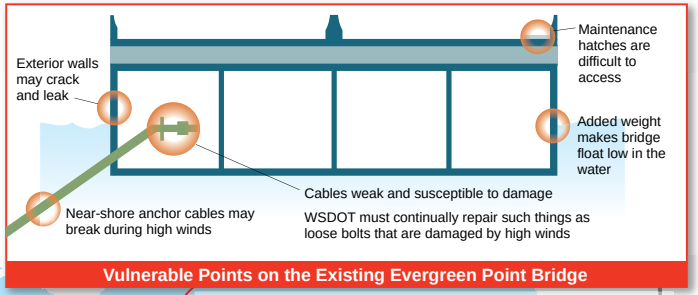
What are the vulnerabilities of the current bridge?

Natural disasters could strike the Puget Sound region before SR 520 can be replaced.

- the Evergreen Point Bridge is vulnerable to windstorms and wave action.
- WSDOT has started planning for a possible catastrophic failure of the SR 520 bridge.
- we will need new pontoons to restore bridge function under any failure scenario or planned replacement.
- the fixed structures are also vulnerable to earthquakes.

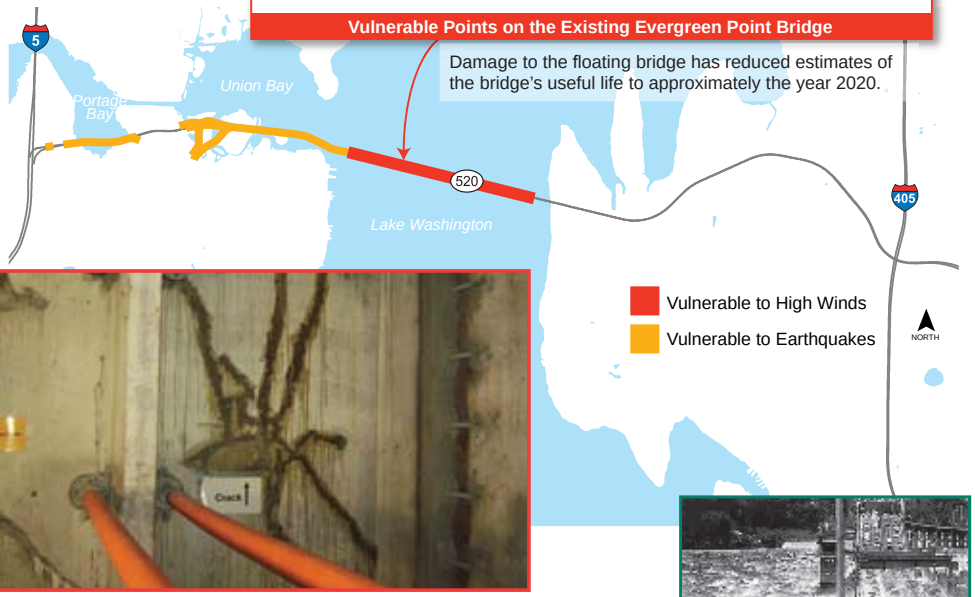
Current Vulnerabilities

A torn cable joint found during a routine inspection in February 2006. The cables connect the floating bridge pontoons to their underwater lakebed anchors.



Vulnerable Points on the Existing Evergreen Point Bridge

Damage to the floating bridge has reduced estimates of the bridge's useful life to approximately the year 2020.

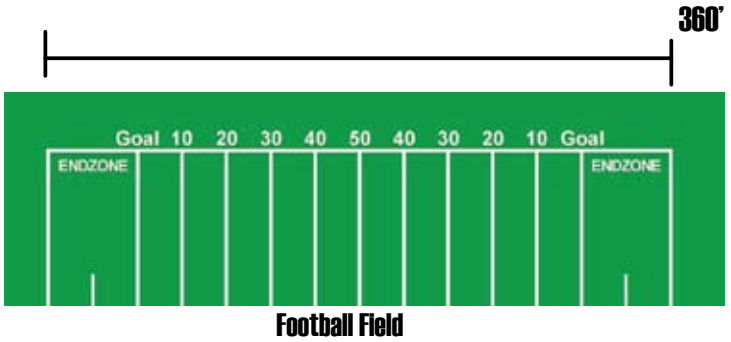


What are bridge pontoons?

Pontoons are the foundation of a floating bridge.

- bridge pontoons are hollow concrete structures designed to support the weight of the road, and the weight of the vehicles that use the bridge.

Pontoon Length



Depending on the bridge design, pontoons can be as long as a football field and as tall as a two-story building.

Climbing into SR 520 bridge pontoon

Crews show tour group watertight hatches inside pontoons

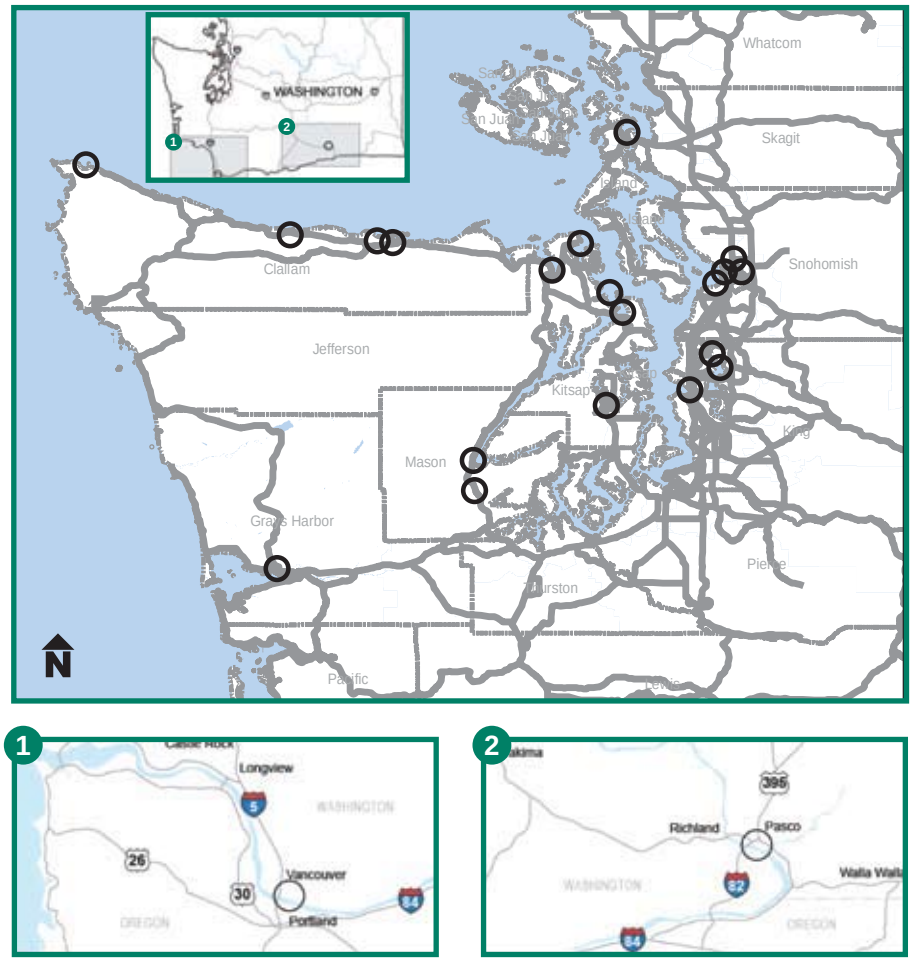
How did we evaluate potential project locations?

To identify a list of potential project locations we:

- solicited for potential construction locations in 2004 that resulted in 18 potential sites for consideration.
- reviewed recommendations from an expert review panel in 2006 that resulted in four potential sites for consideration.
- received private proposals that resulted in two potential sites for consideration.

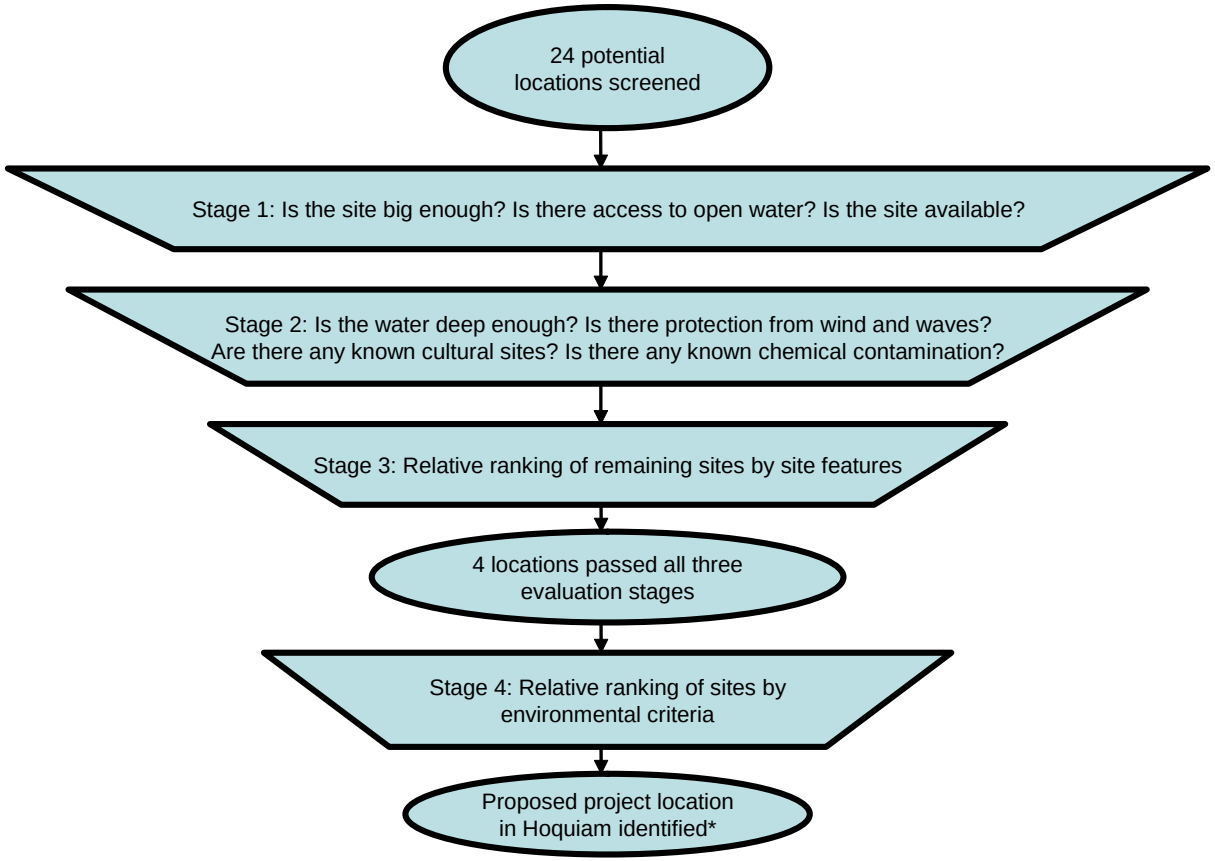
These locations were evaluated based on:

- ability to meet basic functional requirements.
- potential effects on the environment.
- potential effects on project schedule and costs.



Map showing locations evaluated for the Early Pontoon Construction Project

How did we narrow the list of potential project locations?



* One additional site passed all the evaluation stages, but is no longer available

Stage 3 Criteria:

- towing distance.
- waterfront length.
- land access.
- existing facilities, such as docks or bulkheads.
- proximity of other commercial marine facilities.
- proximity of local rail service.
- access to aggregate.
- proximity of commercial concrete plants.
- utilities on or adjacent to site.
- availability of tradespeople.
- local community support for project.
- availability of current site data

Stage 4 Criteria:

- potential disturbance to public parks.
- community compatibility.
- local land use regulations.