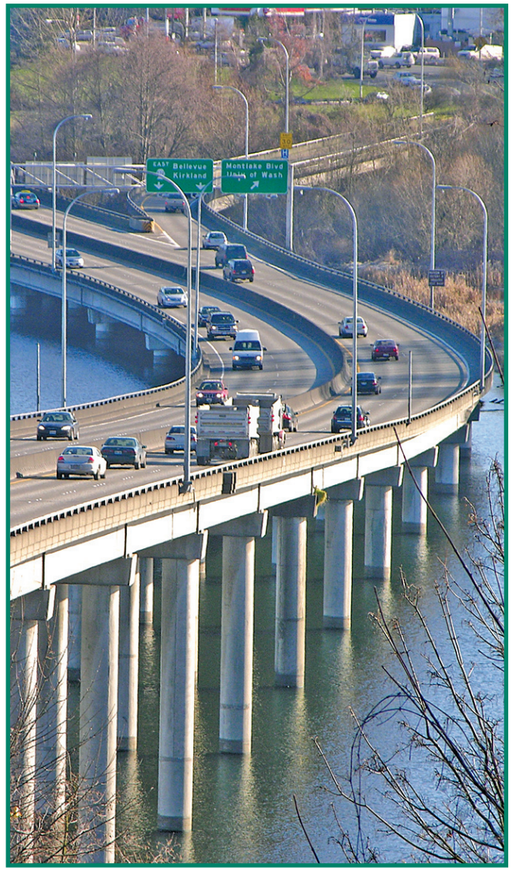

The west end of the SR 520 corridor

Fairweather Creek crosses SR 520 before emptying into Lake Washington

See inside to learn:

- How we're using public comments
- How we're moving forward with environmental work

For More Information

Project Web site:
www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR520Bridge

Phone: 206-781-3922

E-mail: SR520Bridge@wsdot.wa.gov

Washington State Department of Transportation

ADA Information: Materials can be provided in alternative formats: large print, Braille, cassette tape, or on computer disk for people with disabilities by calling the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) at (360) 705-7097. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may contact OEO through the Washington Relay Service at 7-1-1.

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Washington State Department of Transportation

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project

State Route 520

Summer 2007

Environmental Update

WSDOT strives to deliver the best transportation solutions and value with the least possible negative effects on the community and natural surroundings. The SR 520 Project team is committed to being a good steward of the environment, and the new SR 520 bridge will be designed and built with the environment in mind.

What is an environmental impact statement?

An environmental impact statement (EIS) is a document that describes a project's purpose, proposed construction plans, and potential effects related to the natural, human, and built environment. Developing an EIS is required to comply with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA). Before finalizing an EIS, WSDOT must release the draft document so the public can review it, provide feedback, and ask questions.

Has WSDOT studied how the natural and built environment could be affected by the SR 520 Project?

Yes, in the summer of 2006, WSDOT published a draft EIS describing how the SR 520 Project could affect the environment in the project area. Writing a draft EIS is a key step in the process to identify the preferred alternative for replacing the bridge.

What are the next steps in the environmental process?

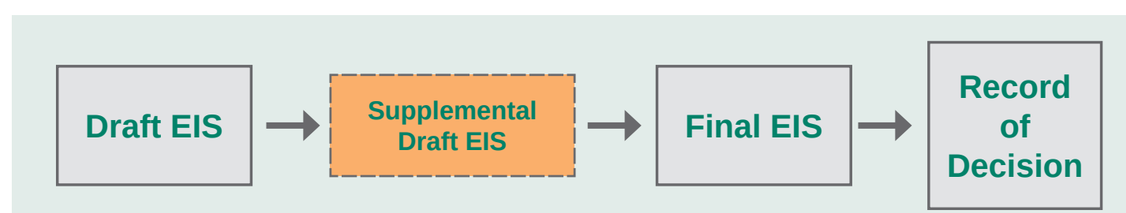
WSDOT has decided that the best path forward is to develop a supplemental draft EIS, an interim document between the draft EIS and final EIS. Like a draft EIS, a supplemental draft EIS is distributed for public and agency comment. WSDOT will then prepare a final EIS, and respond to comments received on both the draft and supplemental draft EIS documents. After we publish the final EIS, FHWA will prepare a Record of Decision (ROD), a written public report describing the project's course of action and specific mitigation measures. Once the ROD is issued, WSDOT will have completed the environmental review process and can begin seeking construction permits.

What information will the supplemental draft EIS contain?

The supplemental study will evaluate additional or refined 6-lane design options. In December 2006, Governor Gregoire directed WSDOT to move forward with design and environmental review of a 6-lane corridor in a "4+2" configuration (four general-purpose lanes and two high-occupancy vehicle lanes).

The supplemental draft EIS will also evaluate sites and construction methods for constructing pontoons for the Evergreen Point floating bridge. (When the draft EIS was published in August 2006, WSDOT

This graphic shows major steps in the environmental review process. The SR 520 Project is moving forward with a supplemental draft EIS.



Washington State Department of Transportation | SoundTransit | U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration

Salmon in a local stream

was exploring alternative sites for pontoon construction.) The analysis will also address issues raised by the public and agencies who commented on the draft EIS, such as adding more detail about construction methods and mitigation measures.

How long will it take to publish the supplemental draft EIS?

Completing the supplemental draft EIS will take about two years. Spending time now to understand all relevant issues will help identify the best replacement alternative.

When was the SR 520 Project Draft EIS public comment period and what were the results?

We held the official draft EIS review and comment period in the fall of 2006. During the 10-week period, we received more than 1,700 comments from individuals, communities, lawmakers and organizations.

You can read the complete draft EIS and the public comment summary at www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR520Bridge. You can also request a CD-ROM or printed copy by sending an E-mail to *SR520Bridge@wsdot.wa.gov.*

What will WSDOT do with public comments on the draft and supplemental draft EIS?

The project team is reviewing, logging and responding to each comment received during the draft EIS comment period.

The project team uses these comments and other public feedback to learn how the project could affect individuals and communities, and to help shape plans for ongoing work. The team will treat public comments on the supplemental draft EIS in the same way, and respond to public comments on both documents in the final EIS. We also identified the most commonly asked questions during the draft EIS comment period, and have included answers to these questions on the project Web site: www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/Questions.htm.

Where can I find more environmental information?

The SR 520 Project team provides more information on specific topics – like ecosystems, water resources, and air quality – in supporting studies called discipline reports. You can view these reports online in the project library at www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR520Bridge/Library.htm. Scroll down to the "Appendices and Addenda" heading.

Top 10 public comment themes on the draft EIS

- Traffic
- Transportation systems and transit
- Parks and recreation
- Urban design, lids, and visual quality and aesthetics
- Agency coordination and public involvement
- Funding and tolling
- Neighborhoods and communities
- Noise
- Bicycle and pedestrian access
- Wetlands

Topic	Work Underway
Environmental process and permitting	Meeting regularly with regulatory agencies, jurisdictions, and tribes to share project information and develop approaches to resolve technical issues
Fish and wildlife	• Developing designs that remove obstacles to fish trying to cross under SR 520 to reach upstream habitat on the Eastside • Tracking fish to determine how salmonids travel under the bridge in Lake Washington
Water quality	• Evaluating innovative water quality treatment solutions (see below) • Continuing work on the stormwater management plan • Evaluating opportunities to enhance and restore the Yarrow Creek watershed
Noise	Testing quieter pavement on SR 520 this summer between Medina and Bellevue to determine if it effectively reduces roadway noise levels
Pontoon construction site	Continuing to evaluate potential construction sites and construction methods

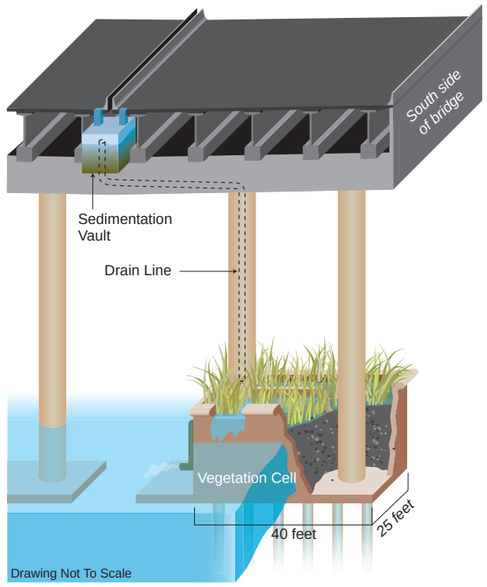
Moving forward with environmental work

The SR 520 team is working hard to design a project that integrates well with the surrounding environment and respects community values. The table above describes how we are moving environmental work forward.

What other environmental work is planned in 2007?

During the second half of 2007, WSDOT will:

- Continue mitigation planning for natural resources, cultural resources, and parks
- Continue refining project design with Eastside communities in ways that support community values
- Support the mediation process on the west side to determine the best bridge configuration connecting to Seattle
- Conduct additional field studies to support pontoon construction site analysis (e.g., cultural resources, environmental investigations, air quality, etc.)



Stormwater treatment wetland at bridge column