

**February 19, 2015**

**Weekly Update to Constituents: SR 305 Agate Pass Bridge**

WSDOT would like to share with you an update on the Agate Pass Bridge cleaning project. The hand-cleaning of the bridge is now done. In total, crews hand-removed about 9 tons of dirt and debris from the bridge. Over the last few days, they have been flushing the bridge with low-pressure water to complete the cleaning process.

Crews are now turning their attention to removing rust, in preparation for an in-depth bridge inspection. They use specialized air-powered tools that grind the rust away and contain it in a connected vacuum system. After the rust is removed, they apply a zinc coating that galvanizes (oxidizes), which then helps protect the underlying steel from future rust.

Traffic volumes remain manageable, thanks to drivers who continue to avoid the bridge during our work hours. Washington State Ferries has noted about a 5 percent decrease in vehicles on their daytime Bainbridge Island runs, and a 3 percent and 4.5 percent increase in their daytime Bremerton and Kingston runs, respectively. Ferries continue to have excess capacity on the daytime Bremerton and Kingston runs, and we continue to encourage people to use those other ferry routes if possible.

Over the President's Day weekend, we did see an increase in traffic volumes to the point where we opted to stop work a few hours early each day to alleviate the backups.

We have also received reports of sightings of Peregrine Falcons near the bridge. Although we have not yet seen actual nests on the bridge, our crews are mindful of the potential of nesting birds and are keeping an eye out for them.

In general, crews continue to find what they expected to find on a bridge of this age – missing or rusted rivet heads, rusty bridge pins, chipped and broken sidewalk sections, etc. We will know more about the overall condition of the bridge after a complete inspection is done next week by WSDOT bridge preservation engineers.

WSDOT remains on schedule and currently see no change to the February 28 ending date. We will send another update next week, and we thank you for your continued support and cooperation.



This photo shows an area of the bridge before the rust was removed.



Following rust removal, crews treated the area with a zinc-based product to protect the underlying steel.

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A reminder that on Sunday, Feb. 22, the Chilly Hilly bike ride is scheduled to take place between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Although the bike route does not cross the Agate Pass Bridge, we expect higher traffic volumes on SR 305 as participants from the Kitsap Peninsula drive to the starting point in Bainbridge Island. We have worked with the Chilly Hilly organizers to inform those participants of our work, and to ask them to plan their trips accordingly.