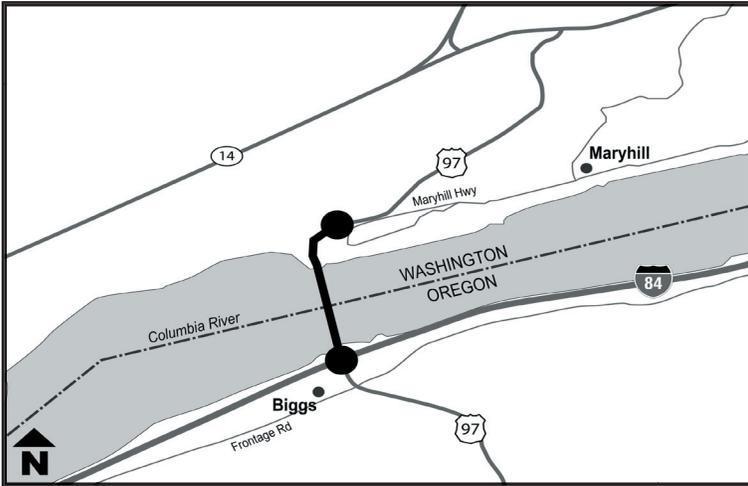




YOU'RE INVITED: Project Open Houses Scheduled

US 97, Biggs Rapids Bridge Deck Replacement



Open House #1	Open House #2
Tuesday, February 15, 2005	Thursday, February 24, 2005
5 p.m. to 8 p.m. (stop by anytime)	5 p.m. to 8 p.m. (stop by anytime)
Goldendale High School Cafeteria	Rufus School/Community Center
525 Simcoe Drive	304 W. 2nd Street
Goldendale, WA	Rufus, OR

The public is invited to attend either of the open houses to find out more about the project and the two possible construction staging options. Staff from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) will be available to discuss the project and answer any questions.

People who attend will be encouraged to fill out a comment sheet explaining which construction option they prefer and why. Additional feedback about the project in general, other concerns and suggestions are also welcome. The open houses will be casual, with no formal presentations. The public is welcome to stop by between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information: Individuals requiring reasonable accommodations may request written materials in alternate formats, sign language interpreters, physical accessibility accommodations, or other reasonable accommodation by contacting WSDOT's Columbia River Gorge Area Engineering Office at 360-759-1310, usually two weeks before meeting's date (February 15 and February 24). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may call the Washington State Telecommunications Relay Service, or Tele-Braille at 7-1-1, Voice 1-800-833-6384, and ask to be connected to the event sponsor's phone number.

Title VI Statement to Public: It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin and sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). For Title VI complaint forms and advice, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7098.

Project Description

This project will replace the existing deck on the US 97 Biggs Rapids-Sam Hill Bridge with a more durable one, replace the existing shoulder curbing with two-foot wide shoulders on both sides of the bridge, install new bridge rail and improve the drainage system.

Purpose

The Biggs Rapids-Sam Hill Bridge provides a vital link for Oregon and Washington commuters and trucking commerce. Over the past several years, the bridge's deck has begun to crack and deteriorate, and it continues to get worse despite several maintenance projects. As a result, non-catastrophic failure of the existing deck is anticipated at some point during the next several years. Funding to construct this project will not be available until 2010. However, if the deterioration of the existing bridge deck reaches a critical point before this time, the project will be constructed early using an emergency contract. WSDOT does **not** anticipate catastrophic

bridge failure, but notes that a significant increase in the amount and severity of the deterioration already occurring is imminent.

Timeline

Summer 2005:
Design begins

Summer 2007:
Design completed

Spring 2010:
Construction tentatively scheduled to begin (depending on availability of funding)

The project will be accelerated using an emergency contract if the deterioration of the existing bridge deck reaches a critical point before summer 2007, work on the project's design also would be accelerated to accommodate early construction.





WSDOT - SOUTHWEST REGION
CHUCK RUHSENBERGER
P.O. BOX 1709
VANCOUVER, WA 98668-1709

POSTAL CUSTOMER

Project Open Houses Scheduled



Project Contact Information

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about this project, or would like more information, please feel free to contact us:

Chuck Ruhsenberger,
Columbia River Gorge Area Engineer
P.O. Box 1709, Vancouver, WA 98668-1709

swcgaeo@wsdot.wa.gov
360-759-1310
toll-free 1-866-279-0730

www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/US97biggsbridge

Open House #1

Tuesday, February 15, 2005

5 p.m. to 8 p.m. (stop by anytime)
Goldendale High School Cafeteria
525 Simcoe Drive, Goldendale, WA

Open House #2

Thursday, February 24, 2005

5 p.m. to 8 p.m. (stop by anytime)
Rufus School/Community Center
304 W. 2nd Street, Rufus, OR

How much will it cost?

It is estimated that design and construction of this project will cost between \$10 - 16 million. As stipulated in Oregon and Washington's Border Bridges Agreement, construction and maintenance costs for the Biggs Rapids-Sam Hill Bridge will be shared equally by the two states. WSDOT will design the deck replacement project and oversee its construction, with review and approval from the Oregon Department of Transportation.

197 bridge at The Dalles Dam. This detour will add approximately 50 minutes to an average commute between Goldendale, WA and Biggs, OR.

- No additional closures of the bridge would be necessary after this four-month period.

Option #2: Staged Construction

- This option would require 18 months of single lane closures across the full length of the bridge.
- The single lane closures would remain in place 24-hours-a-day, seven days a week throughout construction including holidays.
- Flaggers and/or pilot cars would control motorist movements with delays of up to 20 minutes.
- There would be 10-11 foot width restrictions on the bridge throughout construction.
- There would be six, 48-hour full bridge closures to allow the concrete deck to be poured and allow the concrete to cure.
- There would be truck weight restrictions on the bridge for 24-hours after each of the six concrete pours mentioned above.

Public input will be very important in determining how this project is built. We want to hear how both options will affect you, your family or your business, and which option you would prefer.

Construction Staging Options

What do you think?

This project must be built. Not replacing the bridge deck will result in a critical failure, which will force the closure of the bridge first to trucks and then eventually to all traffic. After reviewing the feasibility of a variety of deck replacement scenarios, WSDOT has narrowed down the list of construction staging options to two.

Option #1: Full Bridge Closure

- The entire bridge would be closed around the clock for approximately four months in a row.
- Motorists wishing to cross the Columbia River would detour 20 miles west to the US

For those of you who cannot attend the public open houses on February 15 and 24 and do not have e-mail access, an addressed comment card is attached to the bottom of this newsletter. Simply fill in your comments, cut the card out, apply first-class postage (\$.37) and put it in the mail.

If you'd like to send your comments to the project staff by e-mail, please see the Project Contact Information Section of this newsletter. WSDOT will accept public feedback about how the project should be built until March 25, 2005, when a decision will be made on how to stage project construction.

Please tell us which of the two construction staging options detailed in this newsletter you prefer and why. Thank you.
