

Chapter 4 Consultation and Coordination

This chapter summarizes the public involvement activities that FHWA and WSDOT carried out as part of this environmental analysis, how the public can comment on this Draft Supplemental EIS, and WSDOT's consultation and coordination with federal and state agencies and potentially affected tribes.

4.1 How has the public been involved in the I-90 project?

Throughout the duration of I-90 project, WSDOT has included the public in the environmental impact analysis process. In July 2012, WSDOT prepared a Draft Communications Plan for the Phase 1C Cost Reduction Incentive Proposal process, including this Supplemental EIS. The plan identified the methods for communicating information with the public, which include:

- The I-90 project website:
www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/I90/SnoqualmiePassEast
- The I-90 email list-serve
- Social networking tools (Twitter, Flickr, Facebook)
- The toll-free telephone number: 1-888-535-0738
- Posting information on community calendars
- Media relations, including press releases and media events
- Press releases
- Newsletters
- Fact sheets and handouts
- Outreach booths (fairs, festivals, and farmers markets)
- Project tours
- Project presentations
- Partnerships (visitor and convention bureaus and chambers of commerce)
- Rest area displays

In June 2012, WSDOT prepared a newsletter that highlighted the status of each phase of the I-90 project. The newsletter included an insert that focused on the Supplemental EIS process. The newsletter was widely distributed by mail to over 4,000 people on the I-90 project mailing list, including agencies, tribes, and members of the public. It is available on the I-90 project website.

Issues and concerns related to the I-90 project have not changed since the 2008 ROD was issued. Therefore, WSDOT did not conduct additional scoping for this Supplemental EIS. This approach is consistent with 40 CFR 1502.9, which does not require public scoping for a Supplemental EIS. WSDOT will continue communications on the I-90 project through meetings and presentations and is seeking feedback on this Draft Supplemental EIS.

Draft Supplemental EIS Public Comment Period

This Draft Supplemental EIS or a flyer summarizing this Draft Supplemental EIS was distributed to over 4,000 agencies, libraries, and members of the public on the I-90 project mailing list. WSDOT also distributed copies of the Draft Supplemental EIS to public libraries and placed official public notices and invitations to comment in local and regional newspapers of record, on the I-90 project website, and in the I-90 project newsletter.

The 45-day public comment period began when FHWA published the Notice of Availability for this Draft Supplemental EIS in the *Federal Register*. The comment period is the best opportunity for the public to provide feedback to WSDOT on the content of this Draft Supplemental EIS. All substantive comments received during the public comment period will be addressed in the Final Supplemental EIS.

Please send written comments to:

Jason Smith, Environmental Manager
WSDOT South Central Region
P.O. Box 12560
Yakima, Washington 98909
smithjw@wsdot.wa.gov

Online:

www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/I90/SnoqualmiePassEast

A limited number of hard copies or CDs of the Draft Supplemental EIS may be obtained by contacting the WSDOT Environmental Manager (contact information noted above).

Public Hearings

During the comment period, WSDOT will host informal public hearings in Bellevue, Hyak, and Ellensburg, where the public is welcome to attend and learn about the I-90 project, ask questions, and give oral and written comments on the Draft Supplemental EIS. Fact sheets and displays will be available. A summary report will also be prepared after all three hearings have been completed.

- October 23 – Lewis Creek Visitors Center, Bellevue, Washington from 4-7 p.m.
- October 24 – Summit Inn, Snoqualmie Pass, Washington from 4-7 p.m.
- October 25 – Hal Holmes Community Center, Ellensburg, Washington from 4-7 p.m.

Notice of the public hearings was published in five local English print periodicals. To reach individuals of limited-English proficiency, the public notice was also published in Spanish and Mandarin in local Hispanic and Chinese newspapers. The flyer advertising the public hearings, which was sent to the I-90 project mailing list, also included statements in Spanish and Chinese that full translations of the public notice were available on the I-90 project website.

4.2 How have FHWA and WSDOT consulted with other agencies since the Record of Decision was issued?

Formal Consultation

Formal consultation is communication required by regulation that results in agency findings and project commitments. FHWA and WSDOT participated in formal consultation with other agencies throughout the I-90 project, which is described in detail in Section 6.2 of the 2008 Final EIS. Formal consultation specific to the Proposed Bridges is described in this section.

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Due to the potential for previously unconsidered impacts to listed species and critical habitat as a result of the Proposed Bridges, FHWA reinitiated consultation with the USFWS in October 2012. Consultation is expected to conclude prior to publication of the Final Supplemental EIS.

Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

WSDOT and DAHP developed a Memorandum of Agreement during preparation of the 2008 Final EIS to document mitigation measures for removal of the Existing Snowshed, which is listed on the NRHP. No other historic properties are located within the design modification area. Both structures occupy the same footprint along the shoreline of Keechelus Lake, in an area primarily underlain by bedrock. The Proposed Bridges would not increase the potential to affect archaeological resources. Therefore, formal consultation with DAHP is not required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Informal Consultation

Informal consultation consists of staff-to-staff correspondence between agencies. WSDOT consulted informally with federal and state agencies, local jurisdictions, and tribal governments continuously from the beginning of the I-90 project, which is more fully described in Section 6.2 of the 2008 Final EIS. Informal consultation conducted for this Draft Supplemental EIS is described in this section.

I-90 Project Interdisciplinary Team

FHWA and WSDOT formed the I-90 project IDT as an advisory body to incorporate both relevant science and the concerns of agency stakeholders. The charter of the IDT is to provide technical expertise and consultation on issues such as design solutions, permitting, and mitigation. The IDT's role on the I-90 project is ongoing and the members meet on a bi-monthly basis to discuss the I-90 project and potential project changes. The Proposed Bridges have been discussed regularly at IDT meetings for the past year.

I-90 project IDT member agencies:

- Federal Highway Administration
- US Forest Service
- US Bureau of Reclamation
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
- Washington State Department of Ecology
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Washington State Department of Transportation
- Kittitas County

United States Forest Service

The USFS is a cooperating agency and manages the vast majority of the land in the I-90 project area, including the land in the design modification area. USFS land management policies are an important part of the social and environmental contexts of the I-90 project.

The design modification area is located within the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest and along the shoreline of Keechelus Lake. When I-90 was built, the USFS granted FHWA an easement to use National Forest land for highway purposes. Constructing the I-90 project required an additional easement from the USFS for the use of 36.52 acres of federal land. In order to grant this request, the USFS had to determine that the I-90 project was consistent with its land management direction for the surrounding area. The USFS issued a consistency determination for the I-90 project with the Selected Snowshed on August 18, 2009 (Appendix A). The Proposed Bridges would require a modification to the existing easement.

The procedure for granting an easement modification is the same as described in the 2008 Final EIS. If FHWA and WSDOT accept the design modification based on the evaluation in this Supplemental EIS, the USFS will make a consistency determination for the Proposed Bridges after the ROD is issued, as part of the USFS plan review and approval process. The USFS will base the consistency determination on whether the Proposed Bridges meet the I-90 project purpose and need, as well as the standards and guidelines of relevant land management plans and programs, which include the following:

- The 1990 *Land and Resource Management Plan, Wenatchee National Forest* (USFS 1990);
- The 1994 *Northwest Forest Plan* (USFS and Bureau of Land Management 1994);
- The 1997 *Snoqualmie Pass Adaptive Management Area Plan* (USFS and USFWS 1997);
- USFS Watershed Analysis and Watershed Restoration requirements;
- Amendments to the *Northwest Forest Plan* from 2004 and 2005 covering Survey and Manage Species and invasive plants;
- USFS ACS objectives;
- USFS Riparian Reserves requirements; and

Section 1.13 of the 2008 Final EIS details the procedure for complying with the **USFS Riparian Reserves requirements** and **Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives** and for processing a **land transfer** among USFS, FHWA, and WSDOT.

- National standards for transfers of federal land to FHWA and WSDOT for highway easements.

United States Bureau of Reclamation

The USBR is a cooperating agency and has jurisdiction over water in Keechelus Lake and land surrounding Keechelus Lake. USBR concurrence is required to place fill in the lake for construction of either the Selected Snowshed or Proposed Bridges. USBR also needs to review and concur with permits and approvals issued by the USFS for the Proposed Bridges. FHWA and WSDOT have consulted continuously with USBR on the I-90 project through bi-monthly IDT meetings.

4.3 How have FHWA and WSDOT consulted with tribes since the Record of Decision was issued?

Formal Consultation

WSDOT and DAHP developed a Memorandum of Agreement during preparation of the 2008 Final EIS to document mitigation measures for removal of the Existing Snowshed, which is listed on the NRHP. No other cultural resources, as defined under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, are located within the design modification area. Both structures occupy the same footprint along the shoreline of Keechelus Lake, resulting in minimal potential to encounter archaeological resources. Therefore, additional formal consultation with the tribes is not required given the ongoing informal consultation with the tribes.

Informal Consultation

Informal consultation consists of staff-to-staff contact between agencies. WSDOT consulted informally with tribal governments continuously from the beginning of the I-90 project, which is more fully described in Section 6.2 of the 2008 Final EIS. Informal consultation conducted for this Draft Supplemental EIS includes general updates on the Proposed Bridges during regular meetings on the I-90 project and other WSDOT projects. Specific presentations are also planned during the public comment period.