DRAFT NATURAL RESOURCE MITIGATION PLAN

SR 14 Marble Rd Vic. to Belle Center Rd Vic. Safety Improvements MP 22.60 to 23.70

Skamania County, WA

Prepared by

WSDOT SW REGION

October, 2011

Washington State Department of Transportation

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Prepared By:

Daniel Corlett, MLA, MRP, RLA WA #725,
SWR Roadside and Environmental Restoration Program Mgr.
(360) 905-2186

Thomas Kohl, Wetland Ecologist
(360) 905-2183

Dee Dee Jones, Biologist
(360) 905-2000

Washington State Washington State Department of Transportation-SW Region
Environmental Services Office

Project Engineer:

Chris Tams, Columbia River Gorge Area Engineer
(360) 759-1312

Executive Summary

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is proposing to construct safety improvements on SR 14 from the Marble Road vicinity to the Belle Center Road vicinity. The project is located between milepost (MP) 22.60 and MP 23.70 in Township 1 North, Range 5 East, Sections 17, 19, and 20, in Skamania County, Washington.

WSDOT wetland specialists delineated three wetlands within the proposed project area, all of which would be considered jurisdictional by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), and Skamania County. Some of the wetlands extend beyond the project boundaries and are components of larger wetland complexes or riparian corridors. All of the complexes were Category III wetlands according to the *Washington State Wetland Rating System for Western Washington* (Hruby 2004). The wetlands consist of two hydrogeomorphic (HGM) classes: depressional and slope, and two Cowardin Classes: palustrine emergent (PEM) and palustrine forested (PFO). In general the wetlands provide low to moderate levels of water quality, hydrologic, and habitat functions.

The project proposes permanent wetland impacts to 0.15 acres and temporary wetland impacts to 0.06 acres. In addition, the project proposes approximately 0.2 acres of associated wetland/riparian buffer. The proposed project impacts occur to Ecology Category III slope and depressional wetland complexes. The impacted portions of the wetlands provide moderate levels of hydrologic, water quality functions and low levels of habitat functions. Vegetated buffers around the impacted wetlands and the riparian corridor are dominated by mixed coniferous/deciduous forest species, highway embankments, and pasture grasses.

The project also proposes to impact approximately 2.25 of mature Oregon White Oak woodland in the vicinity of the SR-14/Marble Rd. intersection due to the realignment of SR-14 to the north. The proposed impacts occur to a small portion of a much larger stand of Oregon White Oak of regional significance. While the stand does contain some larger trees, it is considered isolated and has been fragmented by development over time.

To mitigate for the unavoidable environmental impacts, WSDOT will implement a comprehensive multi-resource mitigation strategy for aquatic and terrestrial impacts. Compensatory mitigation will be implemented in accordance with the guidance outlined in Chapter 22.20.020 (F)2 and Chapter 22.28.040 (I) of the Skamania County Critical Area Ordinance (National Scenic Area), guidance in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan, specific requirements conditioned by the US Forest Service, and with the mitigation recommendations outlined in *Wetland Mitigation in Washington State (*Ecology et al.2006a). Proposed impacts and compensatory mitigation areas are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of project wetland impacts and compensatory mitigation.

Region	SW Region
Township/Range/Section	Township 1 North, Range 5 East, Sections 17, 19, and 20
Permanent Wetland Impact	0.15* acres
Temporary Wetland Impact	0.06 acres
Permanent Wetland or Riparian Buffer Impact	0.2 acres
Permanent Oregon White Oak Woodland Impact	2.25 acres
Mitigation Location	Skamania County, Township 2 North, Range 6 East, Sections 35
Total Area of Mitigation Site(s)	Approximately 25 acres
Area & Type of Mitigation	• 1.5 acres on-site Oak Woodland Restoration (reclaimed roadbed/natural reversion area) • 12 acres Oak Woodland Establishment (USFS Cleveland Parcel) • 3.1 acres Oak Woodland Preservation (WSDOT Wind Mountain oak preservation site) • 1.0 acres of Wetland Creation at Homestead Lake Mitigation Site (Beacon Rock State Park). 0.45 acres will be utilized as credit by the SR-14 Marble Rd. Vicinity project. Remaining wetland mitigation acreage may be applied to future WSDOT projects within the western Columbia River Gorge with wetland impacts) • 3.0 acres of Wetland/Riparian Buffer Enhancement at Homestead Lake Mitigation Site • 1.1 acres of Oak Woodland Enhancement at Homestead Lake Mitigation Site
Years of Monitoring	10 Years

*Acreage rounded to nearest hundredth

WSDOT proposes replacing the 2.25 acres of impacted Oregon White Oak Woodlands with high-quality restoration efforts at several sites; 1.5 acres of on-site Oak Woodland Restoration on reclaimed/natural reversion areas on abandoned sections of SR-14 and other disturbed project areas (canopy and understory), 12 acres of Oak Woodland Establishment on a cleared hay field within the geographic area of Mt. Pleasant (canopy and understory), 3.1 acres of Oak Woodland Preservation at a the Wind Mountain oak preservation site 25 miles east of the project area, and approximately 1 acre of Oak Woodland Enhancement at the Homestead Lake Mitigation Site at Beacon Rock State Park (invasive species control and understory improvements).

Permanent impacts to 0.15 acres of wetlands, and approximately 0.2 acres of wetland/riparian buffer and their associated functions will be replaced with 1+ acres of wetland creation and approximately 3 acres of wetland/riparian buffer enhancement at the Homestead Lake Mitigation Site at Beacon Rock State Park. The wetland creation and associated buffer enhancement will expand a Wapato-dominated shelf at the perimeter of Homestead Lake and enhance habitat for the Western Pond Turtle as well as waterfowl and local wildlife. The proposed 0.06 acres of temporary wetland impact will be restored on site using appropriate native vegetation suitable for the impact area.

To mitigate for impacts to scenic resources and roadside function regulated by the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area as a result of clearing and grading activities, WSDOT proposes to restore disturbed areas within the project limits as Oregon White Oak woodland (canopy and understory) as noted above wherever applicable vegetation at several locations within the project corridor.

The proposed mitigation sites and roadside restoration areas will be monitored for a period of 10 years or until performance standards are achieved. Monitoring, contingency, and site management plans are described, which will be used to adaptively manage the mitigation sites and roadside restoration areas.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CRGNSA	Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area
Ecology	Washington State Department of Ecology
GMA	General Management Area
HAC	High Accident Corridor
HAL	High Accident Location
HGM	hydrogeomorphic
HMA	Hot Mix Asphalt
HUC	hydrologic unit code
LWD	large woody debris
MP	mile post
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
PEM	palustrine emergent
PUS	palustrine unconsolidated shore
PFO	palustrine forested
PSS	palustrine scrub-shrub
SMA	Special Management Area
SR	state route
TESC	Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

USFS	United States Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VE	Value Engineering
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation
WRIA	Water Resource Inventory Area