



EIS UPDATE

Hood River – White Salmon BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

MARCH 2020



Photo: Matheny Collection, from CRITFC website

In December 2003, a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) was published as part of a bi-state collaborative effort. This draft EIS was the first step in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Currently, the Port of Hood River (Port) is advancing the project to complete the EIS effort and position the project for future funding and construction.

What’s new on the project?

- The US Coast Guard issued the Preliminary Navigation Determination, which confirms the horizontal and vertical clearances for navigation under the replacement bridge. Please see the notice posted at <https://portofhoodriver.com/bridge/bridge-replacement-project/bridge-replacement-project-resources/>
- Conducting a follow-up survey to document potential historically significant properties.
- Continuing coordination with the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) to address Project impacts to fisheries and tribal fishing treaty rights.
- Consulting with Native American tribes on cultural resources, access to the Columbia River, fishing activities, treaty rights, and any other interests identified by the tribes that relate to the Project. Meeting with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and setting up meetings with other tribes.
- Preparing a revised draft biological assessment to address FHWA, ODOT, and liaisons to the National Marine Fisheries Service technical review. The biological assessment documents Project impacts to threatened and endangered species and habitat and associated proposed conservation measures.

How would bridge replacement benefit the Columbia River Gorge communities?

The Hood River Bridge provides a critical connection for residents and visitors to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. One of only three bridges spanning the Columbia in this region, the bridge is a critical rural freight network facility for agriculture, forestry, heavy industry and high-tech companies with freight originating throughout the northwest. The existing bridge is nearing the end of its serviceable life and is obsolete for modern vehicles with height, width, and weight restrictions and is also a navigational hazard for marine freight vessels. The bridge has no sidewalks or bicycle lanes for non-motorized travel and would likely not withstand a large earthquake.

If project funding is secured, the new bridge would provide a safe and reliable way for everyone to cross or navigate the Columbia River—by car, truck, bus, bicycle, on foot, or on the water. A new bridge would support a thriving economy and livable communities.

What are the next steps?

- Determine which cultural resources are potentially eligible to list on the National Register of Historic Properties and prepare findings of effects from the Project on these resources.
- Continue to consult with Native American tribes and other federal agencies, as needed.
- Supplement the draft cultural resources report with additional survey and analysis.
- Integrate cultural and biological baseline conditions, impacts and mitigation into the draft Supplemental Draft EIS.



To learn more about the project, please visit us at:

www.portofhoodriver.com/bridge

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