



Hood River – White Salmon BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

EIS Working Group Meeting 2

Thursday, February 21, 2019 | 4 - 6 p.m.

White Salmon Room, #112

Pioneer Center, 501 NE Washington St, White Salmon

Meeting Objectives

- Finalize EIS Working Group charter
- Create shared understanding of recent public input
- Understand member perspectives on results of traffic analysis
- Identify key questions for next phase of analysis

AGENDA

Time	Topic	Presenter	Materials
4:00 pm	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda review • Approve meeting 1 summary 	Anne Presentin, facilitator	Agenda Meeting summary
4:10 pm	Working Group Charter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review revised document <p><i>Action: Approve</i></p>	Anne Presentin	Revised charter
4:20 pm	Project updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigational clearance coordination with US Coast Guard • Coordination with Federal Highway Administration • Project schedule • Traffic and Revenue 101 public work session 	Kevin Greenwood, Project Director and Angela Findley, WSP	Schedule
4:40 pm	Public outreach update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person events • Survey results • Environmental justice outreach planning 	Anne Presentin	Slides
5:00 pm	Presentation of traffic analysis results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic analysis • Q&A 	Mat Dolata, WSP	Slides

Time	Topic	Presenter	Materials
5:25 pm	Public Comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observers are welcome to provide comment to the Working Group. Comment time limits will be determined by number of people desiring to make comment. 	Anne Presentin	
5:35 pm	Discussion: Considerations for upcoming work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency coordination Technical studies Toll rate sensitivity analysis Bridge aesthetics Bicycle and pedestrian connections 	Angela Findley, Anne Presentin	
5:55 pm	Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action items and parking lot Meeting schedule Meeting evaluation 	Anne Presentin	Evaluation Form
6:00 pm	Adjourn		

Handouts:

- Agenda
- Revised draft charter
- Project schedule overview

Meeting Schedule: Dates to be determined with the members

- Meeting 3: Spring 2019
- Meeting 4: Summer 2019
- Meeting 5: Fall 2019



BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

EIS Working Group Meeting #1: Meeting Summary

Thursday, November 8, 2018 | 4 - 6 p.m.
Port of Hood River Commission Room

In Attendance

Committee: Betty Barnes, City of Bingen; Peter Cornelison, City of Hood River; Jon Davies, ODOT Reg. 1 ACT; Jessica Olsen on behalf of Lorrie DeKay, Gorge Commission; Rich McBride, Hood River County; David Poucher, City of White Salmon; Matt Ransom, SW RTC; Brian Shortt, Port of Hood River.

Guests: Kristen Stallman, ODOT; Michael Williams, WSDOT

Consultants: Angela Findley, WSP; Anne Pressentin, EnviroIssues

Members of the Public: John Everitt, Port of Hood River Commissioner

Port of Hood River Staff: Michael McElwee, Executive Director; Kevin Greenwood, Bridge Replacement Project Director; Jana Scoggins, Administrative Specialist

Media: Emily Fitzgerald, Hood River News

Anne Pressentin began the meeting with a review of the meeting objectives, which were to develop a shared understanding of the purpose of this Working Group and encourage feedback to seek and create collective recognition of project purpose, history, and EIS schedule. She noted the opportunity for public comment in the second half of the meeting. She also stated her role as a neutral facilitator, which is assist the committee in reaching its objectives. Her role is not to advocate for one position or another.

Working Group Charge and Purpose

Kevin Greenwood presented how the Working Group will influence the project to complete the environmental process for the bridge replacement project. He said the Working Group provides a feedback loop to the project support team. It is his goal to ensure everyone can be heard. He said the Working Group's tasks can be categorized into three areas:

- Areas that need refinement from the Draft EIS developed in 2003
- Community engagement and how to best communicate about the project
- If needed, collaborating to design a process to address a substantial change to the preliminary preferred alternative identified in the Draft EIS. He said if this occurs, the change would have to go back to the local governments for discussion.

The Working Group will not be discussing decisions unrelated to the NEPA process, including governance of the new bridge and setting of toll rates.

Member Introductions

Each Working Group member and members of the audience then introduced themselves, their role and goal for their participation in the group.

Members:

Jessica Olsen, Natural Resources and Land Use Planner, Gorge Commission: This process is an exciting fulfillment of the Gorge Commission's management plan. We are members of the community too are interested in the pedestrian facilities that will be added to the new bridge.

Jon Davies, ODOT Reg. 1 Area Commission on Transportation: The bridge is a big tie between communities. It's the most important thing to be improved for the future and economic vitality of the region.

Rich McBride, Hood River County Commissioner: My role is to learn information and provide it to the Hood River County Commission about what the Port is doing and ensure external folks have conduit to project information. The bridge is a critical piece of infrastructure.

David Poucher, Mayor, City of White Salmon: The bridge is the single most important piece of infrastructure in the region and decision for the next 100 years. We need to get the bridge built. It needs to be an affordable solution. We are one central community tied together by this bridge. Let's get a bridge built.

Brian Shortt, Port of Hood River Commissioner: I agree with the mayor's comments. This project will be a great enhancement to the community. I want to be able to look at a finished bridge and say, "Look at what WE did."

Betty Barnes, Mayor, City of Bingen: I agree with what everyone has said. For safety reasons, it's important to happen as soon as we can get it done. Would like to see it bring us together. We should be considered neighboring communities rather than separate states. The economic necessity is astronomical.

Matt Ransom, Executive Director, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council: RTC led the prior studies. We provide a continuity role from the Draft EIS and Bridge TS&L. And, we are a link to the communities of Klickitat, Skamania and Clark counties. Bridge replacement is a strategic issue. Without hesitation, I can say it is a priority for our Washington partners. I will be a conduit back to the RTC Board and want to partner with both sides of the river.

Peter Cornelison, City of Hood River Councilmember: My goal is to work collaboratively and provide good direction to come up with a good replacement.

Others in attendance:

Michael McElwee, Executive Director, Port of Hood River: This is the number one priority for the Port Commission. We hope today is the beginning of increasing the sense of partnership among Oregon and Washington stakeholders and creating an intentional and collective vision. Hoping for a Record of Decision in 18 months.

Kristen Stallman, Oregon Dept. of Transportation: The Oregon Legislature prioritized this project with the funds to finish the environmental phase. My role is to ensure that the money is spent wisely and the project is a success.

Michael Williams, Washington State Dept of Transportation: I am a conduit to WSDOT. I will answer questions about connections to Washington roads. I'm here to help and support the work.

Angela Findley, WSP: I am with the consulting team to deliver the EIS. The team is committed to completing the environmental phase.

John Everitt, Port of Hood River Commission: I'm here because of the gravity of the bridge and agree with what I've heard this evening

Discussion:

Jon Davies said the project should build on the momentum started to get the project done. Brian Shortt said the project should be used as a model for how a project can be done quickly.

EIS Working Group Draft Charter

Prior to presenting the draft charter, Ms. Pressentin presented the key themes of interviews conducted in September 2018 with most members of the EIS Working Group and several stakeholders in the community. She then presented the draft Charter, which was informed by the interviews and defines the role of the Working Group to support the completion of the NEPA process.

Ms. Jessica Olson asked whether a member of CRITFC has been identified. Kevin Greenwood said that discussions with CRITFC were initiated, but that individual discussions with the four tribes will occur in the future. The tribal representative(s) may take some time to determine.

Commissioner Shortt asked that the project team spell out acronyms. He also would like to look for efficiencies by having all the agencies work together.

Mr. Rich McBride and Mr. Matt Ransom requested that additional changes are made to the methods of providing information related to the project outside of this working group. Kevin Greenwood confirmed that monthly reports will be sent out to the Committee, and additional information will be regularly updated on the Port of Hood River website.

Mr. David Poucher asked that the NEPA schedule is reviewed and adjusted to aim for a shorter deadline. This subject was generally agreed upon by all members of the working group.

Mr. Jon Davies wants to see momentum build in the community about the project. He feels the quicker the project can advance, the better.

Ms. Barnes recommended that the group put the pressure on ourselves to move this project forward.

Members agreed the following edits were needed before the Charter could be finalized:

- Add Working Group members' collective sense of urgency for getting the project done and members' desire to speed the completion of the NEPA process
- Add to the section on the role of project staff the importance of regular communication to inform the Working Group on both NEPA and non-NEPA activities related to bridge replacement

Anne Pressentin said a track changes version of the charter would be sent to the members for their review before the next meeting.

NEPA Process

Ms. Angela Findley provided an overview of key decisions documented in the Draft EIS , including the statement of purpose and need, alternatives development and screening, preliminary preferred alternative. Ms. Betty Barnes and Mr. Jon Davies commented that to move forward the Committee must recognize the sense of urgency in this project.

Ms. Findley noted that part of the NEPA process is to identify which alternatives are going to solve the problem statement. Corridors and facility types were evaluated and the alternatives with lowest impacts to transportation, environment, recreation and cost were selected to advance in further review. The preliminary preferred alternative is a fixed span bridge with 14 spans and 450-foot horizontal and 80-foot vertical navigation clearance. Ms. Findley reported that only 12 comments were received during the comment period from January 2 – February 17, 2004.

Ms. Findley reviewed the next types of decisions moving forward which include design refinements, architectural treatments, scope of environmental analysis, impacts to environment, mitigation measures and others.

Questions, comments and discussion. Some answers were provided by members with personal knowledge of the 2003 Draft EIS.

Q: Was light rail considered?

A: No. Transit vehicles using the bridge today would be accommodated.

Q: Is the bike/ped lane only on one side?

A: Yes. Having a ped/bike facility on two sides, the cost goes up.

A: In previous work, a stakeholder group wanted the bridge to fit in with the environment. Members wanted to keep the bridge narrow and thought the bike/ped lane was best placed on the west side.

Q: How many travel lanes?

A: Two lanes. The traffic analysis didn't warrant three vehicle travel lanes.

A: The bike/ped lane could be used as a third lane. The stakeholder group thought ahead and recommended a 12-foot bike/ped lane so it could accommodate vehicles during emergency response.

Q: Is designation of the existing bridge as a historic resource likely?

A: During the feasibility study, the project team did determine that the bridge is a significant historic property. A mitigation plan would be needed to remove the existing bridge. It is a manageable concern.

A: The USFS archeologist would need to be involved because the bridge is in the National Scenic Area.

Q: Has the landing on the Washington side been considered? Would it affect the planned park?

A: The park will be considered. No conflicts are seen.

Q: What about the Treaty Fishing Access Site?

A: Prior studies sought to avoid the site. The bridge landing would be east of the fishing site.

Q: Some new residents have asked if the new bridge can be more dynamic?

A: It's worth having a conversation about whether the concrete structure is still preferred. It will be massive. History of old bridge should be acknowledged.

A: At the end of the NEPA process, the bridge design will be approximately 10% complete. It's important to focus on items related to NEPA process.

A: Any change in the bridge type or other elements that increase the cost should be tied to a relative increase in costs or toll rates so that the community understands the linkage.

Q: In recent years both Washington and Oregon Departments of Transportation identified the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge as part of the National Highway System which could be deemed beneficial during the replacement project.

A: It bolsters the importance of replacement.

The Committee requested more information be gathered about the cost of bridge types and what the trade-offs would be, including the effect to toll rates.

Q: Would the preliminary preferred alternative's location on the north shore require land acquisition and right of way dedication?

A: It's a question. Land owners include WSDOT, Klickitat County and a private entity.

Q: What Tribal conversations occurred in the past and how will it occur in the future?

A: It will be discussed with Federal Highway Administration and ODOT.

Q: What were key issues from tribal governments previously?

A: Unknown. Possibly there was a preference by Tribal governments for fewer piers in the water and a concern with snow plow discharge.

Q: Will removing the existing bridge be a mitigation?

A: There are impacts associated with demolition and many benefits with a new bridge.

Public Comment:

No members of the public audience provided comment.

Preliminary Preferred Alternative

Based on the presentation and discussion of the previous NEPA process, Anne Pressentin asked the group whether they supported the preliminary preferred alternative as the preferred alternative. All members present concurred with the preliminary preferred alternative by showing a "thumbs up."

EIS Schedule and Process

Angela Findley presented the project schedule, which currently would conclude by Jan. 2021. She said she heard the group's desire to move quickly. The project team is discussing possibilities of a shorter process with FHWA.

Adjourn

Before adjourning, the group confirmed areas of agreement and action items:

Areas of agreement from the Working Group:

- Get the EIS process done quickly. Need to figure out how this can occur.
- Add sense of urgency among the Working Group members to the charter
- Preliminary preferred alternative should proceed

Need more information:

- Can NEPA be complete in 18 months?
- Relative cost of bridge types and the trades offs of each
- Would the preliminary preferred alternative require right of way purchase?
- What were the Tribal government concerns previously – if any?

Parking lot/actions:

- Keep Working Group apprised of non-NEPA discussions.
- Communicate open house date/time/location to the Working Group

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BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

~~EIS~~ Environmental Impact Statement Working Group Revised DRAFT Charter

Charter Purpose

The purpose of this charter is to define the role of the Working Group to support the completion of project work associated with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance for a replacement Hood River-White Salmon Bridge. The Charter describes how the Working Group will work together with the project team (Port of Hood River and consultant staff) to achieve the goal of attaining a Record of Decision from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Background

The Port of Hood River has owned and operated the Hood River-White Salmon Bridge since 1950. The 4,418-foot steel truss bridge was originally constructed in 1924. It provides a critical, bi-state transportation link in the heart of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. The bridge is over 30 years past its design life. It frequently creates a hazardous traffic bottleneck during closures of I-84 in Oregon or SR-14 in Washington. It has undersized travel lanes for today's vehicles, and no pedestrian or bicycle facilities. The 80,000-pound weight limit restricts vehicle freight movement; and the narrow, poorly aligned horizontal clearance with the navigation channel presents the greatest navigational hazard on the entire Columbia/Snake River federal inland waterway system according to towboat operators. For these reasons, the Port of Hood River is continuing the bridge replacement effort that has been underway since the 1990s. As recipient of funding from the Oregon Legislature and facility owner, the Port is leading the next critical step by completing an environmental impact statement (EIS) in compliance with NEPA.

Problem Statement

The obsolete bridge connecting Washington and Oregon between White Salmon and Hood River needs replacement to support the safety, economic vitality and quality of life for people and water quality in the Columbia River Gorge. Completion of the NEPA environmental review is the next essential step in the replacement process. This work best positions our community for future funding, permitting and construction of a new bridge.

The Port of Hood River Commission will work collaboratively with agency partners in Washington and Oregon and stakeholders to move the NEPA analysis forward. The Working Group provides a key component of the partner and stakeholder involvement process.

Role of the Working Group

The Working Group is a discussion body to aid the NEPA analysis project team, which includes staff from the WSP consulting team and Port of Hood River. As leaders and well-informed representatives, Working Group members will provide guidance and information to the project team on key inputs to the analysis and recommendations as the EIS is developed. Collectively, the members of the Working Group are united in their belief that replacement of the Hood River-White Salmon Bridge must proceed without delay. The current facility does not meet current or future needs of the region’s residents, businesses, visitors or natural environment. It is the desire of the members that the NEPA phase conclude as quickly as possible.

The project team will work with members throughout the process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered as alternatives or options are developed. Project staff will explain how Working Group and community input influenced the preferred alternative before submitting the Final EIS to FHWA for a Record of Decision.

The scope for Working Group discussions is consistent with the scope of work for the consulting team supporting the NEPA analysis, and includes the following:

DISCUSSION TOPICS	
What’s in	What’s out
Completion of the NEPA process	Non-NEPA decisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community outreach • Environmental and traffic analysis results and potential mitigation recommendations • Supplemental Draft EIS • Final EIS • Bridge aesthetics and design • Permit planning assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance of the replacement bridge • Toll rates for the replacement bridge • Funding for final design and construction for the replacement bridge, including demolition of the existing bridge • Financing plan

Changes to the Preliminary Preferred Alternative will require approval by the involved local governments who participated in the Draft EIS process. As an example, it is assumed that the preliminary preferred alternative, EC-2 ~~West Alignment~~ [\(Existing Corridor, Alignment 2\)](#), will remain the preferred alignment as described in the 2003 Draft Environmental Impact Statement. If the preferred alignment changes, a process will be developed to gain concurrence from the local entities that previously endorsed EC-2.

Discussion topics and decisions that are outside of the scope of the NEPA analysis are known to be of great interest to agency partners and stakeholders in the community. These topics will be discussed and decided in forums separate from the Working Group or after completion of the NEPA process. When these topics are raised during the Working Group meetings, the facilitator

will identify them and ensure they are catalogued so the project team may to communicate the alternate timing and location for those discussions.

Membership

The Working Group includes about 11 members representing interests from local government, ports, and regional transportation planning organizations. Elected officials on the group will also represent the interests of their constituents. The organizations represented include:

- City of Bingen
- City of Hood River
- City of White Salmon
- Columbia River Gorge Commission
- Hood River County
- Klickitat County
- ODOT Region 1 Area Commission on Transportation
- Port of Hood River
- Port of Klickitat
- SW Washington Regional Transportation Council
- ~~Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission~~

Staff from other agencies may participate as subject matter experts in an ex officio manner.

Roles and Responsibilities

Working Group Members

Working Group members are expected to:

- Prepare for and attend Working Group meetings and project events
- Have robust discussions and provide feedback on “What’s In” NEPA elements listed in the table on page 2
- Be proactive about sharing comments and ideas about the project EIS analysis process during the meetings
- Advise the project team on community involvement efforts
- Engage with personal and/or professional networks about the project and bring information learned back to the Working Group to aid with discussions
- Consider public input when providing feedback to the project team

Project Staff

The Port of Hood River and the WSP Consultant Team make up the project staff. Project staff agree to the following commitments.

- Provide timely, relevant, and objective information necessary to inform Working Group input
- Supply Working Group members with resources necessary to complete their scope of tasks
- Inform Working Group members monthly in writing on NEPA and non-NEPA project activities or advancements.
- Maintain and report an ongoing record of public comments and questions
- Coordinate public involvement activities

- Collect Working Group input in advance of finalizing the preferred alternative, Supplemental Draft EIS and Final EIS.
- Work with the facilitator, and Working Group members to ensure an accurate summary of all input and outcomes are reflected in the meeting notes

Facilitator

The Port has provided an independent facilitator to help prepare meeting agendas, design meeting processes and ensure Working Group meetings are fair and productive. This includes:

- Keeping meetings to the start and end times identified on meeting agendas
- Maintaining a neutral stance on project topics
- Ensuring all members have meaningful opportunities to provide input
- Encouraging constructive discussion of subjects and considering multiple perspectives
- Orienting discussions toward meeting objectives and project goals
- Concluding discussions that are off topic or not constructive
- Serving as a resource for Working Group members and the project team outside of meetings to communicate ideas, opinions or process concerns

Port of Hood River Commission

The Port of Hood River Commission currently makes decisions related to bridge maintenance, operations and toll rates. The body is overseeing the consultant contract for the NEPA process and the deliverables to meet the terms stated in the ODOT grant agreement. In this role, the Commission will:

- Assure NEPA contracting and legal requirements are met
- Have representation on the Working Group to liaison between the Commission and the members
- Encourage and listen for documentation of consensus among all Working Group members before moving ahead with NEPA related actions
- Sign the EIS documents
- Participate in “non-NEPA” discussions outside of the Working Group process

Meeting Protocols

Ground Rules

All meeting participants agree to abide by the following ground rules.

- Silence electronics.
- Ask questions of each other to gain clarity and understanding.
- Express yourself in terms of your preferences, interests and outcomes you wish to achieve
- Listen respectfully and try sincerely to understand the needs and interest of others.
- Honor each other by being honest and authentic.
- Consider the needs and concerns of people outside your own community and not present in the room.
- Be curious and willing to learn and contribute.
- Respect timelines by being concise and brief with comments and questions.

- Seek common ground.

Time Commitment and Attendance

Working Group members will meet approximately 6-8 times between November 2018 and December 2020. Working Group meetings will be about 2 hours in length and will be held weekdays during the late afternoon/early evening at locations in Hood River, White Salmon or Bingen. Meetings will alternate between Oregon and Washington locations. The Port of Hood River will provide refreshments for Working Group members.

Consistent attendance and participation is desired. If a Working Group member misses two consecutive meetings, the Working Group members may seek to exchange the member with someone who can attend meetings consistently.

Feedback Mechanisms

As topics come before the Working Group for discussion, the various perspectives and opinions communicated by the members will be documented. In some cases hand signals (thumb up, thumb to the side, thumb down) or other methods for collective input may be used.

Working Group members are encouraged to seek consensus, but it is not required. Areas of agreement will be noted in the meeting summary. Final decisions related to the NEPA analysis and documentation will be made by the Port of Hood River Commission, as the owner of the facility and as the agency contracted by ODOT to produce the Final EIS, and by FHWA as the lead federal agency.

Public Comment

Members of the public are welcome to attend Working Group meetings and listen. Notice of Working Group meetings will be posted on the project website in advance.

Only project staff, invited speakers, and members of the Working Group may sit at the meeting table to participate in discussions. Working Group meeting agendas will reserve time for public comment and questions to project staff. Time available for each commenter will be dependent on the number of people wanting to speak during the allotted agenda time. The facilitator may shorten the time allotted to each commenter if needed to keep the Working Group's work on schedule. Project staff will be available at each meeting to address questions from the public. Written comments received during a Working Group meeting will be included in the meeting summary. If public comments include specific questions that project staff can address, the response will be added to the meeting summary.

Meeting Agendas and Meeting Materials

The facilitator will work with project staff to develop agendas for the meetings. Working Group members may propose topics for future meeting agendas, and staff will consider requests within the scope of the NEPA process. Meeting agendas and meeting materials will be sent electronically to Working Group members one week in advance of meetings and will be posted on the project website. Hard copy packets will be provided at each meeting.

In addition to NEPA topics, time will be reserved at each meeting for the Port of Hood River to provide an update on activities and news related to the existing Hood River Bridge.

Meeting Summaries

Project staff will prepare draft and final Working Group meeting summaries. Draft meeting summaries will be sent to Working Group members electronically for review. Any edits to meeting summaries will be addressed at the following meeting. Final meeting summaries will be posted on the project website after review by the Working Group. Draft meeting summaries will be placed on the WG's webpage and reviewed at the next available WG meeting.

Guidelines for Communication Outside of Working Group Meetings

Email and Informal Conversations

Working Group members may communicate with project staff or the facilitator outside of formal meetings to share ideas and request information. Working Group members, project staff and the facilitator are encouraged to adhere to the same ground rules of respect outside of formal meetings.

Media

Working Group members may not respond to inquiries from the media on behalf of the Working Group. Working Group members may respond as individuals. Members of the Working Group are encouraged to direct any inquiries from members of the media to the Port's Project Director and, if not available, the Communications Manager for the POHR to coordinate a response.

Work Plan and Tentative Schedule

The work plan below outlines the topics to be discussed in Working Group meetings and other community involvement activities. The work plan will be updated as work progresses.

Item	Date	Topics
WG Meeting #1	Nov. 8, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft charter • Project purpose, history and EIS schedule • Preliminary preferred alternative
Project Re-launch Open House	December 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project purpose, history and EIS schedule • Preliminary preferred alternative
WG Meeting #2	Winter 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing conditions and operations • Navigational clearance coordination with USCG update • Traffic analysis • Public outreach update • Final charter
<u>Optional: Bridge Tour</u>	<u>Spring 2019</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Gain familiarity with facility structure and operations</u>
<u>WG Meeting #3</u>	<u>Spring 2019</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Toll sensitivity analysis</u> • <u>Environmental justice outreach results</u> • <u>Bicycle and pedestrian connections</u>
WG Meeting #43	Summer 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge architecture and aesthetic treatments • Environmental justice outreach results • Bicycle and pedestrian connections • Bicycle and pedestrian facility design on the bridge
WG Meeting #54	Fall 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental impact analysis for SDEIS
SDEIS Open House and Public Hearing	~ Winter <u>Spring</u> 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDEIS review and comment
WG Meeting #5	~ Spring 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of agency and public comments on SDEIS • Additional analysis for FEIS
WG Meeting #6	~Late summer 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public outreach results • <u>Updated impact analysis for</u> FEIS Mitigation measures
FEIS/Record of Decision	~Late fall 2020/ <u>Early 2021</u>	
WG Meeting #7	Early 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion of NEPA phase • Looking forward to position for next phase



EIS UPDATE

BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

MARCH 2019

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?

- Confirmed the NEPA strategy with the Federal Highway Administration, which will include preparing a Supplement Draft EIS that provides updated technical analyses and then a combined Final EIS/Record of Decision.
- Prepared a re-evaluation of the 2003 Draft EIS to determine which elements of the past environmental analysis is still valid and which elements require updates.
- Completed the traffic analysis for the future 2045 conditions to support the environmental impacts analysis of replacing the bridge.
- Initiating a navigation survey with commercial, recreational, and government river users. This survey will inform the US Coast Guard's preliminary determination on the new bridge's navigation clearance.
- Holding meeting #2 with the project's Working Group to provide an update on NEPA strategy, discuss traffic analysis results, and summarize the multi-pronged community outreach efforts and input.

What are the next steps?

- Coordinate with tribes and federal, state and local agencies to formalize their participation in the project's NEPA process.
- Document the methodology that will be applied to the environmental impacts analysis for the EIS.
- Conduct land and bathymetric surveys (weather permitting) to support the new bridge design.
- Begin refining the design for the roadway approaches to the new bridge.
- Present the project at the Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee.

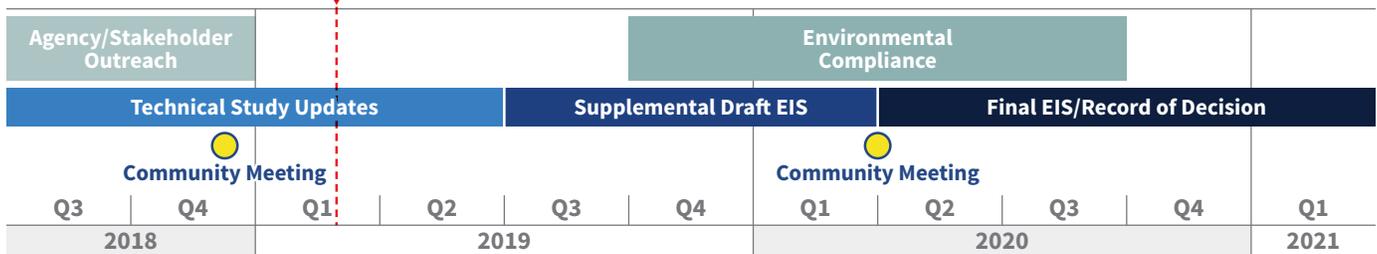


How would bridge replacement benefit the Columbia River Gorge communities?

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.

WE ARE HERE



To learn more about the project, please visit us at:
www.portofhoodriver.com/bridge

PROJECT CONTACT

Kevin Greenwood, Project Director
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