



**Hood River – White Salmon**

**BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

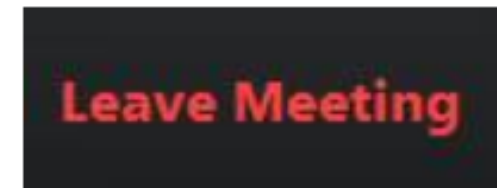
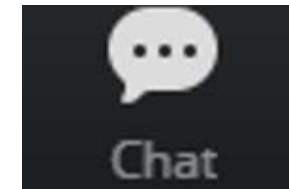
# EIS Working Group Meeting 6

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March 4, 2021

# Zoom Tips

- You will be muted when you sign in to reduce background noise. But we absolutely want to hear from you! Here's how you participate:
  - Ask questions by **raising a virtual hand** – the moderator will call on you at the end of a slide or during a question and answer break. The host can unmute you, or you can do so by clicking the **unmute** button.
  - Or, **use the chat box** to write questions that you want to make sure we address – if we know we're going to address this later in the meeting, we'll let you know.
- If the video freezes or you get dropped off the Zoom platform unexpectedly, please sign in again the same way. You can close your window or use the **Leave Meeting** button in the bottom right corner to sign out.
- Please note that the **meeting is being recorded**.



# Agenda

- Welcome
- Supplemental Draft EIS Public Comments
  - Preferred alternative recommendation
- Discussion: Mitigation commitments
- Public Comment
- Completion of Environmental Process and Next Steps



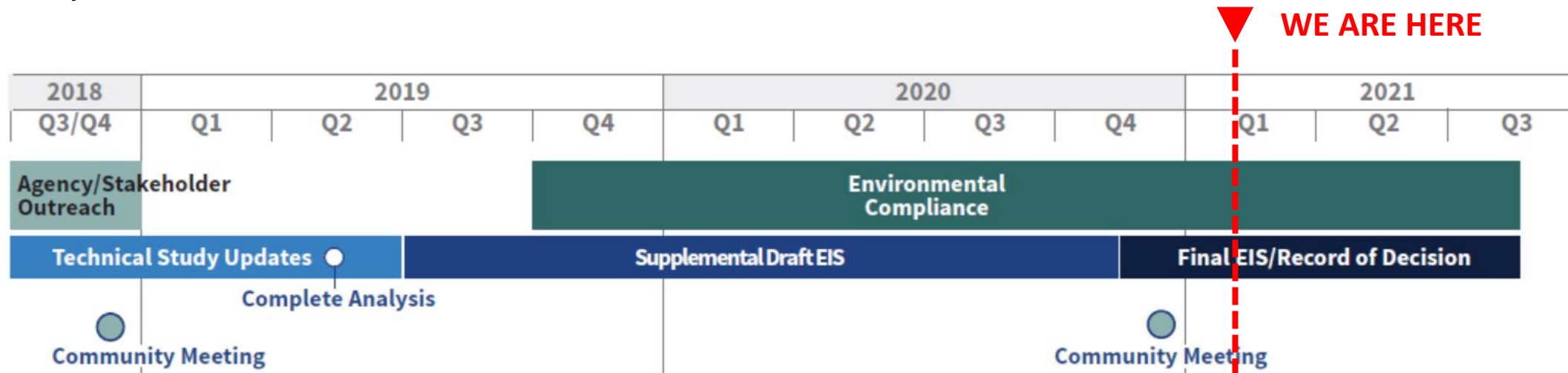
# Welcome New Members

- Purpose of the EIS Working Group
- Introductions – new members
- Acknowledge meeting summary from September 2020

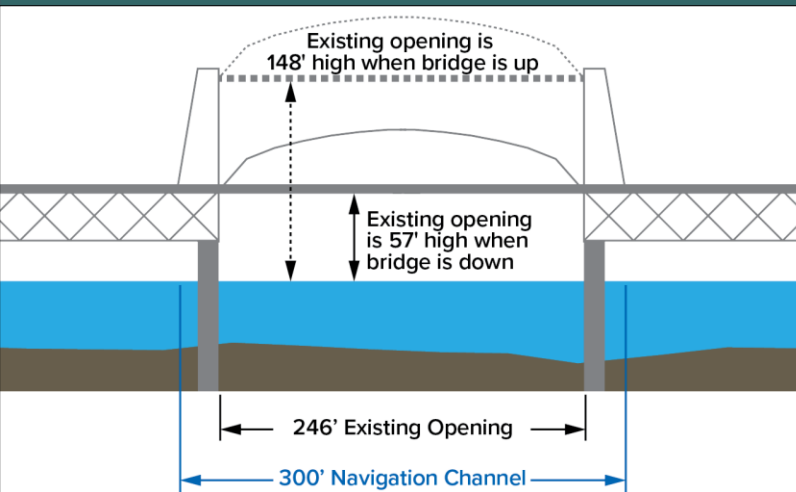
# Review of Past Work

- Early community outreach to re-launch the project
- Re-evaluated the 2003 Draft EIS technical analyses
- Confirmed purpose and need, preferred alternative
- Updated and conducted new environmental and traffic impact analysis
- Extensive agency outreach, tribal consultation

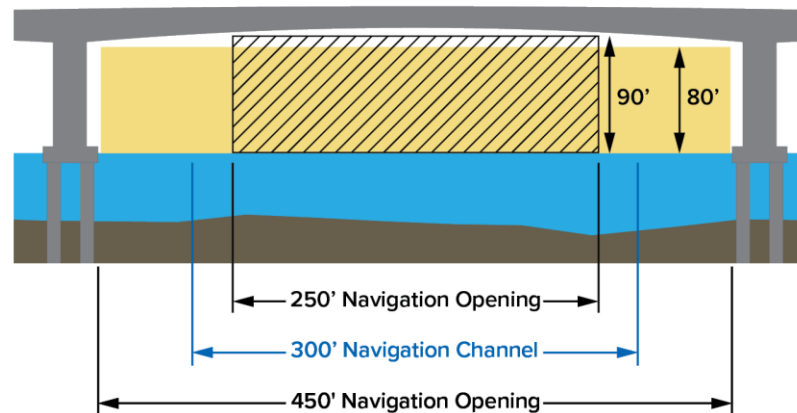
- Advanced the bridge approach road design
- Obtained a Preliminary Navigation Determination from the US Coast Guard
- Prepare photo-simulations
- Developed conceptual aesthetic treatment
- **Published Draft Supplement Draft EIS for public review**



# Preferred Alternative EC-2 and Alternative EC-3



Existing Bridge



Replacement Bridge





# Outcomes from Public Comment Period

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Scott Polzin and Brian Carrico, WSP



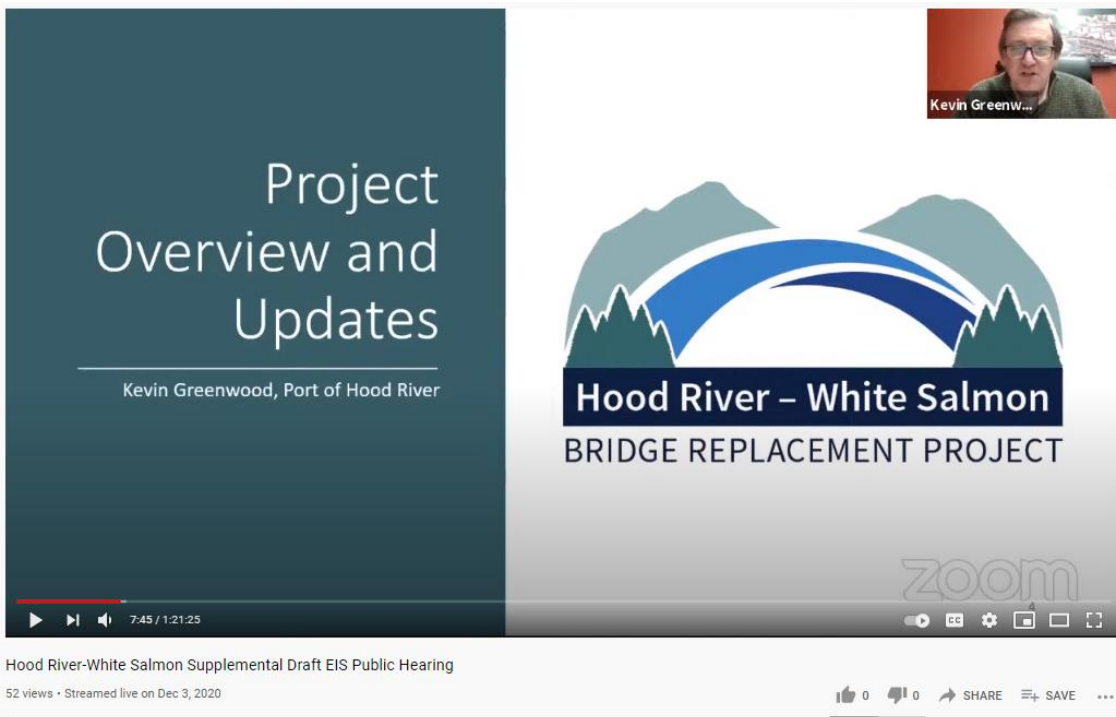
# Notification Activities



- Print & digital ads – Columbia Gorge News
- News releases
- Media coverage – Hood River News & BikePortland
- Radio interviews in English & Spanish – Mid Columbia Today and Radio Tierra's Enterate
- Facebook & Twitter posts in English & Spanish
- Port Newsletter (via direct mail)
- Emails to stakeholders, WG members, and elected officials
- Hood River Chamber of Commerce email
- Project website updates
- Formal notice on US Federal Register



# Public Participation Results



- Over **150** total public comments received
  - **3** voicemails
  - **50** emails
  - **1** letter
  - **99** online comment forms
  - **1** public hearing testimony
- **29** attendees at the online public hearing

# Public Participation Results

	# of Submittals	# of Comments
2003 DEIS – Agency	6	17
2003 DEIS – General Public	6	6
<b>2003 DEIS Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>

	# of Submittals	# of Comments
2020 SDEIS – Agency	8	26
2020 SDEIS – General Public	149	209
<b>2020 SDEIS Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>235</b>

	# of Submittals	# of Comments
<b>2003 DEIS + 2020 SDEIS Total</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>258</b>

# Summary of Comment Themes

- **Preferred Alternative EC-2 received the most support of the three alternatives**
- **Top 5 Comment Themes**
  - **#1 – Shared Use Path (86 comments; 33% of total)**
    - Recommend wider path, separate pedestrians and bicyclists, and locate the shared use path on both sides of the bridge
  - **#2 – Misc. Bridge Design Features (20 comments; 8% of total)**
    - Not associated with shared use path or aesthetics (e.g., wind protection, speed limits, etc.)
  - **#3 – Union Labor (17 comments; 7% of total)**
    - Request union labor be used to construct the new bridge
  - **#4 – Bridge Aesthetics (15 comments; 6% of total)**
    - Desire for an aesthetically pleasing bridge in line with the scenic beauty of the Gorge
  - **#5 – Tolling (14 comments; 5% of total)**
    - Opposition to paying tolls, particularly for local commuters and low-income populations

# Summary of Comment Themes

- **Additional Themes with 10 or more Comments**

- General Project Support (13; 5%) – Support and enthusiasm for a new bridge crossing
- Process / Timeline (13; 5%) – NEPA and permit processing; construction schedule
- Tribal (10; 4%) – Effect on White Salmon TFAS, Tribal engagement, and treaty fishing rights
- Water Quality (10; 4%) – Effect on Columbia River water quality from in-water work/stormwater

- **Sampling of other Themes**

- Historic Bridge (5), Vegetation/Landscaping (5), Lighting (4), River Navigation/Access (3), Fish/Fish Habitat (3), Business Impacts (2), Trail Connections (2), Air Quality (1)

# Recommended Alternative – Discussion

- Given public comment, do you continue to recommend that Alternative EC-2 remain the Preferred Alternative?

# Mitigation Commitments

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Brian Carrico and Scott Polzin, WSP





# Mitigation Commitments

- Review draft commitments outlined in SDEIS
- Member discussion and input: Identify potential strategies to refine commitments



# White Salmon Treaty Fishing Access Site Upper Dock *(view to southeast)*





# Mitigation Commitments

## 3.5 Treaty Fishing Rights

- Consult with Columbia River treaty tribes on pier design regarding tying up boats and gill nets.
- Coordinate with Tribal agencies (BIA and CRITFC) to identify and install screening along a portion of the west side of the bridge to minimize views into and discourage throwing garbage onto the White Salmon treaty fishing access site.

# Mitigation Commitments

## 3.9 Environmental Justice Populations

- Consider incentives for hiring Native American companies for future construction-related work.
- Consult with the tribes with treaty fishing rights and coordinate with tribal agencies (BIA and CRITFC):
  - Timing of construction activities
  - Alternate camping sites
  - Access detours

# Mitigation Commitments

## 3.9 Environmental Justice Populations (continued)

- Robust and inclusive public engagement program and technical evaluation to assess strategies to mitigate undue burdens from:
  - Increased toll rates
  - Implementation of an all-electronic toll collection system
- Recommendations to the tolling authority



# Mitigation Commitments

## 3.9 Environmental Justice Populations (continued)

Potential toll strategies for affected populations:

- Reduced toll rates when replacement bridge opens
- Toll revenues for transportation services that would benefit low-income populations and other bridge users. (e.g. improved transit service)
- A variety of toll payment options (e.g. cash payment at convenient locations)
- Language translation for tolling informational materials, electronic toll applications, smartphone applications, and billing statements
- Toll exemptions for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling on the shared use path



# Mitigation Commitments

## 3.9 Environmental Justice Populations (continued)

Potential toll strategies for affected populations (continued):

- Measures to mitigate any undue burdens from toll rate increases or other costs of toll accounts, such as:
  - Free or low-cost tolls for use of for qualified vanpools
  - Waiving or reducing monthly account maintenance fees or account balance requirements for low-income populations
  - Providing free or low-cost transponders to low income populations
- A toll violations policy that allows reasonable opportunities to pay delinquent tolls prior to advancing unpaid tolls to a collection agency or municipal courts

# Supplemental Draft EIS – Impact Analysis



## Historic Resources

- **Removal of Hood River Bridge – adverse effect**
- Hood River Loops (HCRH), SP&S (BNSF) Railway, OR&N (UPRR) Railroad, 5 historic houses – no adverse effect
- 1 historic house – no effect

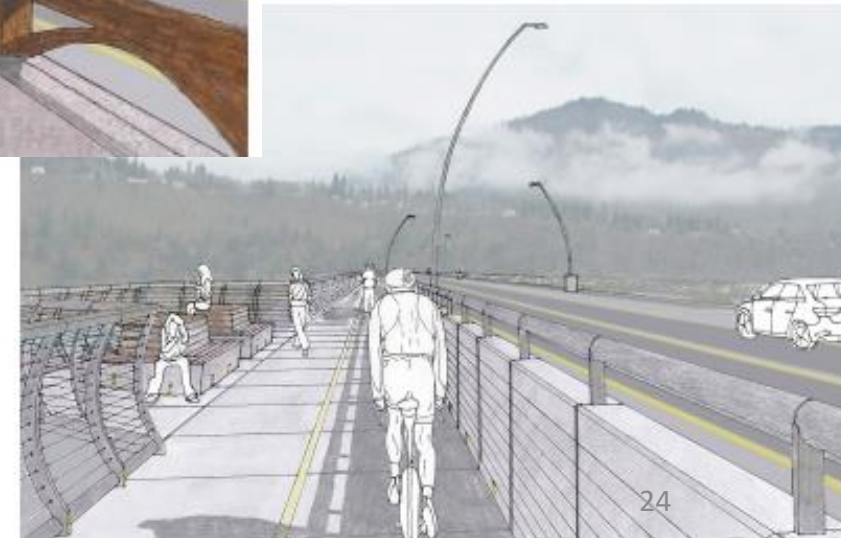
# Mitigation Commitments

## 3.13 Historic Resources

- Prepare draft mitigation plan to account for removal of the existing bridge
  - Public, tribal and agency review
- Final mitigation plan/agreement published in the Final EIS/Record of Decision
- Plan will describe the actions to be taken by signatory agencies

# Three Aesthetic Concepts:

- **Historic:** reflect elements of the existing bridge
- **I-84 Design:** similar to other bridges and roadways along I-84 and other National Scenic Area facilities
- **Contemporary:** create a unique, modern look that fits with the landscape and local communities



# Mitigation Commitments

## 3.19 Visual

- Convene a broadly representative aesthetics advisory committee and process to recommend:
  - Cohesive aesthetic theme for the non-structural components of the bridge (railings, light poles, site furniture, and signage)
  - Concrete colors, textures, shapes, and treatments that would be consistent with the visual quality goals described in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Management Plan



# Mitigation Commitments – Discussion

- Given your local knowledge, what engagement processes are best suited meet the mitigation commitments for:
    - Environmental justice communities
    - Bridge aesthetics
  - Who and how should they be involved?
- What should be considered for the draft mitigation plan for the loss of the bridge, a historic resource?
    - Documentation
    - Public engagement



# Public Comment

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Anne Pressentin



# Public Comment

- Observers are welcome to provide comment to the Working Group.
- Comment time limits will be determined by number of people desiring to make comment.



# Completion of EIS and Next Steps

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Kevin Greenwood, Port of Hood River



# Project Schedule



# Next Steps

- Additional technical work
- Final EIS and Record of Decision – draft being completed
- Bi-State Working Group activities
  - P3 Public Panel
  - AE/Design RFP
  - Legislative Progress
  - Governance
- Next meeting: Fall 2021



**Hood River – White Salmon**

**BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

Adjourn