



Pend Oreille County

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RE: Sullivan Lake Inlet Bridge Replacement, CRP 837, BRS-T261 (005), LA-8109

Due to the sensitivity of the Sullivan Lake Inlet Bridge Project and the question of why the project is scheduled for late March and April construction, the following are the constraint, Pend Oreille County are under for this project.

A project kickoff meeting was held at the Kalispel Tribe of Indians Wellness Center on December 19, 2013. This meeting was attended by representatives from the US Forest Service, Federal Highway Administration, Seattle City Light, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, Washington State Department of Transportation, Pend Oreille County PUD No. 1, and Pend Oreille County.

The purpose and need for the project was discussed. This bridge, classified as both structurally deficient and functionally obsolete, needs to be replaced. The existing bridge was built by the USFS in 1938 to replace a bridge that was located farther upstream on Harvey Creek. This bridge was designed for much smaller vehicles, and is effectively only one lane. This creates a safety concern on a two-lane road. This road also serves as an alternate route for SR 31, further highlighting the need to be maintained to modern standards.

The structure itself has rotting timbers and scour around the piers. Load limits have been posted on this bridge. The bridge also has minimal freeboard over the Sullivan Lake summer elevation.

Due to the seasonal conditions surrounding Sullivan Lake and Harvey Creek, a proposed time schedule for the project was discussed with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, and the US Forest Service. Due to the summer lake elevations, a late spring and summer time construction period was ruled out due to the in-water work that is required for the project. In early spring the flow levels in Harvey Creek are 2' +/- . In the late spring and summer months the water level at the bridge site is 6 to 8 feet deep which would be difficult and very expensive to work with. A fall construction schedule was not possible due to the spawning cycle of the Kokanee out of Sullivan Lake up into Harvey Creek. Pend Oreille County also worked with the Colville National Forest for timing the project to have minimal impact for recreation on the forest and Sullivan Lake Campground. This is a benefit to the businesses in the area and economic driver important to all of us.

During the design process, NEPA and SEPA were met for all environmental permitting. This included published comment periods in which any concerned parties from the community could file their concerns related to the project. A public meeting was held in Ione on February 20, 2018.

This project was scheduled for construction in the early spring of 2017. Due to the slide on Highway 31 the project was postponed and rescheduled for early spring of 2018. Pend Oreille County has obtained grants from both the State of Washington and The Federal Highways Administration. These grants are time sensitive and have deadlines for construction. If the project is not executed within the scheduled time, Pend Oreille County will lose the grant money for the project.

Pend Oreille County has been in contact with Governor Jay Inslee, Senator Shelly Short, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rogers, WSDOT, and State and Federal Legislators for Pend Oreille County to make sure everyone is aware of the concerns of the people of the northern part of the County.

Pend Oreille County has also had meetings with Fire District 2 regarding fire and EMS response, and assured the Fire Department is ready in case a short closure should result. The Public Works Director facilitated and presented to a large group of LEPC participants last week. The Director met with the State Department of Transportation Emergency Manager and Operations Manager.

Pend Oreille County has been assured that if a slide was to occur on highway 31, that an immediate response would be made to keep Highway 31 open with minimal delays.

Sincerely,



Stephen Kiss, Chair