

I-5 Willamette River Bridge - Environmental Assessment

OPEN HOUSE / HEARING

January 31, 2008

WELCOME!

*This slide show takes about **six minutes** and provides information about the project and the purpose of today's meeting.*

The Project

- ODOT has completed an environmental review process for replacing the I-5 bridge over the Willamette River between Eugene and Springfield.
- The environmental review is assessing the possible environmental impacts of constructing a new bridge, removal of the existing bridges and the associated road improvements.

Project Area



Purpose of the Project

- To improve safety and maintain connectivity and mobility for all users of I-5 crossing the Willamette River in the Eugene/Springfield Metropolitan Area.



Why Replace the Bridge?

- Built in 1962, the original bridge has structural problems and would not be cost-effective to repair or widen.
- ODOT constructed a temporary bridge in 2004 to accommodate traffic until a new bridge could be designed and built.
- The temporary bridge is not designed to withstand earthquakes and does not meet federal standards for permanent interstate bridges.



Project Steps



I-5
Willamette River
Bridge
Eugene & Springfield

The Environmental Assessment

- Assessed the impacts of constructing a new bridge and removing the existing bridges.
 - Is required as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
 - The EA helps the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and ODOT determine:
 - The Interests and opinions of public and government agencies
 - Whether there are significant environmental impacts
 - What mitigation measures might be necessary
- The following slides outline the sections of the EA for your review and comment today.

Executive Summary

- Contains a brief overview of the findings in the Environmental Assessment
- Answers a variety of questions about the history of the project

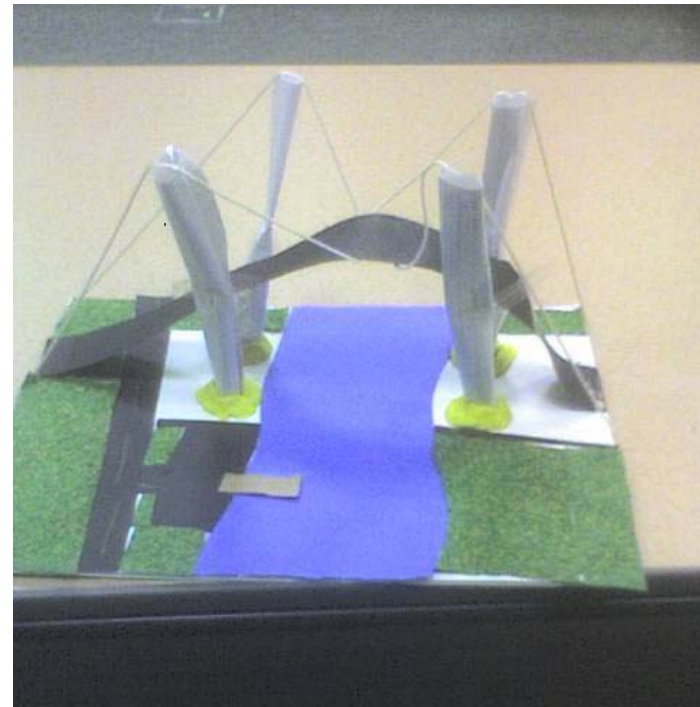


➤ Copies of the Executive Summary are available today.

Project Introduction

Chapter 1 Describes the project

- Explains the **Project Purpose & Need and Goals & Objectives** – created by the project committees and the public.
- Includes a **Public Involvement Summary** – how the public has been involved-to-date.



Bridge model made by an 11-yr old participant

Project Alternatives

Chapter 2 discusses the two alternatives analyzed in the EA:

- **No Build**

- Upgrades the detour bridge and removes the decommissioned bridge.
- Does not meet the project purpose and need.

- **Build Alternative**

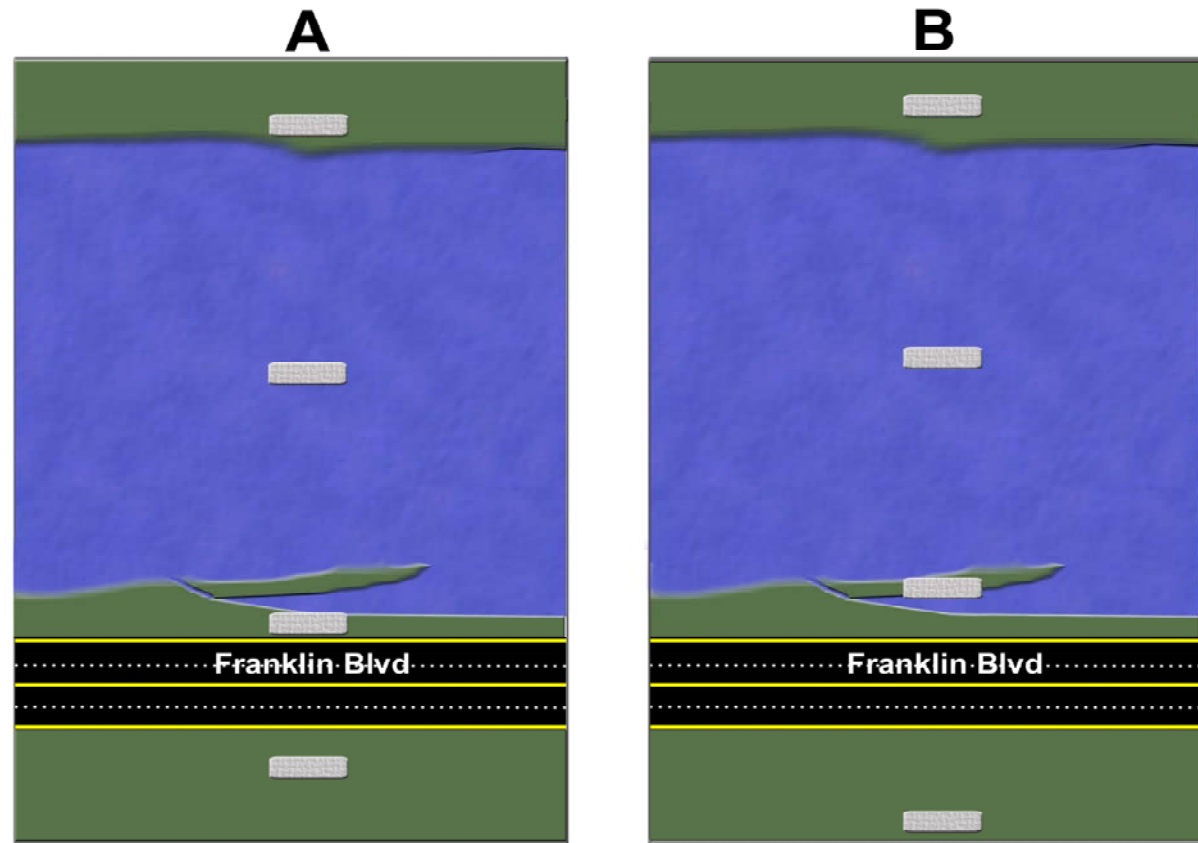
- Removes the existing bridges
- Constructs replacement bridges
- Built within the existing ODOT right-of-way



Project Alternatives – Pier Location

The EA outlines the impacts of ...

The pier locations in the water and on land



Project Alternatives – Bridge Types

The EA also outlines the impacts of the...

- The bridge size (width and height) based on four bridge types – Box Girder; I- Girder; Deck Arch and Through Arch

The EA does *not* consider...

- Design elements such as color, pier shape, texture, railings, or specific aesthetic benefits. These will be determined as part of the design process following the EA.
- The following slides show the bridge types analyzed in the EA with some design ideas to give you a sense of what is possible with each bridge type.

Potential Bridge Type: I - Girder

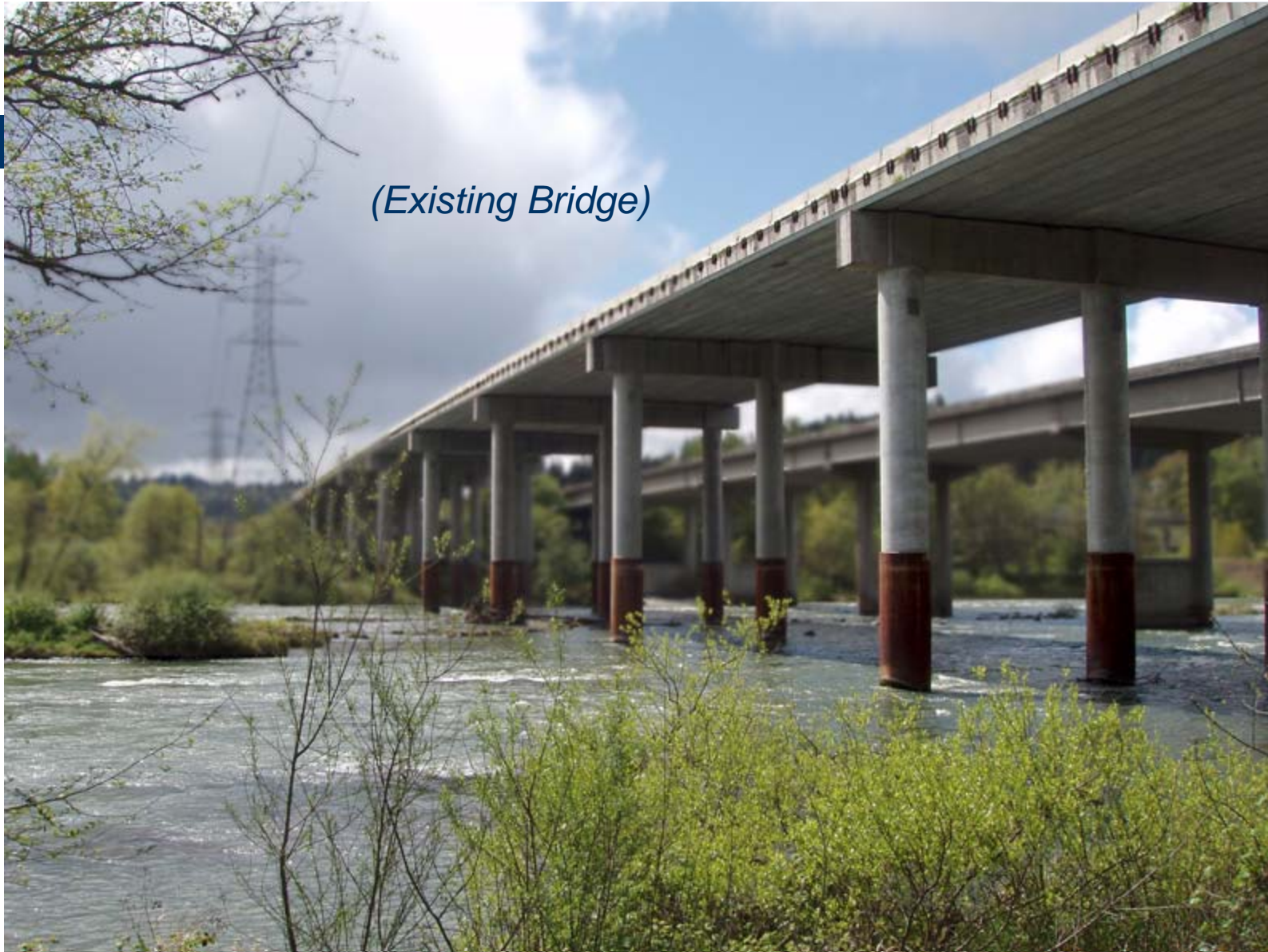


Potential Bridge Type: Box Girder



(Existing Bridge)

Potential Bridge Type: Deck Arch



(Existing Bridge)

Potential Bridge Type: Through Arch



(Existing Bridge)

Environmental Technical Reports

Chapter 3 documents existing conditions and the anticipated impacts both positive and negative in the following areas:

- Air Quality
 - Archaeology
 - Biology/Threatened & Endangered Species
 - Geology
 - Hazardous Materials
 - Historic Resources
 - Land Use
 - Right of Way
 - Section 4(f) – Parks
 - Section 6(f)
 - Socio-economics
 - Visual Quality
 - Water Quality
 - Wetlands
- **The technical reports and staff are here today to answer questions.**

Mitigation and Conservation

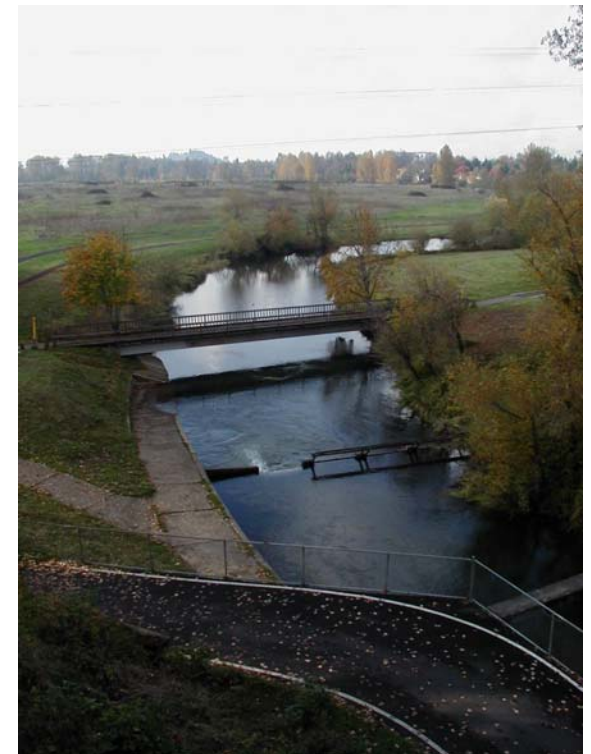
- **Chapter 4 explains mitigation and conservation -**
how to address/minimize the impacts found in the technical analysis.



- The following slides include highlights from the technical analysis and proposed mitigation.

Biological impacts include....

- Wildlife and habitat disturbed by construction
- Aquatic species affected by the periods of in-water work
- The effect of reducing the number of bridge piers in and adjacent to the Willamette River from 15 to six



... proposed mitigation includes...

- Fish avoidance, including in-water work timing
- Work area isolation
- Providing fish passage
- Minimizing work areas
- Preventing debris from falling in the river
- Identifying and avoiding sensitive areas
- Restoring and re-vegetating disturbed areas



Impacts to the Alton Baker Park/Whilamut Natural Area include...

- Proposed temporary use of the trail as a haul route
- Proposed removal of fill material on the east side of I-5 within the park
- Effects on the trails during construction



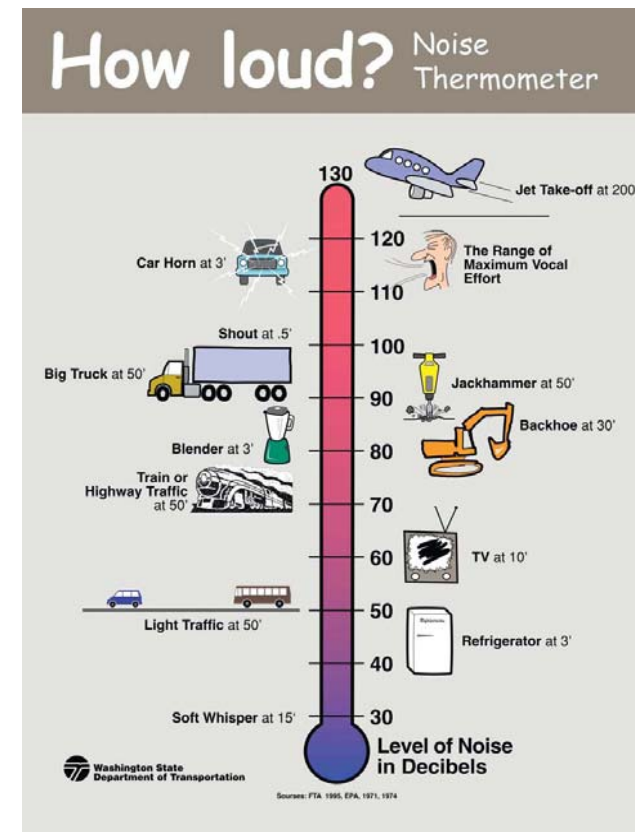
...proposed mitigation...

- Storage and staging areas will be minimized
- Trails will be kept open, safe, and useable during construction and a traffic control plan will be prepared
- A continuous route across ODOT right-of-way throughout construction will be maintained
- Affected areas will be restored as needed



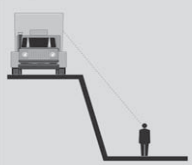
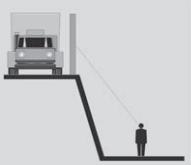

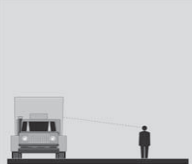


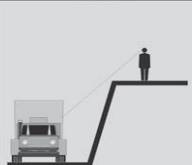
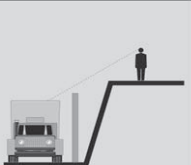
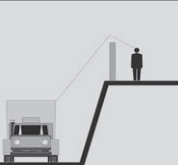
Noise Impacts include...

- Construction noise and noise from projected traffic increases over time
- The No Build Alternative would impact 67 homes, 2 businesses, the park, and cemetery, while the Build Alternative would impact 75 homes, 2 businesses, the park, and cemetery.
- “Impact” is based on noise levels above 65 decibels.



...proposed mitigation...

- Work hour restrictions on construction activities
- Noise walls that meet ODOT criteria for noise reduction and cost-effectiveness are recommended in two locations

Barrier Roadway	NONE	NEAR SOURCE	NEAR RECEIVER
ELEVATED	May be some noise reduction by terrain 	Barrier is very effective 	Barrier has no effect 
LEVEL	Noise travels directly to the receiver 	Barrier is effective 	Barrier is effective 
DEPRESSED	May be some noise reduction by terrain 	Barrier has no effect 	Barrier is effective 

Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2001

➤ *A noise expert is here today to discuss the noise impacts and the recommendation.*

Transportation impacts include...

- Some delays. Roads, railroad, and paths are generally open during construction
- Short term road closures as needed.
- The Build Alternative would provide bridges that meet current design and safety standards and meet long-term traffic needs



The traffic management plan includes:

- Coordination with schools, emergency services, transit district
- Maintaining access to businesses
- Minimizing daytime street closures
- Keeping trails, bike lanes, and sidewalks open and safe
- Reconstructing bike/pedestrian facilities to design standards

Impacts to Visual Quality include...

- Adverse visual impacts during construction
- Long-term visual benefit from fewer piers and consistent design/appearance of new bridges



... proposed mitigation includes...

- Continued community outreach and involvement regarding new bridge type, pier shape, architectural treatments, color, texture, and landscaping
- Design workshops/charettes
- Online surveys
- Newsletters
- Website updates



Impacts to Wetlands and Water Resources include...

- Impacts during construction
- Up to four “in water” work periods for the Build Alternative
- The Build Alternative would increase impervious surfaces, but would add water quality treatment



proposed mitigation and conservation

- Erosion and sediment control
- Construction stormwater pollution prevention
- Water quality treatment of stormwater
- Wetland restoration/rehabilitation



To Comment on the EA

- Provide written comments or oral testimony today. A court reporter is onsite to record your statement.
- Request a CD or hard copy of the EA and provide written comments by **February 19, 2008** to:

Jim Cox
ODOT Major Projects Branch
680 Cottage St NE
Salem, OR 97301
Jim.B.Cox@odot.state.or.us

What happens next?

- The project staff and the Community Advisory Group will be reviewing the public comment on the EA at their next meeting on March 11, 2008 10 – 1pm at the Eugene Library.
- The bridge design process begins in Spring 2008.
- A revised EA will be released in June 2008.
- If you would like to receive project updates in the mail, be sure to provide your name and contact information on the sign-in sheet.
- Thanks for coming today! We appreciate you taking the time to find out more about the project and to give us your input.

Upcoming project steps

I-5 Willamette River Bridge Project Steps and Schedule

