

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)  
Leudinghaus Road Bridge Replacement Project  
Lewis County, Washington FEMA-1734-DR-WA, PW 00101

Lewis County applied through the Washington State Emergency Management Division (WS-EMD) to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for Public Assistance funding under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended, to replace a bridge over the Chehalis River that was washed away during a severe winter storm and flooding. The purpose of the Public Assistance program is to provide financial assistance to state and local governments, federally recognized Tribal governments, and certain private nonprofit entities with the response and recovery from Presidential declared disasters.

The bridge was damaged during storms that occurred December 1, 2007 to December 17, 2007. The event was declared a Presidential disaster (FEMA-1734-DR-WA). During the storm event, the Chehalis River overflowed its banks, carrying large woody debris downstream. This debris hit and destroyed the vehicular bridge that connected River Road, on the south side of the river, to Leudinghaus Road, on the north side of the river. This bridge provided access from State Route (SR) 6 via River Road across the Chehalis River to homes, businesses, and natural and recreational resources on the north side of the river.

The project proposal is to restore vehicular access between these areas by constructing a new bridge over the Chehalis River approximately 2,500 feet upstream (west) of the original Leudinghaus Road Bridge. The proposed bridge design is a single-span structure with an elevated bridge deck to better accommodate debris associated with high-flow events in the river and meet state and local floodplain protection standards. The higher elevation of the proposed bridge will require alterations to the approach roads on both sides of the river to match the elevation of the new bridge, including grade changes, realignment, and new roadway. Although project elements occur within the floodplain, the proposal minimizes floodplain impacts to the extent possible. The project includes a list of environmental conditions that address erosion and sediment control, spill prevention, stormwater pollution prevention, temporary access, footprint minimization, migratory bird protection, and inadvertent discovery of archeological resources during construction. In addition, the project will conform to applicable local floodplain protection standards.

Several alternatives were initially considered including the no build option. In 2008, a feasibility report was completed that evaluated four bridge structure alternatives and four horizontal alignments for the project. A preferred bridge structure (single-span precast girder bridge) and horizontal alignment was selected from the range of alternatives evaluated. However, area residents and local emergency service providers attending the various project public meetings asked Lewis County to revisit project alignment alternatives. Public comments indicated that the county proposed new alignment, which involved constructing a new bridge just downstream of the original bridge location, was not the preferred location by the public.

In response, Lewis County developed a new set of seven (7) project action alternatives. The following five (5) preliminary alternatives were eliminated from further consideration because they were found to not meet the project purpose and need, were not practical, had greater environmental impacts, and/or were less optimal than the county's preferred alternative: 1) Construct a new bridge downstream of the original bridge site, 2) Construct a new bridge downstream of the original bridge site with a new SR 6 intersection, 3) Construct a new bridge at the intersection of River Road and SR 6, 4) Construct a new bridge near the west end of Hatchery Road, and 5) Purchase a temporary bridge to be used in emergency situations. The remaining two alternatives described below, as well as the no action alternative, were evaluated in the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA).

The Draft EA was prepared to identify and evaluate potential environmental impacts resulting from the alternatives presented, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). Alternatives evaluated in the Draft EA included: No Action Alternative, Alternative 1 (Proposed Action-New design at intersection of hatchery road and SR 6), and Alternative 2 (New design at the original bridge site with a new SR 6 intersection). The proposed action is the environmental preferred alternative, as it has the least collective impact of all the alternatives identified. The Draft EA was available for public comment for 30 days. FEMA received comments from a total of seven sources; which are identified and addressed in the Leudinghaus Road Bridge Replacement Project EA Revision Sheet. The comments did not require substantive changes to the draft EA.

### **FINDING**

FEMA evaluated the proposed project for significant adverse impacts to climate and climate change, geology and soils, vegetation, fish and wildlife, coastal zone, historic and cultural resources, socioeconomics (including minority and low income populations), floodplains and wetlands. The results of these evaluations, as well as consultations and input from other federal and state agencies, are presented in the EA.

Based upon the Public Assistance grant application, Final EA and the attached grant conditions and in accordance with FEMA's regulations in 44 CFR Part 10 for environmental consideration, including Executive Orders (EO) addressing floodplains (EO 11988), wetlands (EO 11990), and environmental justice (EO 12898), FEMA determined the proposed project will not significantly affect the quality of the natural and human environment. As a result of this finding, an EIS will not be prepared and the project as described in the PA grant application and Final EA may proceed.

### **APPROVALS**

Mark Eberlein

1-22-2014

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Mark G. Eberlein  
Regional Environmental Officer  
FEMA Region 10

Date

### **Attachment A: Grant Conditions**

The proposed project includes numerous Best Management Practices (BMPs) and mitigation measures. In addition, the following conditions apply, and failure to comply with these conditions may jeopardize the receipt of Federal funds:

- 1) Lewis County or its contractor will monitor slope stability during pile driving for the temporary support bent; if indications of slope failure are observed, the contractor would stop work to evaluate the stability of the slope and implement mitigation measures to stabilize soils and minimize sediments entering the river during continued pile driving and after construction activities on the shoreline are complete. Mitigation measures to minimize sedimentation and stabilize slopes during and after construction could include the placement of additional erosion and sediment control BMPs, the removal of excess amounts of material deposited above the OHWM, the placement of additional riprap above the OHWM, and native vegetation plantings after construction. Corrective actions to permanently stabilize slopes may be delayed until pile driving is complete as continued vibrations may undo any interim corrective action.
- 2) Any clearing of the project area, including the removal of vegetation, between March 1 and August 31, shall not impact active migratory bird nests as regulated by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. If an active nest is determined to be potentially impacted by the project activities, the applicant shall obtain a permit from USFWS prior to proceeding with the work. Empty or abandoned nests can be removed but they cannot be taken into possession without first obtaining a permit.
- 3) Additional mitigation measures to compensate for the effects on biological resources will be developed during the HPA process with WDFW and local Lewis County permitting. Conservation measures arising from the HPA permit conditions are considered part of the project conditions.
- 4) Lewis County has contracted a qualified archaeologist to prepare an archaeological monitoring plan and an unanticipated discovery plan that has been submitted to FEMA, SHPO and Tribes for review and approval. Monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the approved monitoring plan by a qualified archaeologist. Tribes will be given advance notice of project initiation so that they could be present while work was being conducted. A monitor will be present during all ground-disturbing activities identified in the monitoring plan to determine if deeply buried historic properties are present. Lewis County will provide a report documenting the monitoring results, and submit it to FEMA and SHPO for review and approval. FEMA will provide the Tribes with the report. In the event that archaeological materials are discovered during ground-disturbing activities, the contractor would halt excavations in the vicinity of the find and follow the procedures outlined in the unanticipated discovery plan including further consultation with DAHP and the affected Indian Tribes regarding the nature of the archaeological deposits discovered. If human skeletal remains are discovered, the Lewis County Sheriff, FEMA, and DAHP would be notified immediately.
- 5) Any change to the approved scope of work will require re-evaluation by FEMA for compliance with NEPA and other laws and EOs, before approval and funding.