

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Project: Index-Galena Road Milepost 6.4-6.9

Federal Aid #: ER – 0701 (063) County Project #: RC 1532

Purpose of Notice: This notice is published to notify interested citizens and others that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has signed a determination of Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on April 14, 2017. This finding is based upon the evaluation of the Environmental Assessment (EA) as issued on September 19, 2016, and thoughtful consideration of public and agency input, including comments received at the public hearing on October 12, 2016 for the Index-Galena Road Milepost 6.4-6.9 project. The project is located east of the town of Index in unincorporated Snohomish County, Washington.

Description of current proposal:

FHWA, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and Snohomish County propose to design and construct the Index-Galena Road Milepost 6.4 to Milepost 6.9 project. The project will construct a relocated roadway that will extend from an area in proximity to the lower washout at Index-Galena Road Milepost 6.4 to an area in proximity to the upper washout at Milepost 6.9. The roadway will be relocated landward from the North Fork Skykomish River outside of the floodplain and channel migration zone. The relocated roadway will re-establish roadway connectivity on Index-Galena Road for residences, emergency service providers, recreationists, and land managed by the U. S Forest Service.

At the beginning point of the relocation, the roadway will ascend the sideslopes at a 9 percent grade to raise the roadway out of the 100-year floodplain and channel migration zone. To accommodate the re-alignment, the project will require extensive soil excavation and would place fill in other areas. A new Index-Galena Road/Trout Creek Road intersection would be constructed to allow for future continued use of Trout Creek Road by the U.S. Forest Service to carry out its long-term land management plans in the Trout Creek sub-basin. The relocated roadway will cross sideslopes and parallel the existing roadway. Non-fish bearing streams will be crossed by the alignment. A new 180-foot bridge with a deep drilled-shaft foundation will be constructed at a stream crossing near Station 54+00, at the east end of the project.

The proposed roadway design is based on design standards contained in the *2001 AASHTO Guidelines for Geometric Design of Very Low-Volume Roadways (ADT < 400)*. The use of these design standards responds to comments made by the public during the NEPA scoping period to consider use of design standards that would help to reduce the footprint of the proposed roadway relocation repair.

The proposed design will include a pavement width of 22 feet with 10-foot travel lanes and 1-foot shoulders. Additional land area will be required to install guardrail where warranted. The roadway posted speed limit will be 35 MPH.

The proposed project's new alignment on U.S. Forest Service lands in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest will require a new right-of-way easement from the U.S. Forest Service to Snohomish County through FHWA. The existing right-of-way easement would be combined with the new easement area and includes the damaged roadway that will be decommissioned and restored where feasible to natural riparian conditions. The restored areas and adjacent areas downslope from the roadway will be used for roadway stormwater runoff dispersion and will be permanently protected from future development. FHWA, with the consent of the U.S. Forest Service, will grant an easement for approximately one mile of new roadway easement across National Forest land.

Once the decommissioned roadway surface is removed, soil decompaction and placement of organic materials, including forest duff salvaged during clearing and grading, will prepare the site for restoration planting. This riparian mitigation will restore a forested riparian corridor adjacent to the North Fork Skykomish River. Where planting is not feasible, natural riparian conditions will be restored with the asphalt removal. Large woody debris will be placed to enhance in-stream habitat and will be placed within restoration areas to enhance wildlife habitat.

Location of current proposal: Index-Galena Road is located in southeastern Snohomish County, Washington, approximately 35 miles southeast of Everett, in the North Fork Skykomish River valley. The proposal is located in Sections 35 and 36, Township 28 North, Range 10 East, W.M.

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