

# Introduction

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**Project Name:** H.B. Van Duzer Forest Corridor – Steel Bridge Road  
**County:** Polk  
**Highways:** Salmon River and Three Rivers  
**Highway Nos.:** ORE 18 and 22

**Funding Source:** National Highway System<sup>1</sup>  
**Cost Estimate:** \$60.5 million  
**ODOT Region:** 2  
**Begin:** MP 18.8  
**End:** MP 28.2  
**Length:** 9.4 miles

This Revised Environmental Assessment (REA) for the H.B. Van Duzer Forest Corridor – Steel Bridge Road project along Oregon 18 (ORE 18)/Oregon 22 (ORE 22) in Polk County, Oregon, completes the Environmental Assessment (EA) that was released in September 2002. The REA is not intended to be read as a stand-alone document, but rather as a continuation of the EA. Information stated in the EA and not substantially changed since its release is therefore not repeated in the REA.

Copies of the EA and REA are available upon request from:

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)  
Environmental Services Section  
1158 Chemeketa St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Copies of the EA and REA have also been placed on ODOT's Web site. They can be downloaded from [http://www.odot.state.or.us/region2public/Van\\_Duzer.htm](http://www.odot.state.or.us/region2public/Van_Duzer.htm).

Please refer to the EA for a list of preparers and technical reports developed for the project. Acronyms, abbreviations, and notable terms used in this REA are explained in the front of this document, starting on page vii. The majority of the figures included in this REA were part of the EA, or have been updated since the publication of the EA. The EA figure numbering is included for reference on each of the figures in this REA.

This REA describes the Preferred Alternative that was selected for implementation. It also provides the reasons for selecting the Preferred Alternative and a section listing the additions and changes made to the EA. Land use findings of consistency with local plans are

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<sup>1</sup> For the Fort Hill to Wallace Bridge Section

included along with a section summarizing mitigation and conservation measures and a description of public and agency coordination conducted for the project. A project conclusion is also provided. Appendixes to the REA consist of (A) a summary of public involvement and agency coordination; (B) summarized responses to public and agency comments; (C) public comments received on the EA; (D) public hearing transcript; and (E) agency comment letters.

## Alternatives Analysis Summary

Two alternatives were analyzed in the EA – a No Build Alternative and a Build Alternative.

The **No Build Alternative** would leave the highway segment as is without coordinated plans for improvement. Required maintenance projects would occur and other improvements to this segment of ORE 18 would be planned as individual projects. At this time, two projects identified in the *Statewide Transportation Improvement Program* are scheduled for 2006. These are the realignment of the Fort Hill intersection and the addition of an eastbound passing lane between Fort Hill and Wallace Bridge. An access road between Fort Hill and Wallace Bridge is also planned. These projects would be developed under the No Build scenario without coordination with future potential projects in the area.

The **Build Alternative** presented in the EA is similar to the Preferred Alternative described in the next section of this REA with one notable exception: at Fort Hill Road, the Build Alternative presented in the EA proposed an at-grade intersection. The EA states:

“The Build Alternative includes the following proposed projects: widen the highway to four lanes, including three bridges over the south Yamhill River; install non-traversable medians; construct interchanges at Grand Ronde and the Casino/Valley Junction area; *realign the Fort Hill intersection*; consolidate and close private accesses; and construct access roads.”

This intersection relocation would have moved the ORE 18/Fort Hill Road/South Yamhill River Road intersection east of the service station and Fort Hill Restaurant. A northside access road also would have been constructed from Fort Hill eastward approximately 2.8 miles, crossing over ORE 18 and connecting to South Yamhill River Road. This road would have eliminated all highway approach roads, other than the weigh stations, east of the new Fort Hill Road intersection. Fort Hill Road would have connected to the ORE 18/ORE 22 Wallace Bridge Interchange via South Yamhill River Road.

As the EA was being readied for publication and distribution, ODOT designers proposed an alternate solution to the Fort Hill Road/ORE 18/ORE 22 connection. Rather than a realigned, at-grade intersection, designers proposed an interchange that could be constructed at either a comparable cost or for less than the original proposed solution. The separated grade interchange would greatly reduce conflicts for the critical-path left-hand turn movement at the ORE 18/ORE 22 and Fort Hill Road intersection. The interchange also has the potential to impact fewer wetland acreage and may avoid many impacts to existing commercial businesses.

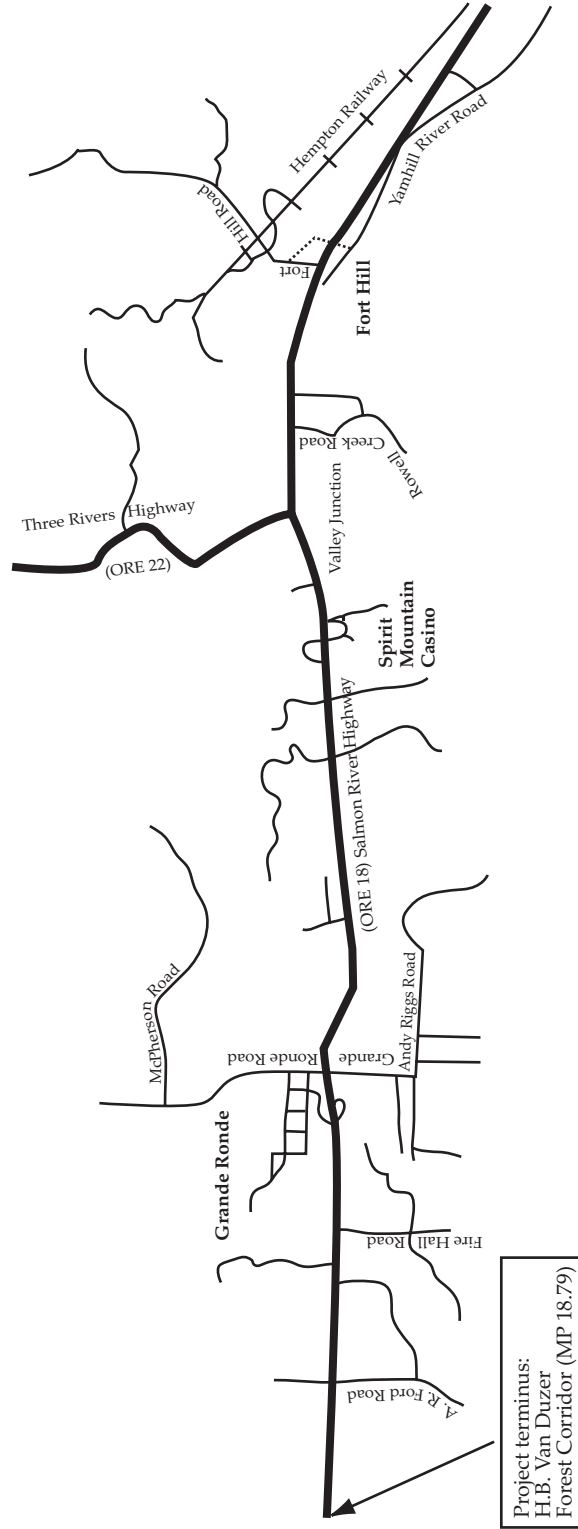
At the November 7, 2002, public hearing for the EA, ODOT presented information about the project and included the proposal for an interchange east of Fort Hill Road instead of

realigning the current intersection at Fort Hill Road. Residents attending the hearing showed strong support for the interchange option. This interchange is recommended by ODOT and included as part of the Preferred Alternative in this REA. It results in improved safety and convenience and provides the opportunity to reduce impacts to wetlands in the area by designing the connecting access road to serve the residents, rather than to carry all the truck traffic between the Fort Hill Lumber Company mill at Fort Hill and the ORE 18/ORE 22 Wallace Bridge interchange near Willamina. See the subsection titled Conceptual Design Changes in the Additions and Changes to the EA section of this REA for more information.

Figures 1 and 2 show the project location from the west and east, respectively.

# Location and Project Map

H.B. Van Duzer Forest Corridor to Steel Bridge Road — West

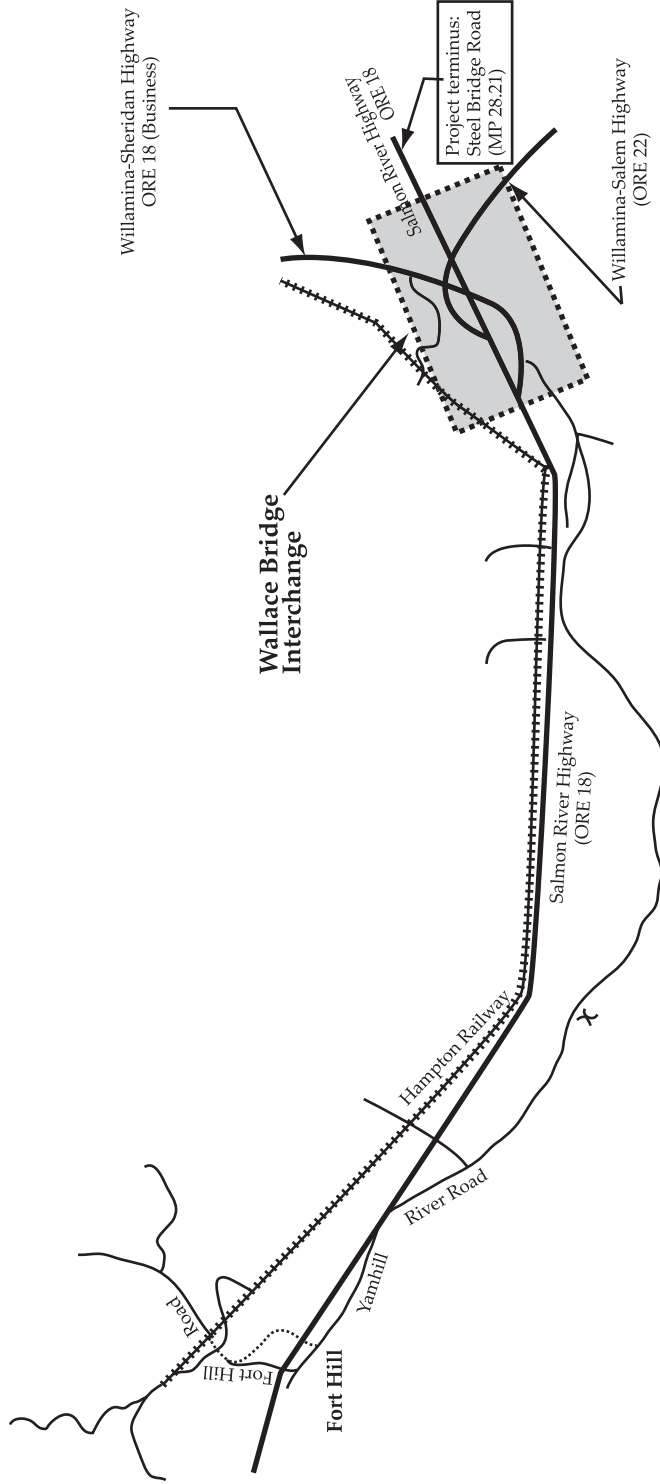


Project terminus:  
H.B. Van Duzer  
Forest Corridor (MP 18.79)

Figure 1: Location and Project Map (West)

## Location and Project Map

H.B. Van Duzer Forest Corridor to Steel Bridge Road — East



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ANALYSIS UNIT

H.B. Van Duzer to Steel Bridge Road Environmental Assessment  
Project Location

FILE: 18ProjBigPPT

Prepared By: Harlan Nole, P.E.

DATE: 5/26/09

Reviewed By: Roxann Rivord, P.E.

**FIGURE 2**

Figure 2: Location and Project Map (East)