

# I-5 Willamette River Bridge

Eugene & Springfield



December 2011

## Hundreds of volunteer hours bring community values to design work

The halfway point of the Interstate 5 Willamette River Bridge project provides a great time to recognize and thank the many volunteers who are contributing their time. The Oregon Department of Transportation appreciates the community's involvement from design through construction.

A 10-member Community Advisory Group has been instrumental in developing project goals, objectives and design considerations to ensure that community values are part of the project. The group has met since 2007 and has included representatives from local neighborhoods, recreation groups, local artists, architects, the University of Oregon and the Citizen Planning Committee for the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park.

ODOT is fortunate to be able to include design enhancements on this project that will reflect community values and add cultural significance to the design.

The Design Enhancement Steering Committee, made up of four members from the CAG, provides guidance on the design enhancements. ODOT gives a big thank you to Charlotte Behm, Bob Kline, Vicky Mello and Scott Wylie, members of the DESC, for giving additional time to this project.

Esther Stutzman, a Kalapuya tribal representative, and David Lewis, representative of The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, have played a large role in inspiring the design enhancements. They each set aside time to help develop the bridge's aesthetic values and foster the designers through their work.

ODOT also thanks our citizen volunteers who have worked to have the bridge renamed the Whilamut Passage Bridge. While the name is not yet official, we are well on our way thanks to their efforts shepherding it through the process.

Results of the work by the DESC and the CAG are already apparent in designs for the new southbound bridge, sound wall, paths and landscaping. More elements will be added by spring 2014.

Portions of this article appeared in our blog post on Oct. 28, 2011. Please visit [willametteriverbridge.blogspot.com](http://willametteriverbridge.blogspot.com) to read more from our project team.



Members of the Citizen Advisory Group and Project Development Team discuss design enhancements for the north bank.

For current project updates, please visit [www.willamettebridge.org](http://www.willamettebridge.org) and follow us on Twitter: @OregonDOT or our blog at [willametteriverbridge.blogspot.com](http://willametteriverbridge.blogspot.com)

## CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE

### 2011:

- Partially demolish the temporary Canoe Canal Bridge.
- Demolish the I-5 detour bridge.
- Begin landscaping using low-maintenance, native plants.

### 2012:

- Complete demolition of the I-5 detour bridge.
- Begin construction of the new northbound bridge.
- Build the sound wall northeast of the new northbound bridge.
- Complete demolition of the temporary Canoe Canal Bridge.
- Complete the new northbound Canoe Canal Bridge.

### 2013:

- Begin construction on the new viaduct path on the south bank of the Willamette River.
- Complete and open the new northbound I-5 bridge.
- Reopen the I-5 northbound off-ramp to Franklin Boulevard, exit 192.

### 2014:

- Begin stream restoration on south bank.
- Complete the south bank viaduct path.
- Complete roadway paving and striping.
- Complete landscaping and install design enhancements.
- Project complete.

## WINTER DRIVING TIPS

Here comes winter weather! Prepare for challenging driving conditions by visiting [www.oregon.gov/ODOT/COMM/winterdriving.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/COMM/winterdriving.shtml).

## Demolishing the temporary bridge and recycling along the way

As crews demolished the temporary bridge, they loaded most of the beams supporting the bridge deck onto trucks and moved them to storage for future use. We will reuse 50 of those beams to build the new south bank viaduct path. Also, 174 additional beams are slated to go in projects throughout Lane County and other parts of the state. In the end, nearly 70 percent of the 326 beams from the temporary bridge will find a home in this or another highway project. We are recycling or reusing a significant amount of material from the temporary detour bridge, saving thousands of dollars in construction costs and landfill charges.

The final stage of demolishing the temporary bridge includes removing its piers from the riverbed and hauling the rubble offsite for disposal. Once the temporary bridge is removed, work will focus on building the new northbound bridge.



**Removing the beams** that cross the railroad tracks on the south side of the river.

**Removal of the old bridge** allows the beauty of the new bridge to be seen.



**Each bridge beam** is so large, it takes its own truck.

## North bank design enhancements to feature Kalapuya culture

On the north bank of the river, under the new Willamette River bridges and Canoe Canal bridges, design enhancements will focus on the Kalapuya culture.

- Design teams are developing individual blue stones depicting the lifecycle of the blue Camas plant that is a historical food source for the tribe. The stones will be placed along the south side of the pedestrian path under the Canoe Canal Bridges.
- Through Community Involvement & Long-term Ownership Strategy (CILOS) students and educators will collaborate to achieve on-the-ground restoration and community stewardship goals in the Whilamut Natural Area.



**Trail enhancements** under the Walnut Road bridge in Whilamut Natural Area.

## Temporary fish ladder helps local cutthroat trout population

In cooperation with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, our contractor team, led by Hamilton Construction, recently installed a temporary fish ladder near the new southbound Willamette River Bridge.

A protected wetland is on the south bank of the Willamette River near the bridge. Waters feed it from Augusta Creek, Glenwood Slough and other local streams. The water flows through a pipe under Franklin Boulevard to the river.

Recently, biologists identified cutthroat trout upstream from the pipe outlet. Unfortunately, juvenile fish cannot safely reach the Willamette River because the pipe outlet is too high above the river. This also prevents mature fish from returning upstream to spawn.

So we built a fish ladder—a series of steps that help fish swim around barriers—as a temporary solution to support the local fish population.

Our bridge project includes restoring the south bank wetlands and the stream system to enhance the natural setting and support fish and wildlife habitat. When the new bridges are complete we will restore the streams in the project area, remove culverts, create spawning ponds and reconstruct a historic stream channel outlet to let fish pass without needing a fish ladder.

Until then, the temporary fish ladder allows cutthroat trout living in the waterways above the south bank of the Willamette River to move freely.



**Prairie grass** designs enhance anti-access walls on the north bank of the river.



**A temporary fish ladder** allows fish from the Willamette River to reach Augusta Creek.



**New signs** installed making it easier for travelers to find local businesses.

## ODOT listens, responds to local business leaders

When ODOT announced the two-year closure of the Interstate 5 northbound off-ramp to Franklin Boulevard, local businesses contacted the agency's project leaders in Springfield to discuss suggestions for improved

detour signs. A meeting arranged by the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce brought Franklin Boulevard business leaders together with ODOT staff.

Together, they toured the project to see the traffic changes and detour signs already in place, reviewed plans to replace the Franklin Boulevard off-ramp and identified additional ideas.

As a result, the project team developed new traffic control plans and signs that better address concerns about customers knowing how to access local businesses.

The new signs are installed and are achieving positive results. ODOT appreciates opportunities such as this to collaborate with local business leaders. Together, we reached a solution for all.

### Tours

Tours of the I-5 Willamette River Bridge construction project can be arranged by contacting John Lively at [john@cawood.com](mailto:john@cawood.com) or calling (541) 484-7052. Tours are regularly scheduled on the second Wednesday of each month at 10 a.m. Tours are limited to a maximum of 15 participants. Advance sign-up is required.

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#### Contact for more information:

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**John Lively, Construction Public Involvement Coordinator**, (541) 484-7052

If you are not already on our mailing list, contact Nichole Hayward at (541) 484-7052 or email [nichole@cawood.com](mailto:nichole@cawood.com). The newsletter is distributed electronically unless otherwise requested.

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