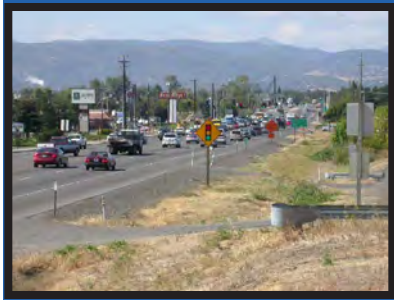
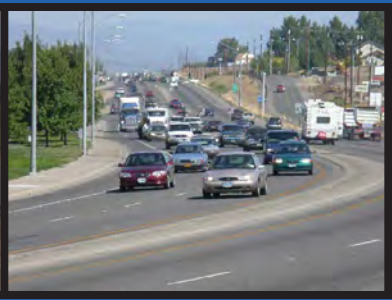
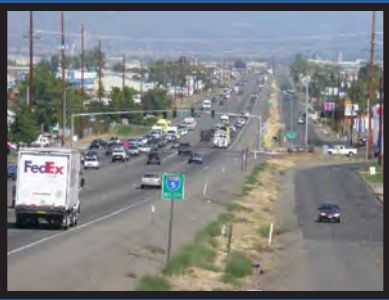
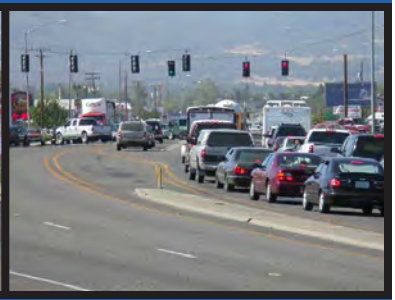
OR 62:
I-5 to Dutton Road

Draft Environmental Impact Statement

September 2012



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Oregon Department of Transportation

Federal-Aid Number: X-NH-S022(022) • ODOT Key Number: 13226

Alternative format availability: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, alternative forms of this document will be made available on request. Contact Anna Henson at ODOT, 541-774-6376.

FHWA-OR-EIS-12-02-D
OR 62: I-5 to Dutton Road (Medford)
Jackson County, Oregon
Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Federal-Aid Number X-NH-S022(022)
ODOT Key Number #13226

Submitted Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4332 (2) (c) and where applicable, 49 U.S.C. 303
by U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)

Frank Reading, ODOT Region 3 Manager

August 22, 2012
Date of Approval

Phillip A. Ditzler, Division Administrator, FHWA

August 21, 2012
Date of Approval

The following persons may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

Anna Henson
Environmental Project Manager
ODOT Region 3
100 Antelope Road
White City, OR 97503
541-774-6376

Chris M. Bucher
Operations Engineer
Federal Highway Administration
530 Center Street NE, Suite 420
Salem, OR 97301
503-316-2555

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) propose to build a new highway from the Interstate 5/OR 62 Interchange in Medford to approximately Dutton Road north of White City in Jackson County, Oregon. The OR 62 project would be an access-controlled, four-lane expressway on a new alignment.

The major beneficial impact would be enhanced mobility through reduced congestion, reduced travel times by up to 19 minutes, or 59 percent in 2035, and improved traffic safety. Major impacts from the project would include the conversion of 248 to 269 acres of land to highway use, the conversion of 33 to 52 acres of land zoned Exclusive Farm Use to nonfarm use, displacement of 21 to 46 households and 51 to 57 businesses, noise impacts on 13 to 20 properties that would not be mitigated, and the displacement of 19.8 to 23.3 acres of wetlands, of which up to 5.5 acres are vernal pools. The project would create approximately 105 to 109 acres of new impervious surface and approximately 220 to 224 acres of contribution impervious area that would be treated. Some of the impacted lands provide habitat for one animal species, vernal pool fairly shrimp, and two plant species, Cook's lomatium and large-flowered woolly meadowfoam, designated as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). Both of the build alternatives would require exceptions to Statewide Planning Goals on agricultural lands, forest lands, public facilities and services, and urbanization. Other impacts would include adverse effects to the visual environment, particularly in the vicinity of Justice Road and Peace Lane, a reduction in neighborhood cohesion in the Peace/Justice neighborhood, and the loss of up to 206 acres of wildlife habitat for non-ESA species including approximately 4 acres of riparian, up to 137 acres of grassland, 24 acres of wetland and 41 acres of mound/vernal pool habitat. Fish passage would be improved by replacing up to 12 non-fish passable culverts with fish passable culverts. Section 4(f) de minimis findings are proposed for the Bear Creek Greenway, the planned Midway Park, and the Denman Wildlife Area. FHWA has made a Section 4(f) de minimis finding for the historic Cingcade Property for the use of 4.9 acres. Use of land in the Bear Creek Greenway by one build alternative would require the conversion of land subject to Section 6(f) of the Land Water and Conservation Act.

Unresolved issues are: 1) whether Statewide Planning Goal exceptions for the northernmost portion of the build alternatives would be needed, when funding becomes available, and, if needed, whether they would meet the applicable criteria; and, 2) the identification of property to replace the Bear Creek Greenway land subject to Section 6(f).

Total project construction cost is estimated to range from $330 million to $440 million in 2023 dollars, of which estimated right-of-way costs are $100 million to $120 million. The first phase of the project has been identified as the Jobs and Transportation Act (JTA) phase, which would use state funds, at a cost of $120 million to $150 million in 2014 dollars. Construction of the JTA phase is planned to begin in 2013, with construction complete in the fall of 2015.

TO THOSE WHO HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THE

OR62: I-5 to Dutton Road (Medford)
Jackson County, Oregon
Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Federal-Aid Number X-NH-S022(022)
ODOT Key Number #13226

Thank you for your interest in the proposed OR 62: I-5 to Dutton Road (Medford) Project.

The Federal Highway Administration and Oregon Department of Transportation have completed the **Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** for the proposed project, which is attached for your review and comment.

In accordance with 23 CFR 771.123(i), comments shall be submitted in writing to the applicant or the Administration within 45 days of the availability of the DEIS unless the Administration determines, for good cause, that a different period is warranted. Thus we request your reply **within 45 days** of the date at the top of this letter. If no comments are received, it will be assumed that you do not wish to comment on this EIS.

Please mail or email your comments to:

Anna Henson, Environmental Project Manager
Oregon Department of Transportation
ODOT Region 3
100 Antelope Road
White City, OR 97503
541-774-6376
Anna.HENSON@odot.state.or.us

A public hearing in accordance with 23 CFR 771.111(h) will be held for this project. The location, date, and time for the public hearing are shown on the cover of this document. An Open House, displaying maps and pertinent information to answer your questions about the EIS, will accompany the public hearing. Opportunities for formal testimony (oral and/or written) will be provided. Although you are encouraged to attend the public hearing, it is not required. You may submit your comments directly to ODOT as indicated above.

If you have questions or need additional information concerning the proposed project, please contact Anna Henson at 541-774-6376.

Thank you for your participation,

Frank Reading
ODOT Region 3 Manager

NOTICE OF DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

This Draft EIS and supporting technical documents are available for review at the following locations:

City of Medford
Planning Office
200 South Ivy Street
Lausmann Annex, Room 240
Medford, OR 97501
541-774-2380

Jackson County Library Services (JCLS) Medford Library Branch
205 South Central Avenue
Medford, OR 97501
241-774-8679

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Oregon Division
530 Center Street, NE, Suite 420
Salem, OR 97301
503-399-5749

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Region 3
100 Antelope Road
White City OR, 97503
541-774-6376

Rogue Family Center
3131 Avenue C
White City, OR 97503
541-864-8700

Oregon State Library
250 Winter St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-3950

ODOT Geo-Environmental Section
4040 Fairview Industrial Drive SE, MS#6
Salem, OR 97302

These documents are also available on the project website:

http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION3/hwy62_index.shtml

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