



# Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

## Department of Transportation

Region 3

100 Antelope Road  
White City, OR 97503  
Telephone: 541-774-6299  
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October 18, 2010

### TO THOSE WHO HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THE:

**I-5: Fern Valley Interchange  
Environmental Assessment  
Jackson County, Oregon  
Key No. 12723  
Federal Aid Numbers: S001(164) and S001(268) PE**

Thank you for your interest in the proposed Fern Valley Interchange project. The Federal Highway Administration and Oregon Department of Transportation have completed the Environmental Assessment (EA) for this proposed project. The EA describes expected environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures to address those impacts.

In accordance with 23 CFR 771.119(e), comments shall be submitted in writing to the applicant or the Administration within 30 days of the availability of the EA unless the Administration determines, for good cause, that a different period is warranted. Thus we request your reply **within 30 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 EA.

Please mail or e-mail your comments to:

**Dick Leever  
Project Leader, Region 3  
Oregon Department of Transportation  
100 Antelope Road  
White City, OR 97503**

**Or e-mail to [Dick.B.Leever@odot.state.or.us](mailto:Dick.B.Leever@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 EA and/or the proposed project, 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 this proposed project, please contact **Dick Leever or Gary Leaming at (541) 774-6299**. Additional project information is also available at ODOT's website: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION3/index.shtml>.

Thank you for your participation.

  
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Art Anderson, Area Manager



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Key No. 12723  
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### ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Submitted pursuant to 42 U.S.C. Section 4332(2)(C) and 49 U.S.C. Section 303

U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and  
Oregon Department of Transportation

10-18-10  
Date

Mark Usselman  
Mark Usselman, Interim Region Manager, ODOT, Region 3

October 18, 2010  
Date

Michelle Eraut  
Michelle Eraut, Oregon Division, Federal Highway Administration

The following persons may be contacted for further information. Additional project information is also available at ODOT's website: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION3/index.shtml>

Dick Leever  
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(541) 774-6299

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**Abstract:** The Oregon Department of Transportation proposes to replace the Fern Valley Interchange. A No-Build and a Build Alternative are being evaluated. The Build Alternative would construct a crossing-diamond interchange in about the same location as the existing interchange. The alignment of the Build Alternative west of I-5 is essentially along the existing Fern Valley Road. East of I-5, the Build Alternative turns north and reconnects with existing N. Phoenix Road north of the Phoenix urban growth boundary. The Build Alternative would cost about \$72.1 million (2012 dollars). The Build Alternative would improve traffic conditions in the project area; all intersections would meet State volume-to-capacity standards for the year 2030. An Interchange Area Management Plan is included in the Build Alternative to protect the function and capacity of the interchange by limiting high vehicle trip-generating development immediately adjacent to the interchange through trip budgets and infrastructure management. The Build Alternative would displace 2 residences and 4 businesses. Changes to the Bear Creek Greenway would not adversely affect the features, activities, or attributes of the multi-use path. Section 6(f) funds were used for the impacted portion of the Greenway; therefore, replacement sites are being evaluated for the 0.07 acre of impact Section 6(f) properties. The Build Alternative would impact about 7.4 acres of land zoned for Exclusive Farm Use. Critical habitat for the Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast Coho salmon (listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act) includes Bear, Coleman and Payne Creeks. Work in Bear Creek would include fish salvage, work area isolation and the use of Best Management Practices to ensure construction impacts would be minimal, short-term, and localized. The Build Alternative would impact about 4 acres of wetlands. Possible wetland mitigation includes purchasing mitigation credits from ODOT's vernal pool wetlands mitigation bank near White City. Federal permit and coordination requirements include: Biological Opinion for SONC coho salmon (National Marine Fisheries Service) and Section 404 and NPDES 1200CA permits (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers).