

Email from Public Works Director David Garlington to City Manager Charlie Bush – November 8, 2016

Today's meeting was a presentation by WSDOT about fixing or replacing the Elwha River bridge. COE was there but did not discuss the Dungeness as was indicated in the email. Sequim will feel some effects from the Elwha though, including probable reduction in tourism on the Peninsula and some big box shoppers in the west end traveling to Aberdeen rather than detouring up SR 113 and SR 112 to get to Sequim.

The 1926 bridge plans show the piers built on bed rock—this was after the lower dam was put in and the bridge was built in an area that was usually slackwater. Since dam removal the renewed current has lowered the bed at the bridge about 12 feet and scour holes have developed. When DOT did some exploration after a high flow event in 2014, they discovered that the piers were actually built on river gravel and could be undermined. Temporary measures have been taken to protect the piers. DOT is looking at four options:

1. Retrofit the bridge by driving coffer dams around the piers to bedrock and filling the dams with concrete. Problem is this a 90 year old bridge and driving the piling could cause movement or structural damage.
2. Build a new bridge in a slightly different location to improve the eastern approach to the bridge and use the existing bridge for traffic.
3. Build the new bridge in the same location and detour traffic onto 112 and 113.
4. Permanently remove the bridge and route traffic across the SR 112 Elwha bridge and build a new US 101 alignment to connect with existing 101 in Indian Valley.

Very rough cost estimate range from 8 million to retrofit, 15 million for new alignment, and 25 million for a new bridge. Schedule for a new bridge is 2 years for construction and at least 1 year for design/permitting (the latter sounds optimistic to me).

The bridge has been fitted with tilt meters and if it tilts more than 1 mm/vertical meter may be closed.

Tomorrow Ty and I will meet again with DOT to talk about winter operations.