

# Puget Sound Gateway Program – Phase 1 of the SR 509 Completion Project

23 CFR §771.129

Washington State Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration

REGION/MODE	SR	PROJECT PROGRAM#	FEDERAL AID #	PROJECT#
HQ/Mega Projects	I-5/SR 509	M00600R	N/A	150907E/G

## PROJECT TITLE, ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT TYPE & DATE APPROVED:

- 1) SR 509: Corridor Completion/I-5/South Access Road, Final Environmental Impact Statement and Section 4(f) Evaluation, January 2003. Approved by signatory agencies Federal Highway Administration, Washington State Department of Transportation, City of Des Moines, City of Sea Tac, Port of Seattle, and King County on January 6, 2003.
- 2) SR 509: Corridor Completion/I-5/South Access Road, Record of Decision, March 2003. Approved by signatory agency Federal Highway Administration on March 20, 2003.

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## REASON FOR RE-EVALUATION:

The purpose of this re-evaluation is to determine whether the first phase of the SR 509 Completion Project (Phase 1 Improvements) will have the potential to result in any new significant environmental impacts that were not previously evaluated in the 2003 Final EIS (FEIS) and 2003 Record of Decision (ROD). With the passing of the Connecting Washington Transportation Package in 2015 by the state legislature, funding has become available for the first phase of the SR 509 Completion Project (Phase 1 Improvements) to proceed through environmental review, design, and into construction. The Phase 1 Improvements includes four-general purpose (GP) lanes on the new SR 509 extension (compared to six lanes as analyzed in the 2003 FEIS), and assumes that all lanes will be tolled using one electronic toll point. The toll point will be located south of the 1/2 diamond interchange at 28th/24th Avenue S., and is located such that any user of the SR 509 extension will be charged a toll. The effects related to tolling (which were not previously evaluated) are a key consideration in the re-evaluation, particularly as it relates to transportation and environmental justice effects. Before tolling can begin, a toll authorization bill must be passed by the Legislature. The rate-setting process will be overseen by the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) in advance of the completion of Phase 1 Improvements.

The State Route (SR) 509 Completion Project is based on more than two decades of project planning and development. In 1995, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) released the Tier I Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which recommended extending SR 509 from S 188th Street southward to connect with Interstate 5 (I-5) and adding a spur roadway, the South Access Road, to connect with Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (Sea-Tac Airport). Within the SR 509 corridor, three routes and a No Build Alternative were evaluated in a project level (Tier II) Draft EIS published in 2002. The Final EIS (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) issued in 2003 identified a six-lane Preferred Alternative (Alternative C2) that included two general purpose (GP) lanes and one high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane northbound and southbound on SR 509. It also included interchange connections at S 188th Street, S 200th Street, 24th/28th Avenue, and I-5 and a new South Access Road. Since the ROD was issued, project progress has included actions such as the purchase of needed right-of-way (ROW), construction of an advanced wetland mitigation site, construction of work elements in coordination with local agencies, and refinements in preliminary design.

WSDOT undertook a Practical Solutions design approach for the project which allowed a fresh look at the previous project plans to ensure that the revised project is designed according to actual demand and needs. Part of the Practical Solutions approach included reengaging stakeholders to review design and potential changes.

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**DESCRIPTION OF CHANGED CONDITIONS:** (See Attachment 1 for more detailed description).

The 2003 SR 509 Project ROD selected Alternative C2. Alternative C2 included a six-lane extension of SR 509 (four GP lanes and two HOV lanes) from S 188th Street to I-5. New interchange improvements were proposed at four locations: S 188th Street, S 200th Street, 24th Avenue, 28th Avenue S, and I-5. A four-lane limited access roadway (South Access Road) was also proposed to connect SR 509 at 24th Avenue S/28th Avenue S with the Sea-Tac Airport Terminal Drive system, and an interchange on the South Access Road was proposed at S 200th Street. Improvements on I-5 included adding northbound and southbound collector-distributor (C/D) lanes between SR 509 and SR 516, and adding auxiliary lanes between SR 516 and S 320th Street. Interchange improvements which included a new undercrossing of I-5 to connect to Veteran's Drive were also proposed at SR 516.

The Phase 1 Improvements are essentially a subset of the improvements that were proposed in the 2003 FEIS (Table 1 and Figure 2 in the attached Re-evaluation). The Phase 1 Improvements would include four GP lanes on the SR 509 extension (compared to six lanes as analyzed in the 2003 FEIS) from S 188th Street to I-5. Interchange improvements would occur at three locations (compared to four locations as analyzed in the 2003 FEIS): S 188th Street interchange, 24th Avenue S/28th Avenue S, and I-5. In addition, there would be no South Access Road or interchange at S 200th Street, and improvements on I-5 would be less extensive than those proposed in the 2003 FEIS (see Figure 3 in the attached Re-evaluation). The Phase 1 Improvements also assumes that the extension of SR 509 between S 188th Street and I-5 would be fully tolled. A toll point would be located on SR 509 south of the 24th Avenue S/28th Avenue S interchange.

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**HAVE ANY NEW OR REVISED LAWS OR REGULATIONS BEEN ISSUED SINCE APPROVAL OF THE LAST ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT THAT AFFECT THIS PROJECT?**

YES (X) NO ( ) (If yes explain, use additional sheets if necessary)

- Since the 2003 FEIS, improvements to vehicle technology have contributed to the dramatic decline in carbon monoxide emissions in the region and the project area now meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and is in attainment for carbon monoxide (CO) and ozone. The Clean Air Act does not require conformity determinations for projects in attainment.
- The evaluation of noise abatement feasibility and reasonableness conducted in 2003 (conclusions found in Table 6 of Appendix I of the 2003 FEIS) has been updated using the current 2012 WSDOT Noise Policy criteria. The Phase 1 Improvements noise abatement analysis evaluates 18 noise wall locations, including new walls, extending existing walls, and increasing the height and/or length of noise walls planned for Sound Transit's Federal Way Link Extension project. The findings from this analysis are shown in Figure 7 and Table 16 in the attached Re-evaluation and the Noise Technical Report (Attachment C).
- The stormwater treatment facilities for the Phase 1 Improvements, differ from those assumed in the 2003 FEIS because treatment facilities are designed using the WSDOT's current Highway Runoff Manual (HRM) (2016).
- Since the 2003 FEIS, the cities of Sea Tac and Des Moines have updated their Critical Areas Ordinances with wider buffer widths. The larger buffer widths have been assumed as part of the Re-evaluation.
- A new evaluation was conducted of potential impacts of the project on an updated list of species under USFWS and NMFS jurisdiction that may occur in the action area. The analysis concluded that the Phase 1 Improvements would have no effect on Puget Sound Chinook salmon, Puget Sound steelhead, bull trout, Oregon Spotted Frog, Yellow Billed Cuckoo, or Marbled Murrelet.

USFWS- and NMFS-listed Threatened and Endangered Species Evaluated under the Endangered Species Act		
Species/Habitat	Federal Status (2003 FEIS)	Federal Status (2017 Phase 1 Improvements)
Oregon Spotted Frog	N/A	Threatened
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	N/A	Threatened
Marbled Murrelet	Threatened	Threatened
Bull Trout	Threatened	Threatened
Chinook salmon	Threatened	Threatened
Steelhead	N/A	Threatened
Bald Eagle	Threatened	Removed from ESA listing

- The local comprehensive plans and policies that were discussed in the 2003 FEIS have also been updated. Similar to the findings in the 2003 FEIS, the current comprehensive plans for the cities of Sea Tac, Des Moines, and Kent recognize the project as a key element in the transportation system and contain a number of goals and policies of direct relevance to the Phase 1 Improvements. SeaTac’s Comprehensive Plan (City of SeaTac, 2015) advocates the completion of the first phase of the SR 509 extension to increase the City’s accessibility to the regional transportation system. The extension is also key element of the City’s long-range transportation system. The Des Moines Comprehensive Plan contains several references to the SR 509 Extension Project. Policy and implementation strategies state that the “planned extension of State Route 509 to Interstate 5 is a key transportation facility for the City of Des Moines and its construction should be completed as soon as possible.” The City of Kent Comprehensive Plan states that the City is working closely with the State of Washington, the Port of Seattle, King County, and other jurisdictions and stakeholders to ensure that the SR 509 Completion Project continues to be a priority in the state and the region.
- The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Destination 2030 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Destination 2030) referred to in the 2003 FEIS has also been updated since the FEIS was released. Transportation 2040, is the transportation element of Vision 2040, and states that completing “key roadway projects that would enhance freight mobility, such as SR 509 extension ...” would be important for the region. This acknowledgement is similar to, but more specific than, what was included in the Destination 2030 that was described in the 2003 FEIS.
- Since 2003, the FHWA guidance for conducting environmental justice has been refined. Current guidance recommends that the use of thresholds to identify environmental justice communities be avoided. Guidance recommends that a demographic analysis be conducted of affected communities first and then consideration of project impacts be given to any low-income, minority or limited English speaking populations. The potential for disproportionately high and adverse effects, not the population size, should be the basis for environmental justice.

**WILL THE CHANGED CONDITIONS AFFECT THE FOLLOWING DIFFERENTLY THAN DESCRIBED IN THE ORIGINAL ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT? (If yes, attach a detailed summary addressing the impacts and mitigation)**

	YES	NO		YES	NO
1) THREATENED or ENDANGERED SPECIES	( )	( X )	5) HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES	( )	( X )
2) PRIME and UNIQUE FARMLAND	( )	( X )	6) HISTORIC or ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES	( )	( X )
3) WETLANDS	( )	( X )	7) 4 (f) LANDS	( )	( X )
4) FLOODPLAINS	( )	( X )	8) 6 (f) LANDS	( )	( X )

Effects on all resources will be the same or less than disclosed in the 2003 FEIS. See Attachment 1.

**WILL THESE CHANGES RESULT IN ANY CONTROVERSY? YES ( ) NO (X) (If yes explain)**

Phase 1 of the SR 509 Completion Project  
 NEPA/SEPA Environmental Re-evaluation Form

**WILL THESE CHANGES RESULT IN ANY CONTROVERSY?** YES ( ) NO (X) (If yes explain)

**WILL THESE CHANGES CAUSE ADVERSE IMPACTS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:** (If yes, address comments below.)

	YES	NO		YES	NO
1) AIR QUALITY	( )	(X)	7) WATER QUALITY	( )	(X)
2) NOISE	( )	(X)	8) VISUAL QUALITY	( )	(X)
3) LAND USE	( )	(X)	9) NATURAL RESOURCES and ENERGY	( )	(X)
4) TRAFFIC or TRANSPORTATION	( )	(X)	10) PUBLIC SERVICES and UTILITIES	( )	(X)
5) DISPLACEMENT (business or residence)	( )	(X)	11) VEGETATION and WILDLIFE	( )	(X)
6) ECONOMIC GROWTH and DEVELOPMENT	( )	(X)	12) RECREATION	( )	(X)
			13) SOCIAL IMPACTS	( )	(X)

**COMMENTS:**

The refinements and updates addressed by this Re-evaluation do not substantially change the overall impacts that were discussed in the previously prepared project documents listed at the top of this form. None of the previously identified environmental commitments would change as a result of the design refinements identified.

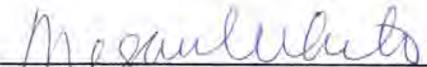
**CONCLUSIONS and/ or RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Changes as noted above would not result in new significant adverse effects. Phase 1 of the SR 509 Completion Project remains compliant with current federal, state, local, and departmental regulations and directives with regard to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) processes. This Re-evaluation document, along with supporting information, demonstrates that there would be no new significant adverse effects resulting from these changes as compared to the Final EIS that was approved in January 2003 and the ROD was approved in March 2003.

**I concur with the conclusions and recommendations above**

**WSDOT Official**

**FHWA Official**



Megan White, P.E.  
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1/16/2018  
Date

1/16/2018  
Date

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## **Attachment 1**