

**REVISED PRESS RELEASE**

**September 14, 2004**

**MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
411 NORTH 5<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
SHELTON, WA 98584  
(360) 427-9670 EXT. 747**

**TO: KMAS, KRXY, SHELTON-MASON COUNTY JOURNAL, THE OLYMPIAN, SHELTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, NORTH MASON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CITY OF SHELTON, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, THE SUN**

**RE: SKOOKUM CREEK BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION DELAYED UNTIL 2005**

On March 11, 2003, the Mason County Commissioners passed a resolution authorizing a project for the construction upgrades to the Skookum Creek Bridge. The Skookum Creek Bridge is located approximately ½ a mile south of the intersection of Highway 101 and State Route 108 on Old Olympic Highway.

The project for the bridge construction was scheduled to proceed at the same time as the construction for the Old Olympic Highway road project that is currently in progress. The road in the vicinity of the bridge was to be closed during the bridge construction and reopened after its completion at the end of November 2004. Approvals for the bridge construction were needed from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The BIA was successful in obtaining funding through the Federal Highway Administration for part of the cost of the project.

The work was also scheduled to comply with regulations that restrict work in waterways during times that could adversely affect salmon migration and spawning. These regulations and the associated permits for the project required the portion of the project's work that is performed in the creek to be completed by mid to end of October. The delay in the start of the work resulted in the waterway work to extend beyond the permit deadline. The County staff worked with the Contractor to explore alternatives to meet the permit deadline, such as extending work hours. Extending work hours would increase project costs in excess of \$100,000. The timing of salmon migration was an additional uncertainty. Uncertainties such as unforeseen construction delays or early salmon spawning migrations may have required the work be halted prior to completion.

Halting the project following the initial demolition work and prior to completion of the required waterway work would result in delay of construction until the next permit construction window in July 2005, and a delay in reopening of the road until October 2005. This risk of extended road closure is an excessive impact on the county transportation system and a significant inconvenience to the area residents that depend on these roads. **Therefore, the bridge project start of construction will be delayed until July 2005 to allow the work to be completed with a shorter duration of road closure. Old Olympic Highway will be reopened on September 15<sup>th</sup> and the road paving is scheduled to be complete by October 15, 2004.** For additional information, please contact the Public Works Department office at (360) 427 9670 Ext. 450 or from Belfair at (360) 275-4467 Ext. 450.

BOARD OF MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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