I-5 Skagit River Bridge Collapse and Replacement — An Emergency Repair Success Story

On May 23, 2013, at about 7 pm, a portion of the Skagit River Bridge on I-5 near Mount Vernon collapsed after being struck by an oversized load. More than 71,000 drivers use this stretch every day.

Within 40 minutes, WADIV staff were aware of the collapse. Within 1 hour, WADIV notified FHWA HQ staff and HQEC. Within 2 hours, WADIV staff arrived at the EOC and Division Office. Within 3 hours, WADIV held conference calls with FHWA HQ, NTSB and Secretary of DOT. Within 10 hours, NTSB launched a go team and FHWA HQ Bridge Rep. Within 13 hours, Other WADIV staff were on site. Within 15 hours, Governor Inslee declared and signed a proclamation of emergency. Within 16 hours, WADIV received a request for ER funds and approved eligibility. Within 17 hours, FHWA HQ releases "quick release" funds.

The next two weeks, WADIV worked closely with WSDOT and others to assure that the communication and emergency relief (ER) funding to repair this bridge moved forward smoothly. After a temporary, and then permanent, span were installed, I-5 at the Skagit River Bridge was permanently reopened to traffic on September 15, 2013. ER funds also paid for sway bar raising and portal strengthening on the three remaining truss spans.

Environmental Programmatic Agreements Streamline Project Delivery

The FHWA Washington Division continues to work with WSDOT and Federal and State agency partners to implement our programmatic agreements (PA), streamlining the environmental process for federal-aid projects in Washington. In March 2013, a new PA for Categorical Exclusions (PCE) was signed and put into effect. The PCE supersedes the 2009 CE per memorandum of understanding (MOU). The "CE per MOU" resulted in delegating 62% of CE decisions to WSDOT. The March 2013 PCE expanded the number of projects that qualify to be certified by WSDOT significantly. Preliminary findings shared in the last report remain consistent—the preliminary reporting from the first quarter showed that 82% of WSDOT's Office of Highways & Local Programs (H&LP) CE projects were certified by WSDOT under the new PCE. The year-to-date data are consistent—with the early numbers—83% of projects used the PCE, an 18% increase over the CE per MOU!

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$100,000 Technical Assistance Incentive!

In October 2013, FHWA announced a program that offers resources to State Transportation Innovation Councils (STICs) to support their efforts to mainstream innovations under Every Day Counts. The STIC Incentive Program offers technical assistance and funds—up to $100,000 per STIC per year—to support the costs of standardizing innovative practices in a state transportation agency or other public sector STIC stakeholder.

In Washington, STICs, led by WSDOT Secretary Lynn Peterson and FHWA Division Administrator Dan Mathis, bring together transportation stakeholders to find and implement Every Day Counts innovations. STIC members include local agencies, regulatory agencies, Local Technical Assistance and Tribal Technical Assistance Programs, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and industry. Examples of STIC funding opportunities include developing technical guidance and standards, implementing system process changes, organizing peer exchanges, delivering training, creating an evaluation plan and offsetting the costs of innovation deployment.

Projects selected for the $100,000 incentives should have a statewide impact on standardization innovation. STIC incentives will carry an 80/20 match requirement. The non-federal match must come from project sponsors or other allowable funding sources.

Contact the FHWA Washington Office at Washington.FHWA@dot.gov to ask how to apply for a STIC incentive grant.

Contact the FHWA Washington Office at Washington.FHWA@dot.gov
The table above reflects the number of authorizations / modifications approved within certain timeframes since 2007. For FY2012 our approval is at 94%, exceeding our goal of 90%!

(Note: the FY begins on October 1 and ends on September 30 of the following year.)

### Other Approvals / Actions

#### Environmental Document Approvals
- Approved I-405 Light Rail (East Link Extension) Re-Evaluation

#### Design Approvals
- Approved I-5 Skagit River Bridge Design Build Contract
- Approved two PS&E Reviews on TIGER III Projects
- Approved I-90 Stage 3A Project Development Design
- Approved Sound Transit Northgate Link Design Project Development
- Approved I-405 Braids Project Development

#### Design Deviations
- I-5 Mobility Improvements SR 510 to SR 512. Tiger III project.
- I-405 SE 8th Street to SR 530 — Concrete Rehabilitation, MP12.38 to MP14.56

### Timeliness of Authorizations / Modifications

#### FHWA Approval of Documented Categorical Exclusions

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<th>Number of Days</th>
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</table>

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### The Stewardship and Oversight Agreement (S&O)

The FHWA and WSDOT Stewardship and Oversight (S&O) Agreement is being revised for the first time in five years. In 2013, FHWA began a more systematic, risk-based S&O approach to deliver the Federal-aid Highway Program (FAHP). The approach is driven by objective data, more consistent from state to state, and adds value to projects and programs. Some notable changes follow.

- FHWA is moving toward a risk-based approach to determine the appropriate level of FHWA project involvement, and more accurately reflect how we operate.
- Projects identified through the FHWA Divisions’ risk assessment process as an elevated risk (threat or opportunity) to the FAHP are called Projects of Division Interest (PoDIs). FHWA Divisions will focus on project phases or areas that add the most value. References to “full” oversight projects in the S&O will be replaced with language about PoDIs.
- FHWA uses a statistical approach for project selection and has created a more consistent review approach nationally. Now called compliance assessment program (CAP) reviews, they provide reasonable assurance, at both the national and local level, that FAHP construction projects comply with key federal requirements. The CAP is one element of project oversight, and it strengthens our approach to being more data-driven. A section on CAP reviews is part of the draft S&O.

MAP-21 provided increased flexibility regarding FHWA’s project involvement, and created more program accountability for the FAHP with Transportation Performance Management provisions. The revision to the S&O will have a greater emphasis on performance indicators or measures to better align and streamline the current performance measures in the S&O to WSDOT’s Gray Notebook. Our goal is to report all the FHWA performance measures annually, although reporting schedules will vary for FHWA HQ. We hope to have a revised, signed S&O before the end of second quarter of FY 14.