



P.O. Box 1350
338 West First Street
Port Angeles
Washington 98362
360.457.8527

Board of Commissioners
Colleen McAleer, *President*
Connie Beauvais, *Vice President*
Steven Burke, *Secretary*
Executive Director
Karen Goschen

December 19, 2016

Troy Cowan, Regional Maintenance Engineer
Claudia Bingham Baker, Communications Manager
Washington State Department of Transportation, Regional Maintenance Office
5720 Capital Boulevard
Tumwater, WA 98504

RE: Design Alternatives for US 101 Elwha River Bridge

Dear Mr. Cowan and Ms. Bingham Baker:

This letter is to offer the Port of Port Angeles Commissioners' recommendation concerning the replacement alternatives of the Elwha River Bridge on Highway 101, west of Port Angeles.

The Commission strongly supports Alternative 7 listed in Washington State Department of Transportation's "Design Alternatives—US 101 Elwha River Bridge" released in December 2016.

The Port exists in part to support industry and foster living wage jobs. US Hwy 101 is the most important transportation route on the Olympic Peninsula. Losing US Hwy 101 would impact all aspects of commerce on the peninsula from tourism to logging, and would cause long term or permanent negative financial impacts to our community members. Additionally, traffic delays or closure of the Elwha River Bridge would cut off our citizens from life-saving emergency services which come from Port Angeles.

Alternative 7 would keep the existing bridge open during construction of a new bridge on a different alignment. This is vital because it allows continued flow of business from the west end of the County and emergency services can access emergencies beyond the bridge. The new alignment will also solve an existing safety problem on the east end of the bridge approach. For these reasons, we urge you to choose Alternative 7.

Sincerely,

PORT OF PORT ANGELES COMMISSION

Colleen M. McAleer, President

Connie L. Beauvais, Vice-President

Steven D. Burke, Secretary

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