



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Paula Hammond, P.E.
Secretary of Transportation

Southwest Region
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May 8, 2012

Bob Zeigler
SEPA/NEPA Coordinator
WDFW Regulatory Services Section
600 Capital Way North
Olympia, WA 98501-1091

Re: Abernathy Creek Tidal Restoration Project
SR 4, MP 48.15

Dear Mr. Zeigler:

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) staff has reviewed the SEPA Determination of Non-Significance for the Abernathy Creek Tidal Restoration Project. Approval will allow the applicant to restore a 20 acre site by constructing new backwater channels, removing an access road, creating log habitat structures, and other restoration measures. WSDOT would like to address our concerns and offer the following comments.

WSDOT has concerns regarding the impact this project may have on the SR 4 roadway fill. The proposed backwater channels could significantly increase the volume of water interacting with the roadway fill.

WSDOT has experienced problems with Abernathy Creek eroding the embankment that SR 4 is constructed on. The proposed channels are at an angle that will direct water directly at the base of the SR 4 embankment. This is likely to further erode the embankment that SR 4 is constructed on. Any further erosion of the SR 4 embankment resulting from the construction of this project is unacceptable and constitutes an adverse impact that must be mitigated.

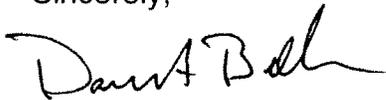
We request that staff from both WSDOT and WDFW meet at the site to discuss options to protect SR 4 and allow this proposal to move forward. Please contact Jeff Barsness to schedule such a meeting.

These comments are based on a preliminary review of your project. As this project progresses, there may be need for additional information by this

department for further review. There may be other issues and requirements by this department that are not stated here. Other issues or requirements may include, but are not limited to, drainage, illumination, access, signing, and channelization. This review does not constitute final approval by WSDOT.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Jeff Barsness, Southwest Region Development Services Engineer, at 360-905-2059.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Bellinger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dave" and last name "Bellinger" clearly legible.

Dave Bellinger
Design Services Engineer

DB: jb