



Legislation Text

File #: 2019-1710, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Transportation and Public Works

Staff Name and Phone Number: Johannes J. Hoevertsz 707-565-2231

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Fourth and Fifth

Title:

Sonoma County Russian River Seasonal Crossings Update

Recommended Action:

Authorize the Department of Transportation and Public Works to work with interested responsible community groups to adopt a long-term plan for the annual installation and/or permanent replacement of three Russian River seasonal crossings. (Fourth and Fifth Districts)

Executive Summary:

The Department of Transportation and Public Works (TPW) is responsible for installing, maintaining, and removing three seasonal crossings on the Russian River annually. One crossing is located near the community of Asti (just south of Cloverdale) and the other two are located near the community of Guerneville. Natural changes to the river's channel have resulted in an increase in installation costs prompting the department to evaluate long-term plans for the crossings.

Discussion:

Background

TPW has been installing seasonal crossings over the Russian River for convenience and support of recreational activities for approximately 100 years.

Historically, four seasonal crossings had been installed at the following locations: Asti (Washington School Road), Odd Fellows Road, Summer Crossing Road, and Vacation Beach Road. In 2009, TPW stopped the installation of the Summer Crossing Road crossing in part due to a second bridge on the same road being structurally deficient to safely carry vehicular traffic. TPW continues to annually install and remove crossings at Asti, Odd fellows Road and Vacation Beach Road.

The crossings have all been installed prior to the Memorial Day Weekend to provide additional access to facilities and properties near the Russian River. All the crossings have vehicular weight restrictions and are not intended to carry heavy trucks. The crossings consist of approximately 60-foot temporary bridges placed on permanent piers that span most of the low flow channel, and gravel roads that span the remainder of the river channel.

The Asti crossing consists of bridge decks that are placed on permanent concrete piers with a large crane

stationed on the river bank. Gravel roads are then built from the end of the bridge to the opposite shore using bulldozers and other large equipment. In addition to offering convenience to local residents, this crossing offers the benefit of being a potential evacuation route to nearby residents, and it was during both the 2017 Sonoma County Complex Fires and the 2019 Kincade Fire.

The seasonal crossings at Odd Fellows Road and Vacation Beach Road consists of 240 feet of temporary bridge decks that span the low flow width of the river to allow fish passage and flow continuity between upstream and downstream of the crossing.

Throughout the years, funding for the installation and removal of the crossings has been analyzed as costs increased and the County’s General Fund has continued the commitment to fund the crossings. Historically, summer crossing expenditures have been funded through the General Fund Road Maintenance contribution, which includes various maintenance activities. Following is a breakdown of historical costs for the past five years:

	FY 15-16	FY 16-17	FY 17-18	FY 18-19	FY 19-20 (to date)
Asti	\$263,247	\$177,488	\$158,440	\$280,658	\$138,563
Odd Fellows	\$71,642	\$44,971	\$34,005	\$70,054	\$4,031
Vacation Beach	\$73,402	\$76,041	\$80,906	\$91,056	\$68,841

The FY 19-20 totals include costs to date, and will increase by the end of the fiscal year, as work for summer crossings typically occurs in late spring. The Asti crossing totals to date do not include cost to remove the bridge, which will occur this month. Costs to install the Asti crossing increased significantly in 2019 due to the February 2019 Federally Declared Flood Disaster. The 2019 flood event caused the river’s low flow channel at the Asti Crossing to be realigned towards the center of the embankments.

The estimated cost to install the Asti crossing for the summer of 2020 is \$625,000, which includes the purchase of a new 150 foot temporary bridge. Additionally, this realignment required TPW to add a second 100 foot temporary bridge in order to span the river which increased from 40 feet to 150 feet due to the 2019 flood event. The new configuration increased permitting, installation, and removal costs significantly. Assuming the river does not further change alignment, it is expected that it will continue to cost approximately \$425,000 each year to install the Asti Crossing in subsequent years.

For the past 18 months, TPW has worked toward a long-term solution with the Alexander Valley Citizens’ League (League), a community organization interested in the Asti crossing. The League funded a feasibility alignment study for a new permanent bridge and has participated in conversations about potential funding options for the construction of a permanent bridge. A new permanent bridge would cost between 15 and 20 million dollars.

Due to ongoing and escalating costs of seasonal crossing installations, TPW is evaluating the following alternatives and potential solutions: 1) Cease the installation of the crossings; 2) Continue the installations as-is; 3) Continue the installation with support from a bridge assessment district; and 4) Establish permanent solutions. TPW seeks input from the communities that benefit from the seasonal crossings.

TPW is requesting authorization to meet and work with the appropriate communities and groups to establish

future plans regarding each of the 3 seasonal crossings. Once the plans have been prepared TPW will bring them to the Board for consideration.

Prior Board Actions:

None

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

None

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

Asti Crossing- Before and After

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None