



Legislation Text

File #: 2020-0497, **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

Supervisory District(s): Fourth and Fifth Districts

Title:

Sonoma County Russian River Seasonal Crossings Update

Recommended Action:

- A) Authorize the Department of Transportation and Public Works to explore options for design and construction of a new permanent bridge replacing the Asti crossing with the Alexander Valley Citizens' League, and approve use of up to \$55,000 from the District Formation Fund to evaluate formation of a special assessment district and other financing and funding options.
 - B) Authorize allocation of \$20,000 from the County Infrastructure Sinking Fund to prepare a feasibility study for the Vacation Beach Road crossing in coordination with the Vacation Beach Fire Safe Council.
- (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. Through discussions with community groups, TPW desires to research feasibility and funding options for a permanent replacement of two of the seasonal crossings. For the Asti crossing, funding in the amount of \$55,000 is requested from the District Formation Fund to evaluate formation of a special assessment district and other financing and funding options. Additionally, the Department desires to complete a feasibility study for the Vacation Beach seasonal crossing, and is requesting \$20,000 from the County Infrastructure Sinking Fund for costs to complete the study.

Discussion:

Background

On December 10, 2019, TPW provided an update to the Board on the installation cost of three seasonal crossings and requested authorization to work with community groups to evaluate short and long-term plans for the installation and perhaps permanent replacement of the crossings if feasible.

The crossings at Asti (Washington School Road), Odd Fellows Road, and Vacation Beach Road are typically 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 access to local residents and visitors, the crossings offer the benefit of being potential evacuation routes to nearby residents as demonstrated during both the 2017 Sonoma County Complex Fires and the 2019 Kincade Fire.

The seasonal crossings at Odd Fellows Road and Vacation Beach Road consist 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.

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	\$266,473
Odd Fellows	\$71,642	\$44,971	\$34,005	\$70,054	\$27,381
Vacation Beach	\$73,402	\$76,041	\$80,906	\$91,056	\$84,570

Installation costs for the Asti crossing increased significantly after the flood event of 2019 realigned the river's low flow channel towards the center of the embankments.

The cost to install the Asti crossing for the summer of 2020 was estimated at \$625,000, which included the purchase of a new 150 foot temporary bridge. The realignment of the channel required that TPW add a second temporary bridge in order to span the river which increased from 40 feet to 150 feet. The new configuration increases permitting requirements, installation, and removal costs. Until the river changes alignment again or the flow decreases significantly it is expected that it will continue to cost approximately \$450,000 each year to install the Asti Crossing.

TPW has worked towards a long-term solution for the Asti crossing with the Alexander Valley Citizens' League (League). The League funded a Bridge Replacement Conceptual Study for a new permanent bridge and has obtained letters of support from various stakeholders in support of the project. The next steps moving forward include identifying financing and funding mechanisms, including a special assessment district, and County, State, and Federal sources. The cost of a new permanent bridge is estimated between 18 and 21 million dollars.

The Vacation Beach Fire Safe Council is interested at this time in options to install the crossing earlier and remove it later in the year as well as a permanent replacement of the crossing if feasible. Those options may require improvements and changes that need to be studied and evaluated.

Fiscal Impacts

For the Asti crossing, TPW requests the Board to 1) approve the use of up to \$55,000 from the District

Formation Fund to evaluate formation of a special assessment district through which properties that receive a special benefit from the construction of a permanent bridge would pay assessments. This evaluation would include a preliminary analysis of the boundaries of the district and the amount of the assessment; and 2) authorize TPW to start working on other potential funding sources to secure design and construction of the permanent bridge. TPW will come back to the Board for direction after this analysis has been performed.

In June 2019, the Board established an Infrastructure Sinking Fund to address unfunded infrastructure needs and to allow the County to leverage additional state and federal funding to support increased investments in aging infrastructure. For the Vacation Beach crossing, TPW requests the Board to consider approving the use of \$20,000 from the Infrastructure Sinking Fund to prepare a feasibility study evaluating options for the crossing. Once the study is completed, TPW will update the Board and request direction on how to proceed and in accordance with the Board's Infrastructure Fund Policy. The Policy states that key departments shall annually convene to create a list of capital projects that do not have identified funding source, and present the list of prioritized projects to the Board for consideration during the annual budget hearing process.

Prior Board Actions:

12/10/19 Sonoma County Russian River Seasonal Crossings Update

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses		\$75,000	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures		\$75,000	
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance		\$75,000	
Contingencies			
Total Sources		\$75,000	

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Anticipated costs are \$55,000 to evaluate formation of a special assessment district, as well as costs to identify funding sources. Anticipated costs to complete a feasibility study for the Vacation Beach seasonal crossing are estimated at \$20,000. If approved, appropriations will be requested during consolidated budget adjustments.

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:

- A- Bridge Replacement Conceptual Study
- B- NOAA Letter of Support
- C- Fish and Wildlife Letter of Support
- D- Northern Sonoma County & Cloverdale Fire Protection Districts Letter of Support
- E- Cloverdale Health Care District Letter of Support
- F- City of Cloverdale Letter of Support

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

None