



File Code: 1950/2720

Date: February 19, 2013

**Re: Proposed fill embankment repair on Index-Galena Road, Mile Post 5.8**

Dear Interested Citizen,

Snohomish County Public Works, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), is proposing to repair and support the road prism, without reactivating a slide, along the County's Index-Galena Road at Mile Post 5.8. The project site is located on lands managed by the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest (MBSNF) in Snohomish County, in the NE1/4, NW1/4 Section 2, T27N, R10E, W.M. (please refer to enclosed photo of the flood-damaged site, easement and design drawings, and vicinity maps).

Approximately 160 linear feet of native soils were eroded away to within 4 feet of the County-owned Index Galena Road shoulder at Mile Post (MP) 5.8, due to a storm event in the spring of 2011. There is a need to prevent further damage to the road in this location for the purpose of keeping this critical arterial open for public, residential and administrative access to the North Fork Skykomish valley. Also, there is a need to maintain access to the proposed relocation of the roadway at MP 6.4-6.9. As a result, Snohomish County Public Works proposes to stabilize the existing roadway embankment by constructing a 160-foot long by 40-foot wide lightweight buttress. An 8 x 25 foot railroad ballast foundation with geogrid layers would be constructed at the base of the slope (toe of scarp), approximately 32 to 35 feet from the existing edge of pavement. The upper portion of the buttress would be constructed upon completion of the railroad ballast foundation. Three finger (trench) drains extending down the slope approximately 55 feet from the foundation would be installed to provide a pathway for the groundwater that passes through the slide. The constructed slope would be covered with wood-strand mulch and topsoil, and planted with local native transplants and/or a weed-free grass mixture as approved by the FS. To authorize long-term occupancy of the installation, the FS plans to grant a permanent easement to Snohomish County. Construction is scheduled to begin in August or September, 2013 and is expected to be completed in one season. Equipment access would be from the Index-Galena Road, and no staging areas will be necessary. The toe of the project buttress and finger drains would stay out of a wetland, and construction would be at least 80 feet from the ordinary high water mark of the North Fork Skykomish River. No in-water work is necessary, and silt barriers or other best management practices would prevent sediment transport from reaching the river.



The lead federal agency for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is FHWA, who is also funding the repair project. The Highway Agent, WSDOT, is preparing a Categorical Exclusion (CE) for this Class II highway repair project, which would categorically exclude the project from documentation in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations category 771.117. The FS is a cooperating agency on the project, and is the lead federal agency for compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and Endangered Species Act. The FS will document consistency with these laws and the MBSNF Forest Plan, as amended, through a Letter of Concurrence.

The project lead for the Forest Service is Eric Ozog, Realty Specialist for the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. He may be reached at 360-691-4396 or email: [eozog@fs.fed.us](mailto:eozog@fs.fed.us). You may also contact Tina Hokanson, Communication Specialist for Snohomish County Public works: [Tina.Hokanson@snoco.org](mailto:Tina.Hokanson@snoco.org) or 425-388-3789.

Comments within 30 days of receiving this letter would be greatly appreciated. Comments may be submitted by phone, email, or letter mailed to the Forest Service's Skykomish office (address above).

Sincerely,

*/s/ Joseph R. Neal*  
JOSEPH R. NEAL  
District Ranger

Encl.