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Snohomish County’s 2018 Annual Bridge Report Highlights Accomplishments

Dedication and knowledge of Snohomish County bridge team showcased in report

EVERETT, Wash., June 28, 2019 – Every year Snohomish County Public Works compiles data about bridge conditions to track status and set priorities. In 2018, the county’s bridge group inspected 117 county bridges, and maintenance crews completed 37 major bridge repairs. Details of bridge conditions for every structure are now available [online](#) in the 2018 Annual Bridge Report.

“The key to our success is working proactively to inspect, repair, and replace our inventory of 204 bridges,” said Snohomish County Public Works Engineering Services Director Janice Fahning. “I am proud of our dedicated and experienced engineering and road maintenance teams for keeping our bridges well maintained and safe for the traveling public.”

All county bridges are inspected at least every two years. A small number of bridges are inspected more frequently due to certain deficiencies that require additional monitoring. The county also provides inspection services for 34 city-owned bridges.

Snohomish County bridge inspections are performed in accordance with the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS). Inspection information is shared with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to determine the eligibility for federal rehabilitation or replacement funds.

“Snohomish County has been extremely successful at securing federal funds to replace roads and bridges,” adds Fahning. “We have leveraged our county road dollars by applying for federal grants for every one of our bridge replacement projects. Looking back over the last five years, federal dollars cover more than 80 percent of bridge construction costs.”

“Earlier this year, Snohomish County began construction to replace Riley Slough Bridge 155 near Monroe. Funding for this replacement bridge is provided by 86.5 percent federal funding

and 13.5 percent county road funds,” said Snohomish County Bridge Conditions Project Manager Paul Heitman. “The county has also applied for federal funding to replace Jordan Creek Bridge, Madden Creek Bridge and Swamp Creek Bridge 503. We will be notified in October.”

Bridges are inspected and coded mainly on the condition of three primary parts known as the deck, superstructure and substructure. A bridge is classified as structurally deficient if any one of these primary parts shows signs of damage or deterioration, the load carrying capacity of the bridge is lower than current design standards, or water frequently floods over the bridge during floods.

Five county bridges are currently classified as structurally deficient. This represents 3 percent of all Snohomish County bridges, which is significantly better than the national average. The number of county bridges across the U.S. that are structurally deficient is 10.5 percent, according to the most recent report by the Federal Highway Administration.

“The idea behind classifications is to stay ahead of repairs and prioritize federal funding requests,” explains Snohomish County Public Works Supervisor Darrell Ash. “While some bridges are considered structurally deficient, they are still safe for travel. Safety is always our first priority.”

About Snohomish County Public Works

The Snohomish County Public Works Department constructs and maintains county roads; controls and manages surface water quantity, quality, and fish habitats; and oversees the recycling and disposal of solid waste. The department’s main office is located at 3000 Rockefeller Ave., Everett, WA 98201. For more information about Snohomish County Public Works, visit www.snohomishcountywa.gov/PublicWorks.

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Editor’s Note: The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Bridge Condition by Owner report can be found here: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/nbi/no10/owner18e.cfm#total>