



State of Washington  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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November 12, 2009

Mr. Mark Doumit, Executive Director  
Washington Forest Protection Association  
724 Columbia Street Northwest, Suite 250  
Olympia, Washington 98501

Dear Mr. Doumit:

Thank you for the comments we received from you and your members on the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) draft Bridge Guidance document. I also appreciated our discussion regarding the important policy concerns that you and Pete Heide expressed at our meeting on October 16. It is extremely important to WDFW that we continue to improve upon such discussions surrounding this and future guidance documents, regulatory reform/permit streamlining, and the other issues that we have in common.

The intent of this letter is to summarize what we discussed on October 16 and how we can move forward on many of the issues that were identified. The first issue we discussed was your perception that the draft Bridge Guidance was changing the standards in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). To clarify, the draft Bridge Guidance document does not propose any changes to the current WAC requirements for bridges. If at some future point it is decided that the WAC needs to be updated, WDFW will engage with the public as defined under the significant legislative rule making process RCW 34.05.328.

We also understand your concern regarding our staff implementing the guidance as "requirements" for Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) submittals and issuance. WDFW intends to address this through the issuance of expectations from headquarters and staff training on the implementation of the guidance document.

Given the shared points of concern from Washington Forest Protection Association (WFPA) and the Washington State Association of County Engineers, WDFW has initiated a process to investigate other potential engineering methods for bridge designs and will be rewriting sections of the previous draft guidance documents to share at the next Aquatic Habitat Guidelines (AHG) meeting. We are hoping to have a good review and discussion with WFPA, Washington State Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Ecology, and county jurisdictions so that we can incorporate your input and work together to address any concerns that arise in this process.

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We understand your member's limited staff and budget issues surrounding your involvement in the Aquatic Habitat Guidelines bridge guidance process, however, we want to urge the continued participation of your forest engineers in the process. It is very important to have their continued technical involvement in the crafting of the final guidance document.

Once again, we appreciate your time and commitment to working with us on important issues.

Sincerely,



Greg Hueckel, Assistant Director  
Habitat Program

cc: Peter Heide, WFPA  
Gary Rowe, Washington State Association of County Engineers  
Joe Stohr, Deputy Director  
Anna Jackson, Environmental Policy Lead  
Peter Birch, Deputy Assistant Director, Habitat Program  
Jeff Davis, Section Manager, Habitat Program