

**OREGON INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
SECTION 106 FINDING OF EFFECT FORM**

Agency/Project: ODOT / US 101 Neahkahnie Rock Wall Repair (Phase 3), Key No. 17886, Federal Aid No. S009(375)PE	
Property Name: Neahkahnie Mountain Historic District	
Street Address: Coast Highway/ US 101, Mile Point 40.53-41.07	City, County: Neahkahnie Beach vicinity, Tillamook

Preliminary Finding of Effect:	
<input type="checkbox"/> No Historic Properties Affected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Historic Properties Adversely Affected
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic Properties Adversely Affected	
State Historic Preservation Office Comments:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Concur	<input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Concur:
	<input type="checkbox"/> No Historic Properties Affected
	<input type="checkbox"/> No Historic Properties Adversely Affected
	<input type="checkbox"/> Historic Properties Adversely Affected
Signed _____	Date _____
Comments:	

Provide written description of the project, and its potential effects on the subject property per 36 CFR 800. Include maps, drawings, and photographs as necessary to effectively describe and discuss the project. Use continuation sheets as needed.

Introduction

This statement of finding discusses the effect of the proposed Transportation Enhancement Grant-funded rehabilitation project on the eligible Neahkahnie Mountain Historic District (NMHD), in Tillamook County. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), received concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in November, 2008, that the NMHD is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). It is the finding of ODOT, on behalf of FHWA, that the proposed project will have an effect on the National Register eligible NMHD but this effect is “not adverse.” This statement of finding is made pursuant to the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR 800), Executive Order 11593, and the National Environmental Policy Act.

Project Description

The proposed project will rehabilitate an additional 370-foot section of the Neahkahnie rock-faced retaining wall, and construct new curb and sidewalk along the remaining portion of the wall, including the wall section proposed for rehabilitation. The proposed project is the continuation of an ongoing effort by ODOT and FHWA to correct the detrimental drainage at the rock-faced wall and rehabilitate the sections of wall that are most critically in need of repair. Additionally, the project proposes to upgrade pedestrian and wheelchair access to the rock wall (and the ocean view), meeting current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards.

The rock-faced wall repair is designed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. With the supervision of a master mason with extensive experience working on historic rock walls, the retaining wall repair will include a careful documentation of the location of each rock slated for removal as in past construction phases. After careful disassembly of the existing wall, construction of a deep foundation feature for stabilization, correction of the drainage issues with granular drain backfill and drainage geotextile, the wall will be reassembled. Adjacent to the wall, the existing curb and walkway will be removed and replaced. New drainage features will be constructed under the sidewalk. After which, the sidewalk will be constructed with an exposed aggregate surface to match the existing sidewalk constructed to the south.

For access to the Neahkahnie Rock Wall at the four vehicle turn-outs within the project area of potential effect (APE), sections of the new sidewalks will be constructed to meet 6-foot minimum width requirements for wheelchair access to meet current ADA Standards. Several small areas of sidewalk will be constructed to 7-foot, 6-inches to allow movement around acute corners. Where the sidewalks are widened for access within the vehicle turn-outs, ADA compliant curb-cuts will be constructed within the sidewalk. The sidewalk sections directly adjacent to the highway will not be widened.

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Continuation Sheet

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As this project is being funded with Transportation Enhancement funding, an interpretive requirement of the grant will be undertaken. At this point in the interpretive panel preliminary design, ODOT believes that the panels will be constructed within the most southerly turn-out of the NMHD. This turn-out is not within the current construction APE, but within the previous phase APE. This southern turn-out was chosen for the additional interpretive display for vehicular safety reasons, as it is the largest turn-out that does not already support an interpretive display. ODOT coordination with SHPO will continue as the interpretive display is designed to ensure there will be no adverse effect to the resource.

Identification and Description of the Historic Resource

Following the route of an ancient Indian trail that linked the Clatsop and Tillamook people, the Oregon Coast Highway (US 101, originally the Roosevelt Highway) was opened over the treacherous headland of Neahkahnie Mountain in 1941. It was the final segment of a highway that hugged the Oregon coast from Astoria south to the California border. Not unlike the feat of the series of major coastal bridges built during the 1930s that eliminated river ferry crossings on the route, this technically challenging but stunning ocean-view route around Neahkahnie Mountain replaced a much longer inland roadway, requiring a lengthy series of half-viaducts which bridged a virtual cliff that, previously, had been impassable. Carved from the rock, the roadway accommodated the scenic splendor and natural features of the mountain. Envisioned as both a scenic byway and an artery of commerce, the Oregon Coast Highway incorporated natural features and ample turnouts whereby motorists could safely stop and take in the expansive shoreline view. The highway engineers worked with the terrain, isolating and preserving a rocky outcropping and conforming the pull-outs to the topography.

The Neahkahnie Mountain Historic District, including features constructed from 1937 to 1942, is significant under Criterion A for its association with the Oregon Coast Highway. It is also significant under Criterion C as one of the longest wall features along the Oregon coast. Taken together, the eligible District represents the best example of a National Park Service Style rock wall feature on an Oregon highway. Its inclusion of a bridge, half-viaducts, and a retaining wall give it almost all the features one could come to expect from this style, save a tunnel. Its location overlooking the ocean, and skirting the mountain, offers a unique opportunity for showcasing a technological feat of design with an aesthetic opportunity to blend road and mountain.

Avoidance Alternatives Considered

Because the NMHD is eligible for the NRHP by the Oregon SHPO, project alternatives were considered to eliminate or minimize the predicted project impacts on this historic resource. Avoidance alternatives considered include:

No-Build Alternative: Although this alternative would have no effect on the Neahkahnie Mountain Historic District, it would not meet the project goal of rectifying the underlying problems with the retaining wall. This alternative was determined to be not prudent, as it would subject the public to a potential safety hazard and not prolong the life of this historic structure. Without repair, it is likely the wall may continue to deteriorate beyond repair.

Build Alternative: This alternative provides for the correction of the current listing wall with the least amount of intrusion into the rock retaining wall, and provides for the work to be done in a fashion that permits the wall to be retained in both form and function following repair. While this alternative requires removing part of the retaining wall, it is clear, after careful study, that repair would not be possible without some removal of the wall to attend to the foundation issues. Given the work will replace the wall to as close to its original state as will be possible, this alternative is the preferred alternative as it is both prudent, and feasible.

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Evaluation of Effects

The proposed project will rehabilitate the existing structure by removing and replacing, in their exact location, the rock-faced wall to improve drainage. This work will also require a replacement, in-kind, of the sidewalk and curb as per the original design, yet, allow for proper drainage which has slowly caused the wall to fail. This work will be done with in-kind materials, as to the extent feasible with rock work; therefore, there will be limited change to the character and appearance of the rock wall.

The proposed project will have an effect to the potentially eligible National Register Neahkahnie Mountain Historic District, but, these effects, we believe, are “not adverse” according to the criteria set forth under Section 106 (36 CFR 800.5). The project will not significantly or substantially alter the features or characteristics that make this District eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and will extend its functional life as a rock retaining wall.

Coordination and Public Output

The public has been informed through various forms of media that the wall will be rehabilitated due to structural deficiencies, drainage upgrades and safety concerns. As the project APE is within Oswald West State Park, coordination has occurred with OPRD concerning staging and road closures, as well as to coordinate additional interpretive panels that will be installed at the NMHD. There is no Certified Local Government with which to coordinate this project.

Conclusion

It is the determination of the Federal Highway Administration and the Oregon Department of Transportation that the proposed project has an effect on the National Register eligible Neahkahnie Mountain Historic District, but the effect is “not adverse” according to the criteria set forth in 36 CFR 800.5.

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USGS Nehalem, OR Quad, 1985 Edition



View: Neahkahnie Rock Wall pre-construction photo February, 1940.

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View: Existing walking path and curb in foreground, previous phase sidewalk and curb in background.



View: Previous phase wall deconstruction with original concrete footing exposed.

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View: Completed phase.

