



Oregon Department of Transportation

Walla Walla River (Birch Creek Road) Bridge Project

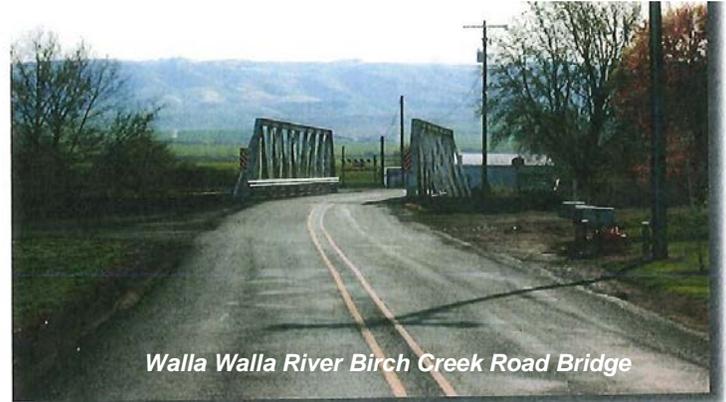
Info page Aug. 2015

LOCATION: The bridge is located northeast of Milton-Freewater in Umatilla County along Birch Creek Road (see map on back page).

BACKGROUND: In 1956, a 112-foot steel truss bridge was constructed across the Walla Walla River along Birch Creek Road in Umatilla County, Oregon, to serve as a route for rural residential, emergency, and agricultural traffic. The bridge and Birch Creek Road are county maintained facilities.

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Bridge Inspection Report dated October 15, 2009, lists the current condition of the bridge as critical, with a Sufficiency Rating of 15.3. A sufficiency rating of 50 or lower is considered unacceptable and replacement is recommended as soon as possible (ODOT 2009.)

Reasons for the poor rating listed in the inspection report include and exposed east abutment footing, extensive settlement and cracking, failed east abutment countermeasure, as well as settlement of the west abutment, which has destabilized the foundation.



Walla Walla River Birch Creek Road Bridge

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF BIRCH CREEK ROAD BRIDGE: The existing Walla Walla River, Birch Creek Road Bridge (#59C483) is a 110-foot long Pratt pony truss built in 1956 as part of a collection of welded steel bridges commissioned by Umatilla County in the 1950s and 1960s. The truss is the earliest remaining example of a fully welded steel truss in the state of Oregon. The bridge was evaluated by ODOT and reviewed by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Officer, and has been determined to be potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to its structure type and construction technique. Because the bridge is a historic resource, removing it through the proposed project, without repurposing it, would result in an adverse effect finding per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and will trigger Section 4(f) of the Federal Transportation Act, which will require mitigation for the adverse impact. The history of the bridge will be described in greater detail at the open house, and ODOT will be seeking public comment on potential impacts and mitigation opportunities.

PROPOSED PROJECT: The purpose of this project is to address the issues listed in the above mentioned report. The proposed alternative will decommission the existing bridge and build a replacement structure 100 feet upstream. Construction will take approximately six to nine months and include work area isolation, placement of bridge abutments and pier footings, construction of a multi-span bridge, roadway/bridge realignment, demolition of the existing bridge, and riparian vegetation removal and restoration.

Work outside of the ordinary high water elevation (OHWE) will occur year-round, as weather permits. Work within the OHWE will occur within the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) preferred in-water work window, which is July 1 to September 30 for this reach of the Walla Walla River.



Birch Creek Road near bridge

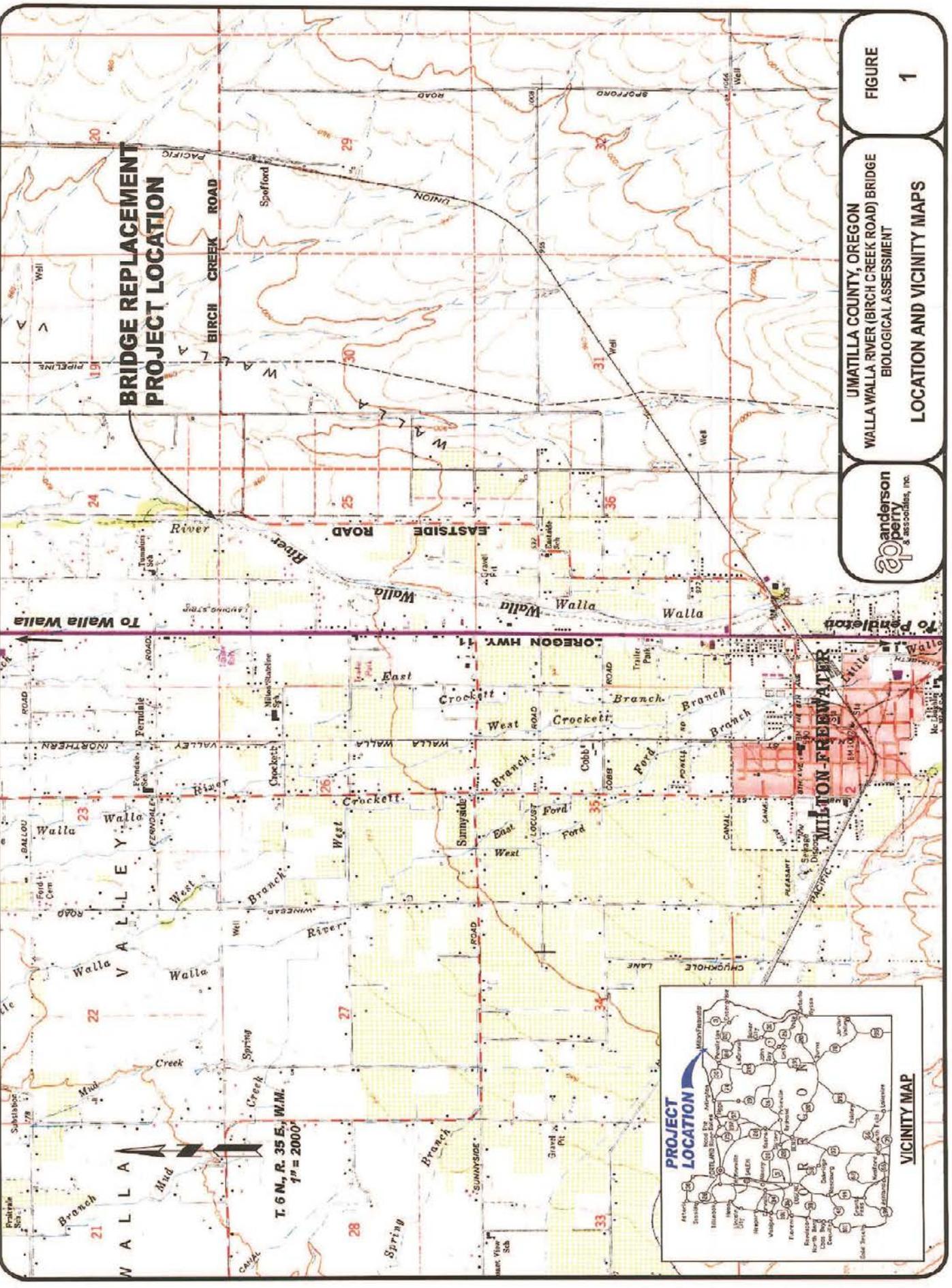
PROJECT COST: Bridge replace and road work is expected to cost around \$2.4 million (90% federal funds, 10% county match). The Oregon Department of Transportation will coordinate efforts with Umatilla County for design and construction.

OUTREACH: A public meeting to discuss the project is scheduled for August 24, 2015 in Milton-Freewater.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

- 2014: preliminary scoping/survey
- 2015: Project design
- 2016: Construction phase

More Information: Contact ODOT Region 5 Project Leader **Ken Patterson** at (541) 963-1365 or email Kenneth.e.patterson@odot.state.or.us.
See location map on back page



**BRIDGE REPLACEMENT
PROJECT LOCATION**

FIGURE
1

UMATILLA COUNTY, OREGON
WALLA WALLA RIVER (BIRCH CREEK ROAD) BRIDGE
BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT
LOCATION AND VICINITY MAPS

