

Exhibit G

Response to COE Question 5(h)

PATHWAY HABITAT ENHANCEMENT ALTERNATIVES

COE Question 5(h)

"Pathway Habitat Enhancement Alternatives. These discharges are to mitigate for discharges into Sand Creek for the shoreline extension, however the discharges themselves will result in additional losses of aquatic habitat in Sand Creek. We need you to evaluate alternative means to mitigate for the discharges into Sand Creek. This mitigation could be provided by removing other existing fills in Sand Creek, or existing fills located at the north end of the Long Bridge. Alternatively, mitigation for the discharges into Sand Creek could be provided by purchasing credits from a mitigation bank."

Response:

When the bicycle / pedestrian pathway along Sand Creek became a part of this project, ITD immediately began investigating options for compensatory actions to account for the associated 2.71 acres of open water fill. All of the relevant state and federal resource agencies were contacted about this matter.

Initial investigations centered on the Idaho Fish & Game Department's recommendation for improvements to their Taylor Pond facility on Sandpoint's west side. This included paving a small adjacent parking area and improving a pathway along the east side of the pond, along with reinforcing a small dam at its outlet. There were at least two field trips to this site wherein ITD analyzed the feasibility of this proposal and discussed it with the agencies. The Corps of Engineers was involved in the entire process.

Other options considered were culvert improvement (fish passage) work along other state highways in the area, and the possibility of removing unpermitted fill material (if it could be identified) in other parts of Sand Creek and/or Lake Pend Oreille.

Our conclusions were that while all of those options might be beneficial in and of themselves, they were not closely enough related to the Byway project itself, and that a priority should be given to selecting an action that was within the project area. That was the overall suggestion that ITD received from the Corps of Engineers.

Further recommendations from the Corps of Engineers, and more specifically in this case, was that ITD should consider "enhancing" the seasonal mudflat shoreline of Sand Creek with strategically placed fills and plantings to create the kind of habitat value and diversity that existed naturally in other nearby creek and river riparian zones within the Sandpoint region. To this end Mike Doherty of the Corps led a field trip to show us a variety of exemplary sections of riparian "habitat" zones for our enlightenment, and as examples to follow in formulating a "habitat enhancement plan" for Sand Creek.

We have many photos on file of such riparian habitat examples as recommended and provided by the Corps, and have used them, in addition to our own observations from a field trip with Mr. Doherty, to design a "Pathway Habitat Enhancement Plan" (PHEP) for the Sand Creek Byway segment of the US-95 Sandpoint North & South project.

Implementation of the PHEP design will provide an enhanced habitat benefit along the three select Sand Creek areas where it is proposed, areas which are similar to other riparian zones occurring naturally in other stream and river sections which are not subject to the Lake Pend Oreille seasonal draw downs that affect the lower portion of Sand Creek in this project area.

All of this has also been the subject of a multi-agency meeting wherein Mr. Doherty discussed the benefits of the habitat enhancement plan concept, and ITD has indicated its acceptance of this approach and intent to implement it as an important part of this project. There was much discussion of this plan but no standing objections, and ITD has since incorporated it into this project.

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