

Exhibit L

Response to COE Question 8

EQUIPMENT ACCESS FILL

COE Question 8

“Temporary Equipment Access Fill for Bridge Construction. Another way to avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic resources would be to construct temporary work bridges on piling instead of the temporary fills currently proposed. Your September 8, 2005 letter ‘Response to Item 5.c.2)’ explained that constructing a temporary pile-supported work platform instead of a temporary fill pad would have more impact on the aquatic environment than the proposed temporary fill. You explained that driving numerous piles would cause adverse impacts to fish due to the compression waves this would generate and a pile-supported platform would block sunlight from a 21,400 square foot area under the platform for an extended period. It also explained that the platform would cost approximately \$260,000 more than the temporary fill. However, because the fill pad would block sunlight from a similar area of the creek and would eliminate bottom substrate and interfere with flows we do not believe this explanation sufficiently demonstrates that the temporary fill pad would have less impact on the aquatic environment than a pile-support structure. We need you to evaluate whether it is practicable to construct the work bridge on piling and explain how your proposed alternative to construct the work bridge on fill would have less impact on the creek than a piling structure.

In addition, it appears that the construction equipment access pad to build the bridges could restrict flows in Sand Creek resulting in erosion of bottom sediments which would be carried and deposited downstream and into Pend Oreille Lake, similar to anticipated impacts for the shoreline extension. Please evaluate the potential for this to occur and how you would propose to mitigate this effect.”

Response:

The configuration of the temporary work bridge (pile-supported structure) and the temporary access fill have been developed to minimize the impact on Sand Creek from the perspective of river users, river hydraulics, and biological functions, as well as to provide an economically feasible design. This response addresses the functional, environmental, and economic aspects of the proposed design.

Construction of the two bridges across Sand Creek requires two separate types of construction operation in and above Sand Creek. These different operations will take place during times of low water level in the lake, separated by a summer

season with high water level. Temporary construction access must accommodate both operations and both construction seasons.

The first construction operation is construction of the north piers of the Sand Creek Bridge and the Off-Ramp Bridge. This includes construction of cofferdams around the pier footings, driving foundation piles, and construction of the foundation seals, the foundations, and the piers themselves. This work is expected to take one winter season, while the water level in the Lake is low.

Any temporary construction access must be removed and reinstalled, or designed to accommodate the summer high water elevation.

Access for the pier construction will be from the north side of Sand Creek. This temporary access fill is required to provide a structurally sound base capable of supporting equipment large enough to drive the piles for both piers. Ideally the access will be low to the ground, to make access for construction easier. The water surface is expected to be low, and in fact the creek bottom may be exposed during construction of the temporary access and the pier foundations.

The second construction operation is erection of the steel girders for the two bridges. This operation requires positioning of two large cranes adjacent to the bridges, driving trucks with girders into position, and lifting the girders off of the trucks and placing the girders onto the bridge piers. As the girders are large and heavy, proper positioning of the cranes and trucks is critical. Erection of the girders is expected to occur the winter following the pier construction.

Girders will be delivered from the south side of Sand Creek. A temporary construction bridge will be built from the south bank of Sand Creek. The surface of the temporary construction bridge must be level for safe operation of the cranes, and so the surface of the temporary bridge will be approximately the same elevation as the top of the south bank of Sand Creek.

This main temporary work bridge includes a narrow extension that will extend from the Sand Creek piers to the north abutment. At the southern spans, the work bridge can be wide enough to also accommodate cranes for erecting the girders. North of the Sand Creek piers the work bridge will be only wide enough to accommodate trucks. The temporary work bridge will not have access from the north bank of the creek.

The proposed plan has the temporary work bridge in place during only one winter season when the girders are being set, while Sand Creek water levels are down and traditionally not being used by boaters. A temporary fill could accomplish the same function as the proposed main temporary work bridge. Such a temporary fill would block the flow of Sand Creek, however, and would therefore not be functionally feasible.

Temporary construction access must also be available from the north bank of Sand Creek. This temporary access will be used by the cranes that lift girders from the temporary work bridge onto the bridge piers. This access from the north bank need not be the same elevation as the work bridge, because trucks with girders need not move from the temporary work bridge to the temporary fill.

The final plans for the Sand Creek Bridge show a construction sequencing plan for how the bridge girders will be erected. Plan Sheets 4 of 51 through 7 of 51 of the Sand Creek Bridge plans are attached.

In order to accommodate all of the required crane set-ups for driving the piles for the piers and setting the girders for the bridges, a temporary bridge the same size as the surface of the proposed temporary access fill would be required. Because of the shape of the area needed to construct the components of the two bridges and the loads it would need to accommodate, it would be much more expensive to build as a pile-supported bridge rather than the shallow, less intrusive temporary access fill. Our estimate is that a pile-supported structure would cost approximately \$260,000 more than would a temporary fill.

The temporary fill is specified to be constructed of clean granular material. This material may be overtopped during the summer high water level without damage. A pile-supported structure must be constructed much higher in order to be above the summer water surface, which make it difficult to use for pier construction, or it must be removed after the pier construction and rebuilt for the girder erection.

Impact	Granular Fill Structure	Pile Supported Platform
Blocks Light	Yes	Yes
Affects Fish	No	No
Disturbs Creek Bottom	Yes	Yes
Requires Removal and Reinstallation	No	Yes[KDW1]