

Saving lives is top priority should bridges collapse

Tsunami threat prompts bridge replacement

By **DANI PALMER**
EO Media Group

CANNON BEACH — Bent over maps during a work session last week, Cannon Beach Emergency Preparedness Committee members and Public Works Director Dan Grassick considered the best options for a safe crossing at the north end of town in case of an earthquake and tsunami.

Because of the likelihood of a bridge collapse over Ecola Creek, the city's evacuation map guides residents and visitors south, toward midtown. This is a longer route that could eat up valuable time, committee Vice-Chairman Les Wierson said.

OBEC Consulting Engineers conducted a bridge study in 2011, warning the Fir Street bridge at Ecola Creek is "vulnerable to failure" even

in a "relatively small earthquake" because of its age and construction.

"Saving lives is my top priority," committee Chairwoman Karolyn Adamson said.

Different options

The group studied options to replacing the traffic bridge or building a pedestrian bridge in the same location or elsewhere.

Whatever the committee decides, Grassick said, 75-foot-deep pilings would likely be needed because of sand liquefaction during a quake.

The committee focused on the most affordable pedestrian alternatives, particularly a bridge over Ecola Creek near NeCus' Park. The plan calls for two separate bridges to meet on a small island in the creek, providing solid ground to build on.

A second option at that location would require more costly permits to float equipment down the creek, Grassick said.



Submitted Photo/Cannon Beach History Center
A bridge went out during the 1964 tsunami. Officials fear an earthquake or tsunami could wreak havoc with the city's current system.

The third pedestrian option would lead people up Second Street before hitting a yet-to-be-built trail connecting to U.S. Highway 101.

According to the 2011 study, replacement of the existing bridge would cost \$4.8 million, while a 6-foot-wide

pedestrian bridge could cost up to \$1.6 million.

If Cannon Beach goes with a pedestrian bridge, Grassick said, options are suspension or truss bridge construction. The latter would more likely survive, he added, as cables can break with sus-

pension bridges.

Wierson suggested taking a closer look at Washington County's bridge standards, because they are designed to withstand earthquakes.

"The structural aspect is big," Grassick said. He added the bridge would need to be at

least 10-foot wide with 1,000 people crossing it.

Potential bond measure

An Oregon State University engineering professor made computer models of potential evacuation routes in the city in 2011, estimating at least 1,080 people would head toward the bridge on a typical summer day after an earthquake.

Grassick said there are a number of ways to fund the bridge, including grants such as a predisaster mitigation grant, sharing costs with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and a Connect Oregon grant.

Committee members agreed they would seek a bond measure if grants don't provide the money needed.

"To do this project, to get a final design, an in-depth geotech study needs to be done," Grassick added.

The committee will have to go through the City Council before taking any further steps. The topic could be reviewed this month.

Coast Guard helps grounded vessel

The Daily Astorian

TOKELAND, Wash. — U.S. Coast Guard crews aided two mariners aboard a 41-foot sailing vessel that ran aground Wednesday morning at the entrance to Willapa Bay near Tokeland, Washington.

The vessel reportedly experienced electrical issues and lost its GPS and radar while sailing up the coast from Coos Bay.

Sector Columbia River watchstanders received a distress call around 6:07 a.m. Wednesday from the owner of the sailing vessel Ronan after it had gone aground near the Willapa Bay entrance.

An MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter from Air Station Astoria and a 47-foot motor lifeboat from Station Grays Harbor, Washington, launched in response.



Photo courtesy of Petty Officer 2nd Class Daniel Goodman
Petty Officer 1st Class Bradford Simmons, left, an aviation survival technical from Coast Guard Air Station Astoria, escorted two mariners to shore from their vessel after it grounded near the entrance to Willapa Bay in Washington state Wednesday.

The aircrew was unable to hoist the two people on board because of the vessel's position and unpredictable motions. A rescue swimmer

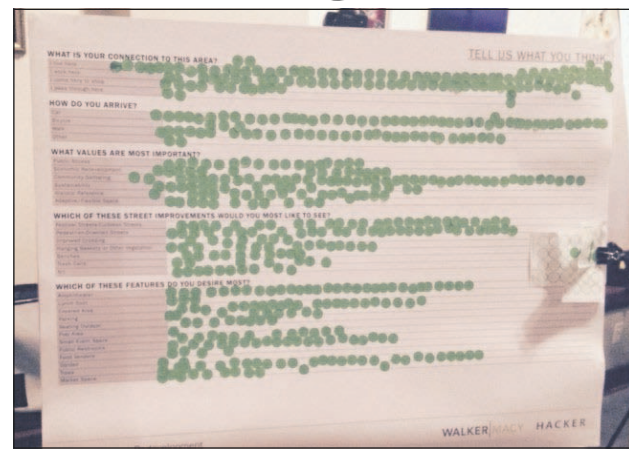
was lowered onto the nearby beach, where he escorted the two mariners from the vessel to the shore.

"As unstable conditions

grew, the crew of the sailing vessel had the proper survival suits and life jackets to don when it came time to abandon ship," said Senior Chief Petty Officer Joseph Dalida, command duty officer at Sector Columbia River, in a Coast Guard release Wednesday. "The last place you want to be when you find out you don't have the proper safety equipment is in an emergency."

The Coast Guard is consulting with the owner to determine the best course of action regarding the grounded vessel. Petty Officer 3rd Class Amanda Norcross said the owner will try to float the boat at the next high tide, around 9 p.m. today. If unable, she said, the Coast Guard will have the fuel removed from the vessel, as there is inclement weather approaching.

Drawing board



The Daily Astorian

Residents offered the city feedback Wednesday on the potential redevelopment of Heritage Square at a daylong open house at the Fort George Brewery and Public House's Lovell Showroom. The displays included three concept design options for a mixed-use project with a new library and workforce housing. City staff also heard concerns about the existing library on 10th Street. "I think there's some commonality," Kevin Cronin, the city's community development director, said. "We don't want any more vacant buildings in downtown. So if we move the library, we need to keep that old library building activated, somehow."

Coast Guard searches for overdue fisherman

The Daily Astorian

The U.S. Coast Guard is looking for a fisherman after receiving a report from his wife Wednesday saying he was overdue from a weeklong fishing trip off of Washington state.

The Coast Guard diverted the cutter Wahoo, an 87-foot coastal patrol boat homeported in Port Angeles, Washington, and the cutter Alert from Astoria to search for his 59-foot vessel, the Pacific Rim.

An MH-60 Jayhawk crew from Astoria is also searching.

A Navy Lockheed P-3 Orion from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington, found a vessel matching the description 182 miles offshore of Tillamook Head Wednesday while conducting radar searches.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Amanda Norcross said Thursday morning the Alert was still en route to the last known location of the vessel. The fisherman was last seen

fishing for albacore about 75 miles northwest of Grays Harbor, Washington, Oct. 15.

The Coast Guard asks anyone with information to call 503-861-6211.

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A special thank you to all of the ALCP volunteers for the support they have given to make this event happen.

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