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Joint Statement from Governor Kitzhaber and Governor Gregoire regarding Columbia River Crossing Project

The Washington and Oregon Departments of Transportation today received a report from an expert review panel regarding potential bridge types to replace the existing Interstate 5 bridge as part of the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project.

The Columbia River Crossing Bridge Review Panel was convened in November 2010 to evaluate the open web bridge type under consideration for the CRC project, as well as the environmental, regulatory and physical constraints pertinent to the crossing and other bridge types and alignments that could work if the constraints were reduced or removed.

The final report is posted online: [Columbia River Crossing: Bridge Review Panel report](#)

The 16-member bridge panel consists of national and international experts with experience in designing, managing and constructing large bridge projects. More information on each panelist can be found online. [Columbia River Crossing: Panelist Bios](#)

A joint statement issued by Washington Governor Chris Gregoire and Oregon Governor Kitzhaber in response to the report is below:

To ensure the future economic growth and prosperity of both Oregon and Washington, we must build the most safe, reliable, and cost effective option for the Columbia River Crossing project. Today a panel of expert bridge designers and engineers presented a report that offers three bridge

types for consideration that panel members found to be less risky and potentially less expensive to construct than the current open web bridge type.

The panel has presented three options. One option, the composite deck truss, simplifies construction risk, has a similar footprint as the open web bridge type, and meets the current schedule. The other two options, a cable-stayed bridge and a tied-arch bridge, would have a different environmental footprint and would require review of aviation impacts.

Oregon and Washington remain committed to delivering this essential project at the least possible cost and as quickly as possible while also ensuring public safety and reliability. To that end, we will focus only on the panel's primary recommendations. We have instructed executives at the Departments of Transportation to discontinue any further design work on the open web box girder bridge type and begin an expedited review of the three bridge types developed by the panel. We are looking for a bridge type that:

- is the most affordable,
- maintains the project schedule,
- minimizes environmental impacts,
- honors commitments that have been made to communities and stakeholders in both states, and
- provides the least risk.

Using the above criteria, the Departments of Transportation, after consultation with local partners, will present their findings and a recommended bridge type to us the week of February 21, 2011.

We convened the design review panel last November, and thank the members for their time and commitment to delving into the unique complexities of the project.

We remain strong supporters of the Columbia River Crossing project. We have heard repeatedly from the citizens of the region that they expect us to proceed. Our work together to move this project to completion will provide 20,000 construction-related jobs that are much needed in both states. And most importantly, it will provide a safer, less-congested corridor to help the region's economy for the long-term.

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