

Statement by Terry Liittschwager to EWEB Board Meeting, Tuesday, 9 Sep 2014

In the EWEB Board of Commissioners meeting held here on 17 September 2013 I urged EWEB to redo the speed-control setup on Leaburg Dam to allow vehicles to move across the Dam at a constant acceptable speed.

In the Board meeting of 19 November 2013 I heard Commissioner Brown say that EWEB's intention was to use "less objectionable" devices, and I verified that verbally with Joe Harwood after the meeting.

In an email of 28 April 2014, Joe Harwood said, "I recall that is [sic] was generally agreed between Commissioner Brown and Bob Vigil, the Leaburg-Waltermville supervisor, that more rounded speed bumps would be installed at the conclusion of the roll gate project."

I have two concerns with that statement. First, if "more rounded" means a more circular cross section, that might exacerbate the problem. What is needed is a parabolic cross section. Second, and of more consequence, is the intention to stay with speed bumps rather than the commonly recommended traffic engineering solution of speed humps.

Now I know there's confusion about the difference between a speed bump and a speed hump. Some of that confusion is explained by a quote from a traffic engineer I've been communicating with, "Both of these treatments are typically signed as 'SPEED BUMP' even though they are very different devices because 'SPEED HUMP' signs are frequently stolen (for their sexually suggestive value)."

Anyway, I'm here tonight to urge you to use standard, accepted traffic engineering practices for speed control across Leaburg Dam, and I believe that would best be done by consulting a professional traffic engineer. I'm told EWEB does not have a traffic engineer. That's understandable. I doubt you often have need of such. However, in this instance I believe there is such a need.

EWEB is chartered by the City of Eugene, and the City does have a traffic engineering department. I'm told by them that they have no recollection of EWEB ever requesting their services, but perhaps that would be a possibility? Lane County tells me they don't do traffic calming, but OSU has a transportation school. Private firms with local offices that provide similar services are JRH Transportation Engineers, Branch Engineering, and KPFF. In other words, there is help readily available, both public and private.

I have now used my allotted time. However, there is more I think you should consider. I have included that additional information in two subsequent pages. I hope you will read them.

Thank you for having given me the opportunity to speak.

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If EWEB chooses a do-it-yourself approach rather than using a traffic engineer, a wealth of information and websites are publicly available, so much so that the first problem is narrowing the choices. For what it's worth, the websites I found most helpful are reachable by clicking on the RESEARCH LINKS left menu item at <http://leaburgdamspeedbumps.info/>.

Collecting objective data on the traffic across the Dam, for both vehicles and pedestrians, and learning what percentage of the time EWEB personnel are on the Dam would be easy. There is a pole with WEIGHT LIMIT and ONE LANE TRAFFIC signs on it (obscured by vandalism—they've been that way for years) that is well positioned for mounting a webcam at the top that would have a clear, elevated view aligned with the roadway. It's less than a 100-foot cable run (or use wireless) from the pole to pier house 1, in which it appears there is—looking through the window—a computer and a modem. Software to analyze the imagery is readily available, some of it free.



An added plus would be that the camera would serve as a general surveillance device as well as a traffic analysis tool. Perhaps you already have security surveillance of which I'm unaware. If so, please

consider using it for data collection.

Having accurate, objective data is critical. Getting that data would be a traffic engineer's first task, and it should be EWEB's first task if you're going to do it yourself. Without that data, I'm concerned that EWEB management will have only anecdotal information that might be inaccurate.

For example, an EWEB email said personnel "felt compelled to hug the side of the dam to get out of the way when vehicles approached at excessive speeds (and didn't slow down as they passed)." My first thought when I read that was to wonder why I have never had the need to do that in 50 years of crossing Leaburg Dam on foot, including many years when I crossed it almost daily, coming and going, when I was young and still running. Things change, of course, so since seeing that email I have repeatedly walked back and forth across the Dam, and recorded the clearance between myself and each passing vehicle and the vehicle's relative speed. Tabulations of that data are at the OBSERVED DATA link at <http://leaburgdamspeedbumps.info/>. In the 138 times vehicles have passed me thus far, I have never felt the need to deviate from my path approximately 18 to 24 inches from the side of the roadway, and at no time did anyone pass me at excessive speed, including the 68 times in the period of Aug 25 through Sep 02 when the speed bumps had been swung to the side and vehicles had no obstruction while crossing.

Now, just as I doubt the objectivity of the aforementioned anecdotal email statement, you may doubt my tabulated observations. That brings me back to my point that with a camera you can easily get verifiable, 24/7, objective traffic analysis to use in your decision making process. That, combined with accepted traffic engineering practice, would give you a policy not easily argued against.

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Here's a quote from a State of Oregon traffic engineer responding to my request for information:

Each road authority is responsible for the highways and roadways under their control or jurisdiction. While the McKenzie Highway (OR 126) is a state highway under the jurisdiction of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Leaburg Dam Rd is a county road under the jurisdiction of Lane County. Therefore Lane County would be responsible for maintaining and installing traffic control devices along Leaburg Dam Rd.

Regardless, all road authorities in the State of Oregon including ODOT and Lane County are required to follow the federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) which sets standards and guidance for the installation of traffic control devices such as posted speeds and speed humps. These standards are adopted in accordance with state law (ORS 810.200) and state administrative rules (OAR 734-020-0005).

I realize that the Leaburg Dam roadway isn't under ODOT or Lane County jurisdiction. However, it seems reasonable that consideration should be given to having a roadway that connects roads that are required to follow the MUTCD to also follow that standard. Further, note that while speed humps are mentioned in the quote speed bumps are not.

You can get the MUTCD at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/mutcd2009r1r2edition.pdf> or <http://leaburgdamspeedbumps.info/MUTCD.pdf>. I did a search of it using "speed hump" and found 41 occurrences through the document, and including design details. A search of "speed bump" revealed only 3 occurrences, all on the same page, and just concerning signing about their presence and public confusion about terminology. Basically, using speed bumps is no longer recommended as a traffic calming measure.

Thank you for your reading time.

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