

**DECISION NOTICE
AND
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

Little Mill Campground Bridge Construction Project



**USDA Forest Service
Pleasant Grove Ranger District, Uinta National Forest
Utah County, Utah**

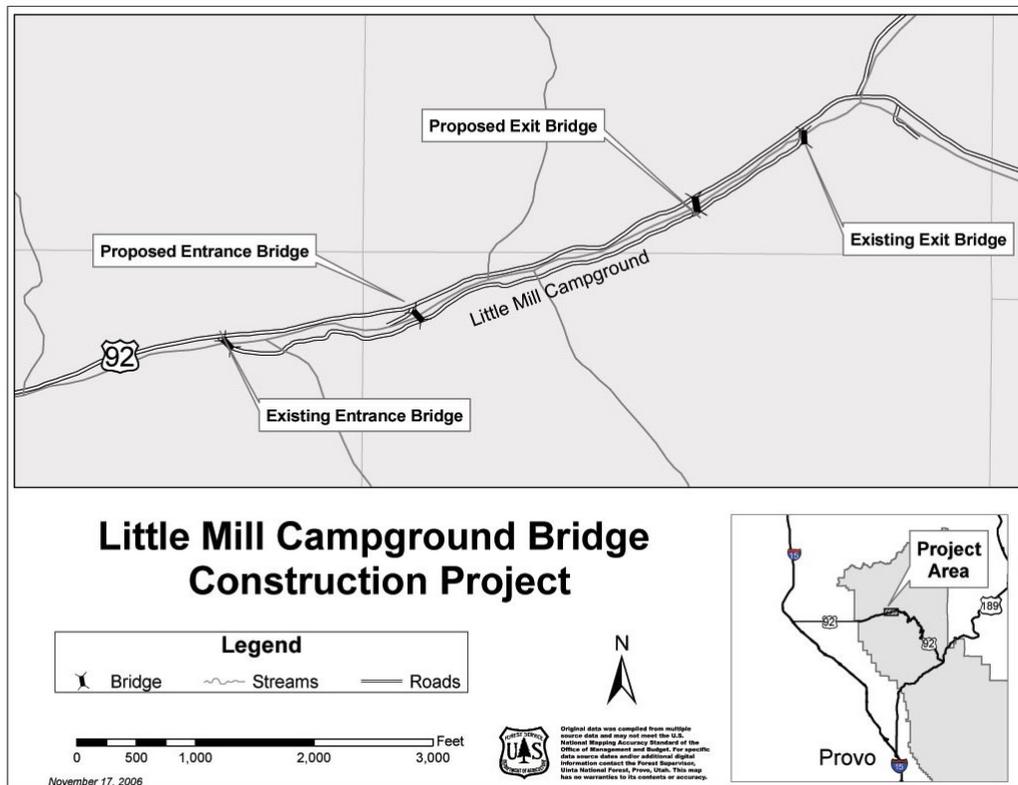
DECISION AND REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Based upon my review of all alternatives, I have decided to implement the Proposed Action, as described in Chapter 2 of the Environmental Assessment (EA). The decision was based on my review of the environmental effects disclosed in the EA and the project record. I decided to approve the Proposed Action because this alternative meets the purpose and need. The *Purpose and Need* is to provide modern bridge designs for the entrance and exit to the reconstructed Little Mill Campground. The new bridges would help concentrate impacts within a smaller area, facilitate more efficient campground management, reduce public exposure to rock-fall hazards, reduce impacts to the American Fork River, and reduce future road maintenance costs.

The project area is within Little Mill Campground, located in American Fork Canyon SE ¼ Section 24, SW ¼ Section 24, NW ¼ Section 25, NE ¼ Section 26 of Township 4 South, Range 2 East, Salt Lake Meridian.

My decision is to approve installation of a new bridge to connect North Mill Campground on the north side of American Fork River to Little Mill Campground on the south side of the river. This would serve as the entrance to Little Mill Campground. A new exit bridge will be constructed close to the reconstructed campsites. The existing exit/east bridge was planned to be replaced with the reconstruction because of condition issues and restrictions the narrow bridge places on the flow of the river. A new exit bridge will be constructed in the new location and the current exit/east bridge will be removed and not replaced. The new location will reduce road maintenance and reduce the footprint of disturbance by about 0.5 miles of road.

Both bridges will be one-way, single-lane vehicle bridges with enough additional width to provide a pedestrian walkway. The bridge span will handle peak river flows, and abutments will be positioned out of the natural stream course. The bridge surface and approaches will be hot bituminous plantmix.



The following Best Management Practices from the “State of Utah, Nonpoint Source Management Plan for 1995 “State of Utah, Nonpoint Source Management Plan for Hydrologic Modification” addendum to the 1988 “Utah Nonpoint Source Management Plan” will be followed for the Little Mill Campground Bridge Construction Project.

- (1) Minimize disturbance in the channel by conducting only essential access and work in the stream area. Conduct staging activities, material/equipment storage well away from the stream. Use physical markers to delineate the area to be disturbed.
- (2) Minimize the length of time that stream-specific construction occurs. Consolidate channel work and complete the installation without interruption. Avoid conducting concurrent site activities that may delay channel work and increase exposure time of disturbance.
- (3) Conduct the construction activity in phases. Avoid area-wide clearance of the construction site. Disturb areas in small parcels and stabilize them before proceeding with the next phase.
- (4) Ensure that all needed materials, manpower, and equipment are available on-site prior to initiating any disturbance in the stream channel/floodplain and tributaries.
- (5) Dispose of excess material out of the stream channel/floodplain.
- (6) Prevent wet cement from entering the water. Ensure that all concrete used during construction is set before allowing contact with stream flow. Wash

- equipment used during concrete work at least 300 feet from perennial streams and 150 feet away from intermittent streams and out of the riparian area, wetland and floodplain.
- (7) Minimize stream fords for equipment. Stream bed alteration for fords should not be done. Limit crossing frequency to absolutely essential trips.
 - (8) Do not conduct work below existing water level, except for essential footings or culvert beds. If the project involves excessive disturbance below the water level, use coffer dams and divert flows if possible.
 - (9) Control runoff from disturbed areas using temporary ditches, berms, catch basins, and pitting.
 - (10) Install temporary sediment control measures prior to initiating construction in the stream channel/floodplain.

In addition, the following required mitigation will be implemented:

The Little Mill No. 2 Bridge is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and its removal would be an adverse effect on its historic character. The Uinta National Forest will enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Utah State Historic Preservation Office. Mitigation measures will make up for the loss of the bridge. These measures will include further photographic documentation of the bridge and a written history of bridge construction on the Uinta National Forest that includes the history of timber bridges on the Forest.

A Forest Service biologist will survey the project area for western yellow-billed cuckoos (Candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act) during the spring breeding season. If any western yellow-billed cuckoos are detected, the Forest Service will contact U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to coordinate on protecting the birds from project-related disturbance. Second, a Forest Service biologist also will survey the cliffs adjacent to the Little Mill Campground for nesting peregrine falcons (Forest Service sensitive species) during the spring breeding season. If any nesting peregrine falcons are detected, the nest site will be monitored and protected from project-related disturbance.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Alternative 1: No Action.

Under the No Action alternative, no bridge would be installed to connect North Mill Campground to Little Mill Campground and the existing east/exit bridge would be replaced in its current location as part of the campground reconstruction. Reconstruction of the Little Mill Campground would proceed using the current access from the bridge on the west end of the existing Little Mill Campground. No transportation connection between North Mill and Little Mill Campgrounds would exist. Continued road maintenance would be needed for the entire existing road length.

The effects of the No Action Alternative are described in Chapter 3 of the EA. A comparison of the two alternatives can be found in Chapter 2 of the EA. This alternative

was not selected because it would not achieve the purpose and need and because the Proposed Action Alternative would achieve this with minor adverse environmental effects.

No additional alternatives were raised during the public opportunity to comment.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The proposal has been listed in the Forest's Schedule of Proposed Actions since the Summer 2006 edition. On April 26, 2006, a letter requesting comment on the proposal was sent to about 100 potentially interested individuals, organizations and agencies. A legal notice requesting comment on the proposed action was published in *The Daily Herald* on April 29, 2006. In response to the request for comments, one letter and one electronic comment were received.

The Forest design and feasibility team further refined the proposal based on fiscal restraints and to further reduce on the ground impacts. The design was modified; therefore, an additional opportunity to comment was provided. On November 17, 2006, a letter requesting comment on the proposal was again sent to about 100 potentially interested individuals, organizations and agencies. The legal notice requesting comments on the revised proposal was published in *The Daily Herald* on November 21, 2006. One comment was received.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

After considering the environmental effects described in Chapter 3 of the EA, I have determined that these actions will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment considering the context and intensity of impacts (40 CFR 1508.27). Thus, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

I base my finding on the following:

(A) Context

- (1) The context of the Selected Alternative is limited to approximately 0.07 acres of disturbance as described in the EA. Actions will be limited to those actions disclosed in the EA. Further, my decision is consistent with 2003 UNF Land and Resource Management Plan direction, including Forest-wide and management area specific desired future conditions, pertinent goals and objectives, and standards applicable to the American Fork Management Area.

(B) Intensity Factors

- (1) My decision will not result in any significant adverse effects [40 CFR 1508.27 (b) (1)]. The analysis documented in Chapter 3 of the EA did not identify any direct, indirect, or cumulatively significant adverse short or long-term impacts resulting from implementation of the selected alternative.

- (2) There will be no significant effects on public health and safety [40 CFR 1508.27 (b) (2)]. The selected alternative will not adversely affect public health and safety. A component of the purpose and need for the proposal was to facilitate safe access between campgrounds for the host and campground users. Construction will be of short duration and the campgrounds will remain closed to the public until construction is completed using a Forest Service special order.
- (3) My decision will not result in any significant effects on any unique characteristics of the geographic area, historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas [40 CFR 1508.27 (b) (3)]. The project will not affect the geographic characteristics of American Fork Canyon; the new bridges will be within existing campgrounds. Cultural resource impacts associated with the removal of the east/exit bridge will be mitigated. There are no parklands, prime farmlands or ecologically critical areas in or near the project site (UNF Forest Plan). There are wild and scenic river segments within the American Fork drainage; however, these segments are upstream of the project and will not be affected. (UNF Forest Plan). The Lone Peak Wilderness is on the north side of State Road 92; project activities will not occur within the wilderness (UNF Forest Plan). The Little Mill Campground is bordered by inventoried roadless area #418032 (Mount Timpanogos IRA); activities will be confined to the campground.
- (4) The Selected Alternative will not result in any effects that are likely to be highly controversial [40 CFR 1508.27 (b) (4)]. Controversy in this context refers to scientific dispute over the effects of the federal action and not opposition to its implementation. There is no controversy associated with the Project, either in regards to human impacts or science. The scientific basis for the analysis is contained in the project record and EA. The effects of the Selected Alternative are very minor (EA, Chapter 3) and are supported by science and information as referenced in the EA.
- (5) The Selected Alternative will not result in any highly uncertain, unique, or unknown risks [40 CFR 1508.27 (b) (5)]. Bridge construction and bridge removal techniques are not new and will be conducted by licensed contractors. No risks to humans or other species are involved.
- (6) My decision does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects nor does it represent a decision in principle about a future consideration [40 CFR 1508.27 (b) (6.)]. This project will not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects. Any future proposed projects will be subject to site-specific analysis and implementation will hinge on that analysis.

- (7) The analysis documented in the EA discloses that my decision will not result in any significant cumulative effects [40 CFR 1508.27 (b) (7)]. Chapter 3 of the EA discloses that the selected alternative will not result in any significant cumulative effects.
- (8) My decision will not adversely affect sites or objects listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor will it cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources [40 CFR 1508.27 (b) (8)]. The project area has been surveyed. The existing east/exit bridge is eligible for National Historic Register listing; however, effects will be mitigated. (Project Record – Archaeology Report)
- (9) My decision will not adversely affect threatened or endangered species or their habitats [40 CFR 1508.27 (b) (9)]. The project will have no adverse effect on any species listed under the Endangered Species Act or any designated critical habitat (EA, Chapter 3 Biological Resources). A Biological Assessment (BA) was prepared, and this document concluded that the project will have no effect on federally-listed species or their critical habitats.
- (10) My decision is consistent with federal, state, and local laws and requirements imposed for the protection of the environment [40 CFR 1408.27 (b) (10)]. The Project does not involve a violation of any federal, state or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

FINDING REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

This decision to install a new bridge and removal of the existing exit/east bridge is consistent with the 2003 UNF Land and Resources Management Plan. My decision will comply with all applicable laws and regulations. I have summarized pertinent ones below.

The purpose of the Clean Water Act is to restore and maintain the integrity of waters. Section 313 of the Clean Water Act requires Federal Agencies to comply with all Federal, State, interstate and local requirements, administrative authority and process and sanctions with respect to the control and abatement of water pollution. Executive Order 12088 also requires the Forest Service to meet the requirements of the Act. The proposed action will comply with the Clean Water Act. There will be no net loss to Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas. No wetlands will be impacted from the construction of the bridges. (Project record: Hydrology Report).

This decision will have no detrimental effects on prime farmland, rangeland, or forestland (Secretary of Agriculture's Memorandum #1827).

The decision fully complies with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Project related impacts to cultural resources will be mitigated. (EA Chapter 3 - Cultural Resources).

The project will result in short-term localized impacts to potential habitat for migrating neo-tropical birds. There are no known raptor nest sites within the project area. However, foraging habitat is abundant in American Fork Canyon and in the surrounding area; consequently impacts will be minimal. In addition, avian surveys will be required prior to the start of construction to ensure that no migratory birds will be affected by project construction (EA Chapter 3; Decision Mitigation).

This decision complies with the Endangered Species Act (EA Chapter 3 - Biological Resources). Bridge construction will not affect any endangered species and no endangered species habitat will be affected by project construction.

The Clean Air Act defines the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for various sources of pollutants that must be met to protect human health and welfare, including visibility. The entire Uinta National Forest lies within a Class II area of air quality. Utah County is a non-attainment area for particulate matter. The generalized effects of recreation and roads on air quality are detailed in the FEIS for the Uinta National Forest 2003 Land and Resource Management Plan. Vehicle emissions from traffic accessing the campground will continue, however, effects are localized and temporary. The road is paved so little dust will be generated. The minimal effects will not be measurable; therefore, there will be no impacts to air quality from the proposed action on the project area or within the air shed. This decision is in compliance with the Clean Air Act.

Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898) requires consideration of whether projects will disproportionately impact minority or low-income populations. This decision complies with this Act. Public involvement occurred for this project, and I considered the results in making my decision. Public involvement did not identify any adversely impacted local minority or low-income populations. This decision is not expected to adversely impact minority or low-income populations.

Implementation of these proposals is consistent with other Federal, State, and local laws for the protection of the environment.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

Pursuant to 36 *CFR* 215.10 (a) and (b), implementation of this project may begin 5 days after the close of the appeal filing period, if no appeal is filed. If an appeal is filed, implementation may not occur for 15 days following the date of appeal disposition. Construction is planned to begin during the summer of 2007.

APPEAL PROCESS

This decision is subject to appeal pursuant to Forest Service regulations at 36 CFR 215. Appeals must meet the content requirements of 36 CFR 215.14. Appeals must be postmarked or received by the Appeal Deciding Officer within 45 days of the publication of this notice in *The Daily Herald*. The Appeal Deciding Officer is Brian Ferebee, Forest Supervisor. Appeals must be sent to: Appeal Deciding Officer, Intermountain Region USFS, 324 25th Street, Ogden, Utah 84401; or by fax to 801-625-5277; or by email to: appeals-intermtn-regional-office@fs.fed.us. Emailed appeals must be submitted in rich text (rtf.) or Word (doc.). Documents in other formats (tiff, jpg etc) should be mailed in hardcopy. Appeals may also be hand delivered to the above address, during regular business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

CONTACT PERSON

For further information about this decision or project, please contact Larry Velarde, Recreation Staff Officer, at the Pleasant Grove District, Uinta National Forest, 390 North 100 East, Pleasant Grove, Utah 84062, or by phone at (801) 785-3563.

/s/ Pamela J. Gardner
PAMELA J. GARDNER
District Ranger
Pleasant Grove District

03/27/07
Date

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