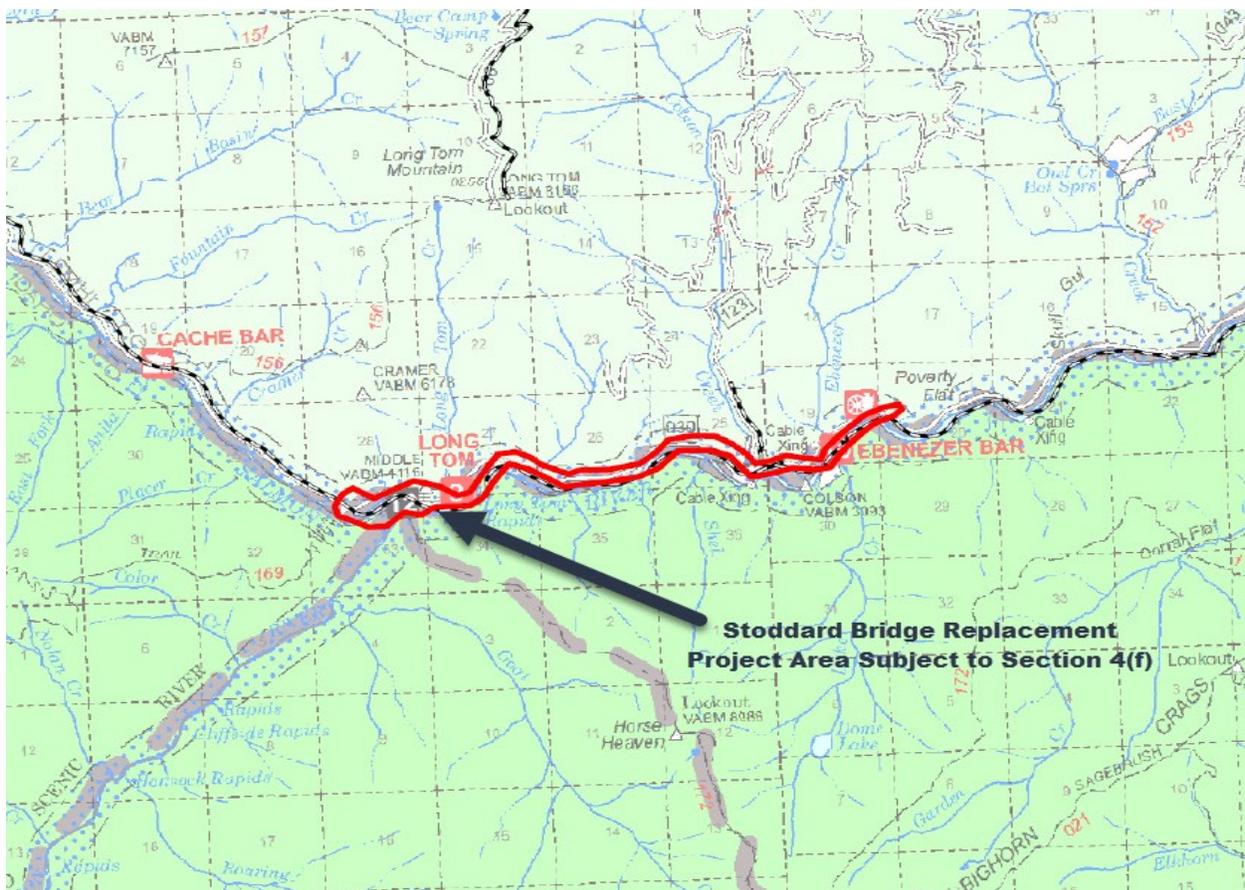


**PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY of
De minimis SECTION 4(f) DETERMINATION**
for
Stoddard Bridge Replacement

The Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFLHD) of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the United States Forest Service (USFS) – Salmon-Challis National Forest, is proposing to replace the Stoddard Pack Bridge.

Stoddard Pack Bridge is a pedestrian and pack animal crossing over the Salmon River, approximately 0.5 miles downstream of the confluence with the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. The bridge is an important access point into the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness Area. The original 348-foot wooden suspension bridge was replaced in 2014 utilizing the original suspension cables. The replacement bridge suffered catastrophic damage in March 15-16, 2017 when a boulder broke loose from the south rock face destroying the south tower and deck. The proposed plan is to reconstruct the bridge as an asymmetric suspension bridge, using the current north land site as the site for the tower, and moving the south landing site approximately 150-feet downstream (to the northwest). The reason for moving the south landing site is to provide more protection from catastrophic rockfall.



Section 4(f) of the Department Of Transportation Act of 1966 (Section 4[f]) stipulates that the FHWA cannot approve the use of land from publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or public and private historical sites to incorporate into a transportation facility unless the following conditions apply:

- There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land.
- The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from use.

OR

- The project has only a *de minimis* (minimal) impact on lands subject to Section 4(f). Once the FHWA determines that a transportation use of Section 4(f) property results in a *de minimis* (minimal) impact and the official with jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) property agrees, analysis of avoidance alternatives are not required and the Section 4(f) evaluation process is complete.

FHWA must comply with 23 CFR 774.11(g) when determining if there is a use of a Wild and Scenic River (WSR). The *National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act* (WSRA) (16 U.S.C. § 1271 et seq. and 36 CFR 297.3) identifies those rivers in the United States which are designated as part of the WSR System. The Salmon River is publicly owned and designated a recreational river under the WSRA and thus is a Section 4(f) property. The USFS administers the Salmon River Wild and Scenic study area and are considered the officials with jurisdiction over these Section 4(f) properties. As the officials with jurisdiction, Section 4(f) requires that the USFS concur in writing that the Stoddard Bridge Replacement Project Section 4(f) use of the Salmon River Wild and Scenic study area will result in a *de minimis* (minimal) impact because the impact will not adversely affect the features, attributes, or activities that qualify these Section 4(f) properties as recreational areas.

Designated sections of the Salmon River under the Wild and Scenic River Act of 1968 include the "recreational section" from North Fork Idaho to Corn Creek (46 miles), and the "wild section" from Corn Creek to Long Tom Bar (79 miles). The proposed Stoddard Bridge replacement is within the recreational designated section.

The proposed project closely follows guidance found in the *Salmon Wild and Scenic Management Plan*. Additionally, given the mitigation efforts for cultural resources, aesthetic treatments for the structures, timing restrictions and revegetation of disturbed areas, the proposed activity would not directly or adversely affect the established Outstanding Resource Values (ORVs) of the Salmon Wild and Scenic River.

The Ebenezer Campground, located approximately 5 miles east of the Stoddard Pack Bridge has been identified as the project's staging and laydown area for

construction of the replacement Bridge. Ebenezer Campground was named after Ebenezer Snell, whose placer mine was located here. In the 1930's, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) built their camp at this location. Use of the Ebenezer Campground will only temporarily be disrupted during construction and will result in a *de minimis* (minimal) impact because the impact will not adversely affect the features, attributes, or activities that qualify the Section 4(f) property as a recreational area.

Section 4(f) requires that the FHWA post a public notice and provide an opportunity for public review and comment concerning the effects on the protected activities, features, or attributes of the recreational Section 4(f) properties. This public posting intends to serve that purpose.

If you have any comments, questions, or need any additional information, please contact Steve Morrow at 360-619-7811 or by e-mail at stephen.morrow@dot.gov .