

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT
GRANTS PASS RESOURCE AREA
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CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DOCUMENTATION / DECISION RECORD

Bunker Creek Bridge Replacement
NEPA No: DOI-BLM-OR-M070-2009-0023-CX

A. Proposed Action

The BLM is proposing to remove and dispose of the existing closed and temporary wood bridges spanning Bunker Creek on the Rogue River National Recreational Trail and install a replacement steel pedestrian bridge. The 40 mile Rogue River National Scenic Trail follows the north bank of the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River, which was designated for protection of its Outstandingly Remarkable Values: natural scenic qualities, fish, and recreation. The temporary bridge will be removed and the new bridge will be installed with the use of a helicopter.

B. Location/Land Use Allocation

The project is on BLM-owned lands located within the wild section of the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River corridor at T. 33 S., R. 9W., Section 35 SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$.

C. Need / Rationale for the Proposed Action

The Bunker Creek Bridge was evaluated in October 2008 and deemed unsafe and closed at the time. The popular hiking season on the Rogue River Trail begins in the spring and coincides with high water flows, making the creek impassable for several months. A temporary trail and a temporary wooden bridge were constructed spring 2009 and placed over Bunker Creek to provide a safe alternative to cross the creek.

The purpose of this project is to provide a long term, viable, attractive, and safe way to cross Bunker Creek, in a manner compatible with the scenic and recreational values of the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River.

D. Description of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would remove and dispose of the existing closed and temporary wood bridges and replace them with a steel bridge.

The bridge will be supported steel truss assemblies with a 1 ½ inch minimum thickness Douglas fir plank deck surface. Deck support members and other components of the bridge superstructure will be steel including the bridge railing. The existing abutments may be modified and reused or new reinforced concrete abutments may be designed and constructed and the existing abutments removed and disposed of. The bridge will be 78 feet in length and 4 to 5 feet wide with a minimum walkway clearance of 3 feet 9 inches. The 300 feet of decommissioned trail that was pruned and improved to provide access to the temporary bridge will be decommissioned, re-contoured, and planted with native vegetation if needed.

The contractor will notify the Contracting officer immediately in writing if they discover evidence of possible scientific, prehistorical, historical, or archeological data with the location and nature of the findings.

Materials used will be compatible with the existing scenic landscape to preserve the scenic values of the river corridor.

E. Project Design Feature

1. Wood from the old bridge will be kept out of the riparian and disposed of off federal land
2. A helicopter will be used for disposal of wood structure and installation of the replacement steel bridge
3. The design and fabrication will be in accordance with AASHTO Standard Specifications for Highway Bridges, 2003 edition.
4. Bridge decking will be pressure treated off site with water borne preservatives conforming to the applicable requirements.
5. Any noxious weeds within and 25' from the disturbed area will be treated and reported.
6. Between March 1 and June 30 helicopter will maintain a minimum of ¼ mile distance from NSO sites.

F. Plan Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the following plans and decisions:

- a) Medford District's 2008 Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (USDI 2008)
- b) Final EIS for the Revision of the Resource Management Plans of the Western Oregon Bureau of Land Management (2008)
- c) Rogue River Comprehensive River Management Plan (Fed. Reg. Vol. 37, No. 131, 1972)
- d) Decision Record and Environmental Assessment for the Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan (April 1998)

This proposal also complies with the direction given for the management of public lands in the Medford District by the Oregon and California Lands Act of 1937 (O&C Act), Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, the Clean Water Act of 1987, Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 (as amended 1986 and 1996), Clean Air Act, Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (1968).

This proposed action is consistent with management objective in the 2008 Medford District Resource Management Plan to “Conserve, protect, and restore the identified outstanding cultural, ecological, and scientific values of the National Landscape Conservation System and congressionally designated lands” while protecting the outstandingly remarkable values of designated wild and scenic corridors (2008 RMP, p. 30). In addition, this project fully complies with the management objectives, actions, and direction of the resource management plan in place prior to December 30, 2008, which was the 1995 RMP, as amended (USDI 1995). The design of this project would not have differed under either the 2008 or the 1995 plans.

G. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act

The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under Department 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 46.210(f), “Routine and continuing government business, including such things as . . . maintenance, renovations, and replacement activities having limited context and intensity (e.g., limited size and magnitude or short-term effects).”

H. Extraordinary Circumstances Review

Title 43, Section 46.205 (c) of the CFR requires the review of this action to determine if any of the following “extraordinary circumstances” (found at 46 CFR 46.215) would apply. If any of the extraordinary circumstances apply, then an otherwise categorically excluded action would require additional analysis and environmental documentation.

1) Have significant impacts on public health or safety.

Yes No **Remarks:** This project will improve safety by providing a long term safe crossing over Bunker Creek.

2) Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.

Yes No **Remarks:** This project lies within the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River Corridor. Materials used in this project will be compatible with maintaining the Outstandingly Remarkable Values, particularly the scenic values of the river corridor.

3) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].

Yes No

4) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

Yes No

5) *Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.*

Yes No

6) *Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.*

Yes No

7) *Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.*

Yes No

8) *Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.*

Yes No

9) *Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.*

Yes No

10) *Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).*

Yes No

11) *Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).*

Yes No

12) *Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).*

Yes No

I. Decision

I have reviewed this Categorical Exclusion Documentation, including the plan conformance, NEPA compliance review, and extraordinary circumstances review, and have determined the proposed action is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required. It is my decision to implement the action as described.

Abbie Jossie
Abbie Jossie
Field Manager
Grants Pass Resources Area

7-14-09
Date

Reviewers:

Sarah Davis 7/9/09
Silviculture, Vegetation
Dynamics, & Port-Orford Cedar
Date

Jason Reay 7/11/09
Wildlife
Date

Robin Sch-Dawson 7/9/09
Botany
Date

Michael D. Blasi 7/1/09
Soils/Hydrology
Date

Tim Brown 6/30/09
Cultural Resources
Date

Dot Ballman 6/24/08
Visual Resources / Recreation
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Jan R. Brown 7/9/09
Fisheries
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Cindy Walden 6/25/08
Engineering
Date

Dulcey Schuster 7/9/09
Planning Coordinator/NEPA
Date