

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

*Finding of No Significant Impact
Grant Easement for Highway Bridge Replacement
Matheson Wetlands Wildlife Management Area, Moab, Utah
Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Project W-149-L-2*

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has prepared this document in accordance with the procedures for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act as it applies to the Federal Aid in Fish and Wildlife Restoration Acts (64 Stat. 430; 16 U.S.C. Sec. 777 et. seq. and 50 State 916; 16 U.S.C. Sec. 669 et. seq.).

The Utah Department of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) proposes to issue an easement to the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) to accommodate a bridge replacement across the Colorado River on a portion of Matheson Wetlands Wildlife Management Area (WMA) purchased with Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration (WSFR) funds administered by the Service. Consequently, the Service must approve a grant amendment to Grant #W-149-L-2, Moab Wetland Complex, allowing UDWR to issue the easement to UDOT.

The entire project covers improvements to a 3.7-mile portion of US-191 from 400 North in Moab to SR-279 (Potash Road) and includes the replacement of the US-191 Colorado River Bridge. Within the project limits, US-191 is typically two lanes and transitions from a rural road on the northern end of the project to a city street on the southern end of the project.

The easement terms will allow impact to an area of approximately 1 acre, on Matheson WMA, for the UDOT perpetual utility easement. The first easement segment will be 10 feet wide and 166 feet long. At that point the width will increase to 25 feet to allow an access road and continue for a length of 1,569 feet. The total utility easement length will be 1,735 feet or 105.10 rods. The easement will be for a term of 30 years, with an option to renew.

The Service, in cooperation with the UDWR, is adopting the UDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project. An environmental analysis and public involvement was conducted over a three year period by UDOT and the FHWA on the proposed project, resulting in their preparation of an FHWA Final EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The Final EA can be found on the web at: <http://www.udot.utah.gov/coloradoriverbridge/final-ea.htm>.

A range of reasonable alternatives were considered. Each conceptual alternative considered is summarized in Section 2.2 of the EA and further detail is included in the Bridge Feasibility Study. The following is a list of alternatives considered:

No Build Alternative (two lanes remain from Potash Road to Moab):

Alternative 1 - No Build Alternative (on-going maintenance)

Conceptual Build Alternatives (each includes four lanes from Potash Road to Moab):

Alternative 2 - Widen Existing Bridge

Alternative 3 - Construct a New Southbound Bridge

Alternative 4 - Construct a New Bridge with Pedestrian/Bicycle Facility on Existing Bridge

Alternative 5 - Construct a New Bridge (Staged)

Alternative 6 - Construct a New Bridge on an Alternate Alignment

Alternative 7 - Construct a New Bridge (Non-staged)

Alternatives 5 and 7 would achieve the project objectives and goals; therefore, these alternatives also considered cost and potential impacts. Alternative 5 was found to provide the same benefits as Alternative 7 and result in less impact to surrounding properties and the environment. As such, the general concept of Alternative 5 was advanced and further refined during the development of the Build Alternative (Preferred Alternative).

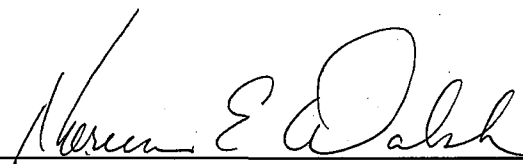
Just south of the US-191 Colorado River Bridge, the project design incorporates the use of a 2:1 slope and retaining wall to avoid fill within the preserve. Runoff will be treated using an inline oil/sediment separator prior to discharge into a depressed area within the preserve at this location. Runoff will also be discharged to the preserve just south of the Moab Valley RV Resort; however, physical construction at this location will be avoided. Opportunities for additional water to be discharged to desirable locations within the preserve may be possible during design. Changes will be in accordance with the ecological and programmatic goals outlined in the Site Conservation Plan (Division of Wildlife Resources, 1994) and coordinated with UDWR and The Nature Conservancy.

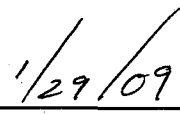
Both UDWR and the Service were consulted during preparation of the EA. The Nature Conservancy is a Matheson Wetlands WMA management partner and was involved in project planning. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers was consulted and has issued a permit for the project under the Clean Water Act. Agencies and other interested parties contacted about this project include (but are not limited to) the general public; property owners; businesses; local communities; and representatives from the Bureau of Land Management, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Native American Tribes, Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, Resource Development Coordinating Committee, Utah Department of Natural Resources, Utah Department of Environmental Quality, Utah Division of State History, Grand County, Moab City, The Nature Conservancy, Moab Trails Alliance, and the Moab Trail Mix Committee for Non-Motorized Trails.

Based on review of the final EA and evaluation of the effects of the proposed action, I have determined that the proposed action is not a major Federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. I also find that all reasonable alternatives were considered in the evaluation of this project and that this project complies with the intent of Executive Order 11988, "Floodplain Management," and Executive Order 11990, "Protection of Wetlands." Consequently, I have determined that an environmental impact statement is not required. The EA is on file in the Division of Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 134 Union Boulevard, Lakewood, Colorado 80228, and is available for public review upon request, or available online at:

<http://mountainprairie.fws.gov/federalassistance>.

APPROVAL:


Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6


Date

Deputy

References:

Environmental Assessment, Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation and Finding of No Significant Impact. <http://www.udot.utah.gov/coloradoriverbridge/final-ea.htm>

Submitted Pursuant to 42 USC 4332(2)(c) and 49 USC 303 by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration and the Utah Department of Transportation

Application for Federal Assistance, Utah W-149-L-2, Narrative Statement