



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Nevada Division

July 13, 2011

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In Reply Refer To:
HENV-NV

Susan Martinovich, P.E.
Director, Nevada Department of Transportation
1263 South Stewart Street
Carson city, Nevada 89712

Subject: Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for Laughlin Bullhead City Bridge Project

Dear Ms. Martinovich:

The Nevada Department of Transportation's (NDOT) July 8, 2011 letter requested a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Laughlin Bullhead City Project located between Laughlin Township, Nevada and Bullhead City, Arizona. FHWA determined that the project will have no significant environmental impacts. The (FONSI) is enclosed.

The Environmental assessment (EA) was approved for circulation on October 21, 2010 and Public Design Hearings (Public Hearings) were conducted on November 17 and 18, 2010 in Laughlin, Nevada and Bullhead City, Arizona, respectively. Based on the EA, and the Design Recommendation Report including the public meeting transcripts and other related project documentation contained therein; we determined that the project will have no significant environmental impacts.

Sincerely yours,

Terry Philbin
Bridge and Construction Engineer

Enclosure

cc: Steve Cooke, NDOT
Bill Hoffman, NDOT
David Swallow, RTCSNV
Sherri McMahan, HDR

ec: Abdelmoez Abdalla, FHWA
Becky Bennett, FHWA

**FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
FOR**

Laughlin–Bullhead City Bridge Project

Town of Laughlin, Clark County, Nevada and Bullhead City, Mohave County, Arizona

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that the selected alternative (Parkway Alternative) will have no significant impact on the human environment. The selected alternative includes the construction of a new four-lane bridge (two general-purpose lanes in each direction and a multi-use pathway) over the Colorado River. In addition to the new bridge, the proposed project includes a new intersection and a four-lane approach roadway from Needles Highway in Nevada; and a four-lane approach roadway from the extension of Bullhead Parkway west of State Route (SR) 95 in Arizona. Each four-lane approach consists of two general-purpose lanes in each direction and a multi-use pathway. The Parkway Alternative is approximately 23,126 feet (approximately 4.38 miles). This alternative would require constructing approximately 18.638 feet (approximately 3.53 miles) of roadway in Nevada, an approximately 1,286-foot-long bridge, and 3,168 feet (approximately 0.6 miles) of roadway in Arizona.

The Parkway Alternative right-of-way (ROW) in Nevada varies from 110 to 170 feet wide. In Arizona, the Parkway Alternative ROW is 100 feet wide. The final specifications of the roadway components, geometric configuration, and construction methods would be developed as guideline requirements are incorporated and finalized in the design process. For the Nevada roadway approach, a signalized intersection with Needles Highway would be developed to address anticipated traffic loads, in accordance with the local guidelines. The additional roadway approach heading east from Needles Highway would be developed in lands owned by Clark County with no current development. For the Arizona roadway approach, the configuration would begin at the west end of the Bullhead Parkway extension (a currently built roadway segment and developed intersection to access the Mohave Crossroads development) and then continue west (towards the Colorado River) in lands privately owned with no current development. The approach roadways would have a design configuration of four travel lanes (two in each direction), a median, and a shoulder on the north side of the roadway, and at a minimum a ten-foot wide multi-use pathway on the south side.

The Environmental assessment (EA) was approved for circulation on October 21, 2010 and Public Design Hearings (Public Hearings) were conducted on November 17 and 18, 2010 in Laughlin, Nevada and Bullhead City, Arizona, respectively.

This FONSI is based on the EA, supplied materials, and the Nevada Department of Transportation's (NDOT's) Design Recommendation and Hearing Certification which have been independently evaluated by the FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project. A list of mitigation measures is attached and it shall be part of this FONSI. These documents provide sufficient evidence and

analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the EA and its attachments.

7/13/2011

Date

Terry D. Philbin

Terry Philbin for FHWA

7/13/2011

Date

a. a. abdalla

Abdelmoez Abdalla for FHWA

**Laughlin–Bullhead City Bridge Project
Parkway Alternative**

FHWA-NV-EA 10.02

DE-PLH-0003(108)

PROJECT ID: 73360

LIST OF MITIGATION MEASURES

The following list describes measures that will be implemented as part of the project to avoid, reduce, or otherwise mitigate environmental impacts associated with the project.

Mitigation measures and actions to comply with federal, state, and local laws/regulations are listed by mitigation category in the following table. Responsibilities are identified by topic and by the required agencies or contractor (as a larger heading above the top row of the matrices) and will be included in the contract documents.

The following mitigation measures and commitments are not subject to change or modification without prior written approval from the FHWA. This list does not include any of FHWA's permits, approvals, or reviews that are required related to Plans, Specifications, and Estimates; Right-of-way (ROWs); contracts; or other design or administrative aspects of the project.

Project Responsibilities (Clark County and Bullhead City)

EA Section Reference	Mitigation/ Compliance Category	Description
2.1.4.2	Construction	Local jurisdictions will coordinate with businesses to address access and construction concerns.
2.1.4.2 2.15.1.3.2 2.15.3.3.2 2.16.1.3.2	Construction/ Mobility and Access/ Safety	Transportation management plans will be developed and specified in contract documents to maintain traffic safety and access during construction. All traffic-related impacts will be short-term, ending upon completion of the project. Access to businesses will be maintained during construction.
2.3.3.2	Hydrology and Water Quality	Obtain operational water quality certification from NDEP and ADEQ that is associated with the collection and management of bridge and roadway run-off. This water quality certification will address water quality degradation aspects of the river (due to the operation of the proposed bridge).
2.4.3.2	Floodplain	If it is determined that levees will be affected, coordination with USACE and BOR may be required.
2.5.4	Wetlands and Jurisdictional Waters	Obtain USACE Clean Water Act Section 404 permit, Section 401 Water Quality Certification, and an USCG Section 9 Bridge Permit.
2.6.2.3.2	Biological Resources and Sensitive Species	Noxious weed control and abatement will be implemented as part of ongoing project maintenance by the local jurisdictions' public works departments.

Project Responsibilities (Clark County and Bullhead City)

EA Section Reference	Mitigation/ Compliance Category	Description
2.10.3.2	Socioeconomics	In conformance with the Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970 (Uniform Act), ROW will be negotiated for with property owners directly affected, ensuring they receive fair market value for the ROW acquired. Landscaping, signs, and other items located within the acquired ROW will be relocated, replaced, or compensated as required by the Uniform Act. Legally permitted property access will be perpetuated in the after-condition.
2.17.4.2	Recreation Resources; Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Resources	The Colorado River Nature Center Interdisciplinary Team (AGFD, BLM, and Bullhead City) has committed to ensuring a water supply will be available for irrigation of the vegetation on the proposed earthen berm to be located in the Colorado River Nature Center.

Project Design Responsibilities

EA Section No. Reference	Mitigation/ Compliance Category	Description
2.1.4.2	Construction	Approaches and intersections not proposed to be improved or realigned will be at a minimum, be matched to existing conditions.
2.4.3.2	Floodplain	The bridge structure will be designed in accordance with 23 CFR 650, Subpart A (Bridges, Structures, and Hydraulics), and USCG Section 9 Bridge Permit, and approved by the DOTs. The bridge will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained, in accordance with state laws, regulations, directives, safety standards, design standards, and construction standards.
2.4.3.2	Floodplain	Final design of the project will avoid impacts to existing levees/berms. If a risk-analysis determines that there would be impacts to the levees, the bridge design will be modified to minimize impacts. Coordination with USACE and BOR will be necessary and may include levee certification.
2.4.3.2	Floodplain	Develop a technical drainage study report in accordance with flood control evaluation requirements for Mohave County, Arizona and Clark County, Nevada. A detailed HEC-RAS modeling analysis for actual bridge design and construction will be performed (abutment to abutment, and bank to bank) to determine and avoid impacts during design.
2.4.3.2	Floodplain	Bridge abutments will be located outside the Colorado River Floodway or Zone AE areas. Locations of bridge piers will be determined during final design.
2.4.3.2	Floodplain	The bridge girders will be placed a minimum of 25 feet above ordinary high water mark consistent with USCG Section 9

Project Design Responsibilities

EA Section No. Reference	Mitigation/ Compliance Category	Description
		bridge permitting requirements.
2.5.4.1 2.5.4.2	Wetlands and Jurisdictional Waters	Adhere to parameters of the Section 404 and Section 401 permits issued by the USACE and other permits issued by state and local agencies.
2.13.3.2	Visual Resources	Designers will be responsible for mitigation of visual impacts that may include low lighting or shields, vegetation or natural landform screening, structural screening, and complementary architectural design. No light shall be located in such a way as to be a nuisance to a neighboring property. This may include low mast for lighting structures, low output, and/or shielding. Integrate complementary architectural features into design of the bridge (e.g., bridge façade, bridge and road design, fences, use of earth-tone colors).
2.13.3.2	Visual Resources	Replacing, repairing, or improving any disturbance to vegetated areas such as re-stabilizing disturbed soils and generally restoring or improving natural resources that have been disrupted will also mitigate aesthetic conditions. Reducing earthwork contrasts by: retaining rocks, trees, shrubs, and adding mulch or topsoil, and repairing any disruption to existing drainages will also help relieve visual changes.
2.13.3.2	Visual Resources	Additionally, the consideration of the bridge location and orientation will reduce potential shadow effects. The proposed bridge alternatives are all oriented in an east-westerly pattern thus generally reducing the effects of shadowing on the adjacent landscape.
2.15.1.3.2	Mobility and Access	Mobility and access to and within the future planned Colorado River Heritage Greenway Trail will be maintained for bicycles and pedestrians.
2.17.4.2	Recreation Resources; Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Resources	Design will include a noise reducing, vegetated earthen berm between the Colorado River Nature Center and the proposed Parkway Alternative. This earthen berm will be made of fill from the Colorado River Nature Center (whenever possible) to facilitate wetland excavation. Preliminary design and size specifications (approximately 2,900 feet [length] by 58 feet [width] by 6 feet [height]), and the location of the vegetated earthen berm are indicated on Appendix F—Figure 10 (minimum 25 feet south of northern border of parcel for maintenance access).
2.17.4.2	Recreation Resources; Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Resources	Design will include the installation of a fence near the vegetated earthen berm and barriers installed under the bridge. This will prohibit OHV access issues across the Colorado River Nature Center property.

Project Construction Responsibilities

EA Section No. Reference	Mitigation / Compliance Category	Description
2.1.4.2	Construction	Construction equipment will be washed and properly maintained to minimize pollutant runoff from construction equipment.
2.1.4.2	Construction	Construction equipment and associated hazardous material storage will be frequently inspected and maintained to reduce the potential for hazardous materials spills and runoff into the river, floodplain, and upland areas.
2.1.4.2	Construction	Noise mitigation measures will be implemented during construction activities. BMPs include limiting construction hours to within normal business hours, etc.
2.1.4.2/ 2.3.3.2	Construction/ Hydrology and Water Quality	Contractor will develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan as part of the Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and Arizona Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permitting processes.
2.1.4.2/ 2.3.3.2	Construction/ Hydrology and Water Quality	To reduce deposition of sediments in adjacent surface waters, erosion control measures will be incorporated for site soil stabilization. Measures will include the application of soil stabilizers such as landscaping, mulch, and rock slope protection. Erosion control measures will be designed to filter the stormwater originating from the pavement prior to entering the offsite drainage system.
2.1.4.2/ 2.3.3.2	Construction/ Hydrology and Water Quality	The contractor will prepare a Spill Prevention Notification and Cleanup Plan prior to the start of construction. Proper control and cleanup measures will be available on site. See section 2.14.3.4 for additional BMP and mitigation measures.
2.1.4.2 2.6.2.3.2	Construction/ Biological Resources and Sensitive Species	Mitigation for the prevention of invasive weeds will be developed in coordination with the local jurisdictions. Easy mitigation is to have the contractor wash their equipment before arriving on site and to wash before leaving site. In compliance with Executive Order 13112 regarding noxious weeds, all earth-moving and hauling equipment will be washed prior to arriving onsite to prevent the introduction of noxious weed and invasive weed seeds. Contract documents will specify a noxious weed management plan to control noxious weeds.
2.1.4.2/ 2.11.3.2	Construction/ Air Quality	Fugitive dust generated from construction activities must be controlled in accordance with federal, state, and local laws regulations governing air pollution control.
2.2.3.2	Land Resources	To avoid an increase in river turbidity during deep foundation construction within the river, spoils will be deposited on barges, removed offsite, and disposed of properly.

Project Construction Responsibilities

EA Section No. Reference	Mitigation / Compliance Category	Description
2.3.3.2	Hydrology and Water Quality	Development or construction of roadway and bridge improvements will have to be completed within and in accordance to applicable federal, state, and local standards. Floodplain impacts will be minimized by improving the offsite drainage system in consultation with the Clark County Regional Flood Control District. Offsite drainage cross culverts will be extended to accommodate roadway construction while maintaining flow patterns.
2.3.3.2	Hydrology and Water Quality	Construction within the Colorado River floodway or where the proposed bridge crossing is to take place (bridge abutment to abutment – Arizona side to Nevada side) will be controlled through modifications to the natural storm water drainage system, including but not limited to, construction of lined and unlined channels, installation or modifications of culverts, temporary and permanent detention basins, and other natural or engineered controls as necessary.
2.3.3.2	Hydrology and Water Quality	If previously unidentified wells are encountered during project construction, the contractor will be responsible for notifying the appropriate state Department of Water Resources and for retaining an authorized driller to abandon the well properly.
2.3.3.2	Hydrology and Water Quality	Water quality parameters such as turbidity will be monitored in accordance with each of the state's 401 WQC requirements.
2.5.4.1 2.5.4.2	Wetlands and Jurisdictional Waters	Adhere to parameters of the Clean Water Act Section 404 and Section 401 permits issued by the USACE as well as other permits issue by state or local agencies.
2.6.1.3.2 2.6.3.3.2	Biological Resources and Sensitive Species	Construction activities will occur within, and be limited to the 250-foot study corridor.
2.6.1.3.2	Biological Resources and Sensitive Species	Protected plant species will be avoided, whenever possible. Prior to any construction activity, the project boundaries will be flagged and cactus, yucca, mesquite, and other Nevada and Arizona protected plant species will be salvaged in coordination with landowners such as Clark County. Plants will be removed in accordance with Arizona and Nevada state guidelines. Disturbed soils will be stabilized using BMPs for erosion control. If areas are to be revegetated, a certified weed free seed mix will be used.
2.6.3.3.2 2.7.1.3.2	Biological Resources and Sensitive Species/ Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species	A litter control plan will be implemented. All trash will be collected and put in proper receptacles so ravens and other predators are not attracted to the site, and subsequently prey on juvenile tortoises. Receptacles will be emptied at the end of each workweek so ravens don't congregate around dumpsters. All reasonable and prudent measures with terms and Conditions identified in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife' Biological Opinion must be followed

Project Construction Responsibilities

EA Section No. Reference	Mitigation / Compliance Category	Description
2.6.4.3.2	Biological Resources and Sensitive Species	Gila monsters will be removed during preconstruction surveys for desert tortoises in accordance with guidelines established by NDOW (2005).
2.6.1.3.2	Biological Resources and Sensitive Species	Disturbed areas will be landscaped and/or seeded with certified weed-free mixes.
2.7.1.3.2 2.7.2.3.2 2.7.4.3.2 2.7.5.3.2	Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species and Migratory Birds	Contractor will be responsible for providing biological oversight of construction activities and payment of mitigation fees (copies of receipts must be provided to the applicable DOT environmental divisions prior to the initiation of project construction) to comply with mitigation measures set forth in the Biological Opinion issued by the USFWS. For specific mitigation for Threatened and Endangered Species, see Section 2.7.
2.7.2.3.2 2.7.5.3.2	Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species and Migratory Birds	Land clearing activities will not take place in saltcedar-mesquite woodland habitat during migratory bird breeding season (March to July). BMPs will restrict activities to within the 250-foot study corridor to minimize impacts to saltcedar-mesquite woodland.
2.8.3.2	Cultural Resources	The contractor will comply with the executed Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for the project.
2.14.3.2	Hazardous Materials	Contractor mitigation will include detecting and excavating impacted media, and documenting the appropriate handling, transport, and disposal of impacted media in compliance with applicable environmental laws and regulations.

State Department of Transportation Environmental Division Responsibilities

EA Section No. Reference	Mitigation/ Compliance Category	Description
1.4.4.1	Bridge Design	State DOT's are the ultimate recipients of Federal-aid Highway funds and as such are responsible for oversight of these projects. This typically requires state DOT approval of the project guides and specifications.
1.4.4.2	Roadway Design	State DOT's are the ultimate recipients of Federal-aid Highway funds and as such are responsible for oversight of these projects. This typically requires state DOT approval of the project guides and specifications.
2.8.3.2	Cultural Resources	Mitigation for the types of sites encountered by the project will include, but is not limited to, archaeological excavations, historical and archival research, ethnographic studies, and will comply with the executed Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for the project.