

GREATER PRAIRIE CREEK ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT

Road Removal



Road activities to be implemented under the Proposed Action would involve three stages.

Road Reoccupation:

Throughout the project area, many abandoned and unmaintained haul roads, skid trails, and landings require maintenance to provide access for proposed forest and aquatic restoration activities. Proposed maintenance activities on these roads include removing vegetation, providing proper drainage, and removing stream crossing structures that interfere with streamflow and replacing them with temporary stream crossing structures. These roads were initially constructed in the 1950s and 60s, when road crossings were built by simply pushing dirt and debris into the stream channel. These types of crossings have been eroding since construction, and have led to severely degraded aquatic habitat conditions. Upgrading and improving stream crossings is expected to immediately decrease a major source of sediment input into streams. During forest and aquatic restoration activities, all access roads would be maintained and winterized during and in between field seasons.

Road Removal:

Upon completing forest and aquatic restoration activities, most haul roads and stream crossings would be removed. Skid roads would be treated for partial landform restoration in high risk areas. Low-threat roads (i.e., stable ridgetop roads without erosion issues) would be treated for long-term abandonment. Based on many decades of experience removing abandoned haul roads in the park, sediment inputs are expected to dissipate within the first winter season following road removal.

Road Maintenance:

Roads with little to no threat of delivering sediment to streams would be treated for long-term abandonment. Typically, these roads are on ridges or gentle slopes where erosion potentials are minimal or nonexistent. Some of these roads may be maintained for administrative purposes. If a road is not needed, it would be closed and treated to improve drainage and to ensure that it is not contributing sediment into aquatic systems.



Substrate at Godwood



Substrate at May Creek

These two photos show the contrast between undisturbed channels and channels overwhelmed from failing road sediment. The photo on the left shows Godwood Creek, just north of the Prairie Creek Visitor Center. The photo on the right shows Lower May Creek, less than a mile away from Godwood Creek.



Larry Dam Road Removal Project: crossing excavation in 2003 and regrowth in 2007

