



PUBLIC SCOPING

Rose Creek Fish Barrier Removal and Bridge Replacement

Background

Two man-made barriers in lower Rose Creek limit access to potential spawning and rearing habitat for native fish, including migratory bull trout, from St. Mary Lake. Just upstream of the Rising Sun developed area, the Rose Creek Dam was built in the mid-1960's to provide water to local developments. The dam is approximately 1.5 meters high and prevents fish from migrating upstream. Removal of the dam would return fish passage in lower Rose Creek to a more natural state and restore historic spawning and rearing habitat. Another concrete dam further upstream does not obstruct fish passage, since a portion of it has failed. Between the two dams, segments of abandoned metal pipe are exposed along the stream bank or protruding from the streambed.

The second barrier is the Rose Creek Bridge (also known historically as the Roes Creek Bridge) on the Going-to-the-Sun Road (GTSR). The bridge has a solid concrete slab foundation, which has altered the way sediments move through the stream channel and resulted in the removal of sediments on the downstream side. The slab and the absence of a jump pool immediately below the bridge inhibit fish passage during periods of low flow.

Additionally, sediment scouring and degradation of the natural stream channel are threatening the bridge's long-term structural stability. The abutments are showing signs of settling, and maintenance will increase as the concrete ages. The bridge is also not compatible with the historic design characteristics of the GTSR, a notable National Historic Landmark. Built in 1932, the bridge was severely damaged by a flood in 1964. When it was rebuilt, the original rubble stone railing and wing walls were replaced with concrete and steel tube railing, making the bridge the only large structure along the GTSR that is not in keeping with the road's historic design principles.

Determinations of Eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places has found that neither the Rose Creek Bridge nor the dam is eligible for listing. Rose Creek is not Critical Habitat for Bull Trout.

Objectives

- Restore fish passage on Rose Creek to provide access to historic spawning and rearing habitat for native fish.
- Restore natural sediment transport along lower Rose Creek.
- Address the structural deficiencies and incompatible historic design elements of the Rose Creek Bridge.

Alternatives Identified to Date

- *No Action*—the Rose Creek Dam would not be removed; the Rose Creek Bridge would not be replaced.
- *Remove the Rose Creek Dam*—the concrete dam would be removed. Exposed pipe would be cut and removed from the streambed.
- *Replace the Rose Creek Bridge*—the existing bridge and concrete slab foundation would be removed. A new clear span bridge (no footings or pilings in the stream channel) would be constructed. The railing and wing walls would be faced with stone to make the bridge more compatible with the historic design characteristics of the GTSR. The work would occur under the Federal Lands Highway Program as part of the GTSR Rehabilitation Project.



Rose Creek Dam, NPS photo.

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Environmental Assessment Process

- Public Scoping
- Preparation of Plan/Environmental Assessment (EA)
- Public Review of Plan/EA
- Analysis of Public Comments
- Preparation of Decision Document



Rose Creek Bridge, NPS photo.

Concerns and Issues

- Native fish.
- Impacts to streambed, water quality, and stream bank vegetation.
- Long-term bridge maintenance and stability.
- Effects on the GTSR National Historic Landmark.

Public Comments During Scoping

Your comments will help identify issues and other alternatives to evaluate in the EA. There will be another opportunity for you to comment when the plan/EA is completed. Please post your comments online at:

www.parkplanning.nps.gov/RoseCreek

Or send comments to:

Superintendent Glacier National Park

Attn: Rose Creek EA

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Please provide comments by

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