

## Environmental Assessment Process Overview:

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

### Public Comments During Scoping

Your comments will help identify issues, concerns, 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 scoping comments online at:

***[www.parkplanning.nps.gov/  
GTSRBridgesCulverts](http://www.parkplanning.nps.gov/GTSRBridgesCulverts)***

or

Send comments to:

***Superintendent, Glacier National Park  
GTSR Bridge/Culvert EA  
PO Box 128  
West Glacier, MT 59936  
Phone: 406-888-7901***

No public meetings are scheduled at this time..

Please provide comments by  
**December 14, 2012**

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Glacier National Park  
P.O. Box 128  
West Glacier, MT 59936



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



GLACIER NATIONAL PARK  
Montana  
Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park

## PUBLIC SCOPING

For Proposed Streambed  
Maintenance and Riprap  
Protection at  
Bridges and Culverts  
along the  
Going-to-the-Sun Road  
**ENVIRONMENTAL  
ASSESSMENT**



Logan Creek Bridge, N PS photo.

November 2012

**Background**—Completed in 1932, Glacier National Park’s Going-to-the-Sun Road (GTSR) is an important National Historic Landmark and National Engineering Landmark that connects the east and west sides of the park and is a favorite attraction for many visitors. Stream crossings along the GTSR require maintenance to protect the road from water damage, maintain water flow, and provide for safe and reliable visitor and administrative travel. Routine clearing of rocks, vegetation, and other debris from within ten feet upstream or downstream of water crossing structures (culverts and bridges) occurs regularly under the park’s 2005 *Road Maintenance Guidelines*. Rehabilitation of several of the road’s historic bridges and extensive drainage work including culvert replacement and new culvert installation have also occurred as part of the GTSR Rehabilitation Project, still underway. But neither the *Road Maintenance Guidelines* nor the 2003 *GTSR Rehabilitation Plan/Final EIS* analyzed bank stabilization measures or in-stream maintenance activity that would physically alter a stream or its immediate banks. Such activities therefore require additional environmental compliance, analysis, and review.

High water from spring runoff and weather events can cause bridge spans and culverts to become clogged with sediment and debris, including boulders and downed trees. When this occurs, large amounts of sediment can be deposited upstream of these structures, which can alter the shape of the stream channel and, in some cases, result in unstable channel alignments that are prone to flooding. Some culverts and bridge spans can become completely blocked during flooding, severely impeding stream flows and potentially damaging the culvert or bridge as well as the road. For example, after 9.1 inches of rain fell over a 36-hour period in November of 2006, debris accumulations at the Logan Creek Bridge caused floodwaters to overtop the bridge and the road.



Flood waters overtopping Logan Creek Bridge during the November 2006 flood event. NPS photo.

A number of culverts and bridges along the GTSR are located where flooding and potentially damaging sediments loads occur frequently. Logan Creek, lower Haystack Creek, Big Bend, and Divide Creek are some of the chronic problem areas. During GTSR rehabilitation, larger culverts were installed to improve high water conveyance at several sites, but additional stream work is required. Historic bridges, including the Logan Creek Bridge, were not altered due to the need to protect their cultural significance and integrity.

To maintain stream flow, allow for improved flood water conveyance, and protect historic bridges and culvert headwalls, the park is proposing to remove, or dredge, sediments as needed from stream channels along the GTSR, beyond what already occurs under the park’s *Road Maintenance Guidelines*. The proposal also includes placing riprap at the Logan Creek Bridge and other bridges and culverts as needed to reduce sediment deposits caused by erosion. New culverts could also be installed.

Riprap and streambed dredging have the potential to physically alter the channel and impact the stream as well as the aquatic biological community. Also, lower elevation portions of the GTSR are adjacent to waters designated as critical bull trout habitat, which could be affected by the proposal.

## Objectives

- Maintain adequate stream flow at bridges and culverts along the GTSR.
- Protect historic bridges, culverts, and the GTSR, a National Historic Landmark, from damage during high water and flood events.
- Reduce the potential for flood events to prevent or restrict visitor and administrative travel along the GTSR.
- Preserve natural stream processes as much as possible.
- Protect native fisheries and other aquatic resources.

## Preliminary Alternatives

**No action**—do not increase sediment removal from stream channels at GTSR bridges and culverts beyond what already occurs under the park’s *Road Maintenance Guidelines*; do not place riprap at Logan Creek Bridge or other areas.

**Action**—remove sediment deposits from stream channels at bridges and culverts along the GTSR as needed, beyond what already occurs under the *Road Maintenance Guidelines*; install riprap.

Road damage at lower Haystack Creek from flooding. NPS photo.



## Issues and Resources to Consider

- Physical alterations to streambeds.
- Water quality and increased sedimentation.
- Critical bull trout habitat.
- Native fish and other aquatic life.
- Wildlife, vegetation, and soils.
- The GTSR National Historic Landmark and associated historic structures.
- Visitor and administrative access.