



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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## Grand Canyon News Release

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### **National Park Service Announces Availability of Environmental Assessment for South Entrance Road Improvements Project at Grand Canyon National Park**

**Grand Canyon, Ariz.** – Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Steve Martin announces the availability of an Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect (EA/AEF) for the park's South Entrance Road Improvements project. The park is requesting comments on the EA/AEF during a 30-day public review period beginning July 19, 2007.

The EA/AEF evaluates a No Action Alternative and a Preferred Alternative that proposes to improve the South Entrance Road (Highway 64) between the community of Tusayan and the entrance station, located on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The purpose of these improvements is to provide an effective system that would address the crowding and safety issues that can occur during the high visitor use season, as well as to improve the experience of those entering the park through the South Entrance. Although some improvements have recently been implemented at the South Entrance to address these issues, the additional improvements are planned to further improve conditions at the entrance station.

The park is working with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) to address the proposed work in the ADOT easement, south of the park boundary. The preferred alternative includes 1) constructing up to two additional northbound lanes, approximately 1 mile long; 2) restriping the road from the park boundary to the entrance station; and 3) constructing a ½ mile long independent bypass lane.

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The proposed road improvements in the preferred alternative have been considered in the larger planning effort for the upcoming South Rim Visitor Transportation Plan Environmental Assessment (Transportation Plan) expected to be released in fall 2007. This project was separated from the larger plan to address visitor experience and safety concerns and to expedite implementation. Although this project would precede the finalization of the Transportation Plan, it would ensure compatibility with future transportation options.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, calls on federal agencies to consider environmental issues as part of their decision making process and to involve interested parties in the process. The NEPA process was initiated in May 2007 with a public scoping letter soliciting issues and concerns on preliminary project proposals. Responses to these scoping efforts were used during preparation of the EA/AEF.

The EA/AEF will be on public review for 30 days. The document can be reviewed online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/grca> by clicking on the project name, and then scrolling to “Open for Public Comments.” Comments can also be submitted online at the same web address (the preferred method) or mailed to Steve Martin, Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, Attention: South Entrance Road Improvements, P.O. Box 129 (1 Village Loop for express mail), Grand Canyon, Arizona 86023. **Comments will be accepted through August 20, 2007.**

The NPS encourages public participation through the NEPA process. After the public review period, the comments received will be carefully considered before a decision is made regarding implementation of the South Entrance Road Improvements project.

For additional information, please contact Rachel Stanton, Project Planning Leader, at (928) 774-9612 or Vicky Stinson, Project Manager at (928) 774-3026.

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