

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Glacier National Park
Waterton – Glacier International Peace Park
Montana



Going-to-the-Sun Road Construction and Maintenance Staging and Stockpiling Site

Finding of No Significant Impact and Statement of Findings for Floodplain

January 2008

Finding of No Significant Impact Going-to-the-Sun Road Construction and Maintenance Staging and Stockpiling Site

Glacier National Park • Montana A portion of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park

The Going-to-the-Sun Road (listed on the National Register of Historic Places) is the primary public use roadway that provides access to viewpoints, trailheads, picnic areas, campgrounds, and visitor centers. The Logan Pit staging and stockpiling site was identified in the *May 2003 Going-to-the-Sun Road Rehabilitation Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement* as the primary staging and stockpiling site for rehabilitation of the west side of the Going-to-the-Sun Road (GTSR). The site also serves as a general maintenance staging site and as an administrative and emergency helicopter landing site. Logan Pit is centrally located and is adjacent to the GTSR at milepost 20.2 within a point bar on McDonald Creek. The access road to Logan Pit crosses a back bar flood scour channel. In November 2006, Glacier National Park experienced a weather event that caused multiple creeks within the park to swell above their 100-year-flood-event stage causing notable damage throughout Glacier National Park including Logan Pit and resulted in McDonald Creek backing up into the flood channel and flowing across the access road until June 2007. Access to Logan Pit was delayed until the water receded and delayed construction and maintenance work.

Recognizing the potential for future flooding and identifying concerns over future access to supplies being staged and stockpiled at Logan Pit, the park decided to evaluate the options of staging and stockpiling at a different site or continue utilizing Logan Pit concurrently with another location. In order to provide a safe and adequately sized staging and stockpiling site for the GTSR rehabilitation project, ongoing road maintenance and emergency and administrative helicopter operations the following factors were evaluated in the analysis of alternative sites: distance to the project site, required staging and stockpile usable area for construction work, safe access in and out of the staging site, and the minimization of adverse impacts to natural and cultural resources. The following impact topics were evaluated: soils, vegetation, wildlife and aquatic species, threatened, endangered and species of concern, natural soundscapes, visitor use and experience, water quality, and floodplains.

Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative is to use two different locations on the west side of the park for materials staging and stockpiling for the GTSR rehabilitation effort and for long term maintenance on the road. As already analyzed in the *Going-to-the-Sun Road Rehabilitation Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement* and 2003 *Record of Decision* staging and stockpiling will continue both inside and outside the park. Areas used will be private land under lease to FHWA for this purpose, turn-outs, parking areas, and pull-outs along the Going-to-the-Sun Road and Sun Point on the east side.

Logan Pit will continue to be used and is located at milepost (MP) 20.2 on the GTSR (see Map 1) and offers adequate space and short travel routes for hauling materials and equipment storage for all west side road projects. The pit area is currently about 85,000 square feet but materials being stored and stockpiled do not occupy the entire space. Rock for walls and bridges, riprap, corrugated metal, plastic pipe, and gravel are currently being stored and stockpiled.

Logan Pit is visible from the road above the pit and nearby trails. The site is approximately 1 to 2 feet lower than the surface of the GTSR. It is accessed by a road that crosses a back bar flood scour channel of McDonald Creek. The back bar flood scour channel parallels the GTSR and is between 2 to 3 feet below the surface of the road.

The West Glacier Staging Area will also continue to be used. The site has seasonally been used for materials storage such as picnic tables for about the last five years and in 2006; it was decided to use the site temporarily for overflow stockpiling of rock for the GTSR project to provide more room at Logan Pit. The site was originally developed as a social gathering area through the years for park employees for picnics and ball games and at times was used by the public for large gatherings. Due to the high number of Columbian ground squirrel burrows at the site it was determined to be unsafe for recreation. It is approximately a quarter mile from the Going-to-the-Sun Road, just inside the park entrance, and is not visible from the GTSR.

Logan Pit will be used for construction staging and materials storage, except during high water times during the year. Material stockpiled at the pit will include stone for walls and bridges, rip rap aggregate, mortar, concrete, grout, asphalt, equipment and other supplies. Concrete forms wrapped in an impermeable fabric will be placed around a reduced perimeter to stabilize the usable area and to protect the staging area in the event of a flood. The construction staging area will be reduced from its current approximate size of approximately 2 acres to approximately 1.5 acres. The new perimeter is approximately ½ acre smaller than the disturbed area mapped in 2001 when the GTSR rehabilitation project started. The concrete forms may be buried and will form a wall (approximately 3.5 feet high) on the upstream portion of the site to divert floodwaters away from the staging site, but only used around the rest of the perimeter to mark the site. A culvert will be placed across the access road to capture sheet flow during high water flows. The West Glacier Staging Area will be used year round, weather permitting, as it is not located in a floodplain, for long term storage of materials including those not suitable for storage in a floodplain. The West Glacier Staging Area site will remain its current size of approximately 1.8 acres and will not be expanded. Hazardous materials will not be stored at the pit during high water times of the year. Construction vehicles may park overnight at the beginning of the construction season. Port-potties may be placed at the site once construction season begins. If used, they will be placed at least 100 feet from water. During the spring and fall high water season, weather conditions will be closely monitored to allow for removal of the porta-potties and vehicle in the event of predicted high water.

The following objectives will be met by using these two locations:

- Minimize travel distance between staging and stockpiling site and the project work on the GTSR to reduce conflicts with visitor traffic and minimize transportation costs.
- Provide adequate room for materials staging and stockpiling.
- Insure safe access in and out of the staging site.
- Minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures as appropriate will be taken to protect natural resources at each site:

Soils

- Install filter barriers (silt fences, certified weed seed free straw bales, coir logs).
- Minimize the area of compaction to defined limits.

Vegetation

- Implement Best Management Practices to prevent wind and water erosion.
 - Disturbance to vegetation and ground will be avoided as much as possible and be contained to as small of footprint as possible while meeting project objectives.

- Use landscaping design features to minimize visual impacts and to aid in creating suitable site conditions for revegetation.
- Complete a restoration analysis to decide if revegetation is necessary throughout the life of the project. If it is determined to be necessary the following mitigation measures will apply.
 - Apply soil amendments, mulches, organic matter and other measures as appropriate to facilitate revegetation.
 - Revegetate to restore native vegetation to areas previously disturbed outside of the Logan Pit boundaries to be established during this project.
 - Utilize native species from genetic stocks originating in the park for revegetation seeding and planting efforts. Plant species density, abundance, and diversity will be restored as nearly as possible to prior conditions for non-woody species.
- Monitor to evaluate vegetation cover and develop contingency and maintenance plans if vegetation cover is not similar to original ground cover.
- Prepare a vegetation management plan for the entire project.
- Conduct aggressive noxious weed control measures and control noxious weed populations in the vicinity of the staging areas to minimize transport of noxious weeds to other locations along the GTSR.
- Inspect gravel and topsoil sources, and avoid use of material currently supporting invasive exotic plants.
- Inspect construction vehicles to prevent the import of noxious weeds from tires and mud on the vehicles.
- Limit the use of fertilizers that may favor weeds over native species.
- Use periodic inspections and spot controls to prevent noxious weed establishment. If noxious weeds invade an area, an integrated noxious weed management process to selectively combine management techniques to control the particular noxious weed species will be used.

Wildlife and Aquatic Resources

- Prepare a stormwater management plan to minimize erosion and the introduction of sediments to aquatic habitat.
- Drainage improvements will be used to control runoff and reduce erosion.
- No food garbage or items that will be considered attractants to wildlife will be stored on site.
- Equipment will be inspected for hydraulic fluid, antifreeze and oil leaks prior to use at staging and stockpiling sites, and materials will be kept on site for clean up of any motor vehicle or heavy equipment fluid spills that may occur (such fluid spills are potential unnatural attractants to wildlife species including mountain goats and mule deer).

Threatened and Endangered Species and Species of Concern

- Implement measures to reduce potential for bear-human conflicts. Require construction personnel to adhere to park regulations concerning food storage and refuse management.
- Enforce regulations that prohibit feeding of wildlife and that require proper food storage.
- Provide adequate portable restroom facilities for construction workers to eliminate human waste as a wildlife attractant at construction sites.
- Use best management erosion and sediment control measures to prevent sedimentation of aquatic habitats used by westslope cutthroat trout.
- Maintain the larger vegetative buffer zone between McDonald Creek and Logan Pit to minimize impacts to harlequin duck habitat.

Natural Soundscapes

- All construction equipment will contain adequate mufflers and pollution emission controls.

Water Quality

- Conduct periodic water quality monitoring in nearby streams.
- Install filter barriers (silt fences, certified weed seed free straw bales, coir logs)

Floodplain

- No overnight storage of hazardous materials or fuels, with the exception of construction vehicles, will occur within the floodplain during high water times and in the event of an off season flood. Vehicles will be permitted only because they can be moved out of the area quickly in the event of high water.

Alternative Considered

A No Action Alternative was considered as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Under this alternative, the Logan Pit staging area would continue to be utilized during the shoulder seasons and in the summer for storage of stone for walls and bridges, rip rap aggregate, and other supplies. The existing disturbed area is about 2 acres (or 87,120 square feet). Logan Pit would remain the primary site for material storage and staging on the west side of the park and the West Glacier Staging Area would continue to be temporarily utilized for additional storage. No actions would be taken to protect/fortify Logan Pit from potential future flooding. During floods, the Pit would likely be closed to use, delaying park maintenance and GTSR construction activities and schedules. Materials and supplies stored at the Pit could be lost during flood events. The access road would be allowed to flood and water would not be diverted to protect it. Under this alternative the West Glacier Staging Area would only be utilized for the duration of the GTSR rehabilitation project and would be rehabilitated after the project was complete. The West Glacier Staging Area site would remain its current size of approximately 1.8 acres.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

The Council on Environmental Quality defines the environmentally preferred alternative as "...the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in the National Environmental Policy Act's §101." Section 101 of the National Environmental Policy Act states that "... it is the continuing responsibility of the Federal Government to ...

- 1) fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
- 2) assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
- 3) attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
- 4) preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity, and variety of individual choice;
- 5) achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and
- 6) enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources."

The Preferred Alternative will achieve criteria 1 by reducing impacts on the floodplain from the current operation and yet still provide a critical staging and material stockpiling site to accomplish the GTSR rehabilitation and then continue ongoing road maintenance. It achieves criteria 2 reducing the size of the staging area and improving the aesthetics of the site. It achieves criteria 3 by attaining the widest range of beneficial uses including providing for the GTSR rehabilitation project, reducing impacts on the natural environment, improving the viewshed without causing degradation, and reducing the risk to health or safety. It achieves criteria 4 by contributing to the preservation of both a national historic landmark and the McDonald Creek floodplain. Utilizing the Logan Pit and West Glacier Staging Area sites congruently will allow McDonald Creek to flow in a semi-natural condition during high-water periods. Installation of a culvert will allow water to flow in the back bar flood scour channel potentially facilitating floodplain dynamics of McDonald Creek at the Logan Pit site more so than the No Action Alternative. A reduction of usable area at the Logan Pit site will provide a better vegetative buffer zone to protect wildlife species. It achieves criteria 5 by balancing preservation and ultimately visitor use of the GTSR with natural resource restoration and reduction of impacts. Criteria 6 is neither achieved nor not achieved. Therefore, the preferred alternative is the also the environmentally preferred alternative.

Why the Preferred Alternative Will Not Have a Significant Effect on the Human Environment

As defined in 40 CFR Section 1508.27, significance is determined by examining the following criteria:

Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse

Impacts to soils will be minor, localized, long-term and adverse due to cumulative impacts of utilizing the sites, immediate impacts will be negligible as the site will continue to be denuded and subject to accelerated erosion. Vegetation will experience negligible impacts from the actions proposed in the preferred alternative since no new actions related to vegetation are proposed but will incur minor, localized, long-term and adverse impacts due to the cumulative impacts of continued use of the sites. Wildlife species will have minor, short- and long-term and localized adverse impact since road construction-related activities would continue at both sites. Impacts to aquatic species will be minor, localized, long-term and adverse due to the continued use of Logan Pit and its location in a floodplain. No impacts were assessed for aquatic species at the West Glacier Staging Area as there are no water sources within the vicinity of the site. Impacts to grizzly bears, a federally threatened species, will continue to be minor, short- and long-term and localized adverse in relations to road construction related activities. Actions under the preferred alternative will have slightly beneficial impact to harlequin ducks, a species of concern, as the buffer zone between the Logan Pit site and McDonald Creek will increase. Under the preferred alternative impacts to visitor use and experience will be minor, short and long-term, beneficial and adverse, localized and widespread due to the length of the rehabilitation project and the positive improvements once it is complete. The preferred alternative will have negligible to minor, adverse, long-term and localized impacts to water quality in McDonald Creek in the vicinity of the Logan Pit site due to the potential for flooding. The floodplain associated with McDonald Creek will experience minor, adverse and beneficial, short and long-term, and localized impacts upon implementation of the preferred alternative because while there are improvements made to enhance floodplain dynamics in the area, the Pit will continue to be used for staging and stockpiling. No major impacts are anticipated as a result of this project. Public scoping was conducted to assist with the identification of resources that could be impacted and to identify additional alternatives. Six letters were received.

Degree of effect on public health or safety

Public health and safety are core Service values. Glacier National Park is committed to addressing risk recognition and early prevention for a safe work and recreational environment. Public health and safety will not be affected as there is no change from the current conditions. The staging and stockpiling sites are located on straight-aways off the GTSR and have adequate sight distance for vehicles entering and exiting the two construction staging and material storage sites.

Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park land, prime farm lands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas

The Logan Pit site is within the floodplain of McDonald Creek and will experience minor, adverse and beneficial, short and long-term, and localized impacts upon implementation of the preferred alternative because while there are improvements made to enhance floodplain dynamics in the area, the Pit will continue to be used for staging and stockpiling. A Statement of Findings was prepared to address these impacts of the floodplain and is attached to this document. A wetland was delineated adjacent to Logan Pit, but analysis indicated it will not be affected by the preferred alternative. Therefore a Statement of Findings for Wetlands was not prepared.

Degree to which effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial

During the initial public scoping period, two of the six comments that were received, discussed the concern that the impacts from raising the elevation of the pit floor would result in significant impacts and therefore would require an EIS. In consideration of the concerns expressed by the public, the preferred alternative was developed and did not involve raising the elevation of the pit floor. Additionally, the site available for use was reduced in size, a larger buffer was provided between the staging area and McDonald Creek. No hazardous materials, including vehicles will be stored in the pit during times of year when flood events are likely or during an off season flood event. The back bar flood scour channel will continue to flow, but will be redirected through a culvert to avoid flooding the entrance road to the site. No further comments were received regarding this issue.

Degree to which effects on the quality of the human environment is highly uncertain or involves unique or unknown risks

There are no uncertain or unknown impacts on the human environment from the proposed project.

Degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration

The preferred alternative does not establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision about a future consideration.

Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts

Use of Logan Pit was initially evaluated in the *Going-to-the Sun Road Rehabilitation Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (2003)*. However at that time it had not experienced a large flood event and the EIS had not evaluated the need for flood protection. Therefore, use of the Logan Pit is related to the GTSR rehabilitation, which does have cumulative impacts, but this action does not significantly add to cumulative impacts from past, on-going or future actions.

Degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed on the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources

The Going-to-the-Sun Road (24FH0161/24GL0136) is the only cultural resource near the Logan Pit area. The road is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is a designated National Historic Landmark. The GTSR is a cultural landscape significant for its engineering features and as an example of National Park Service landscape design. Logan Pit is visible from the road only briefly as travelers pass the pit's entrance road. The proposed project will have negligible, short term impacts on the Road during the project and under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, there will be no effects from this project that will alter directly or indirectly, any characteristic of the GTSR that qualify it for inclusion in the National Register or as a National Historic Landmark. There are no historic structures or cultural landscapes within the area of potential effect of the West Glacier Staging Area. The State Historic Preservation Officer wrote stating their concurrence with the park that the project will have no effect on the National Historic Landmark listed in the National Register of Historic Places (November 14, 2007). The Going-to-the-Sun Road (24FH0161/24GL0136) is the only historic property near the Logan Pit project area and there is no historic property around the West Glacier Staging Area.

Degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its critical habitat

Glacier National Park was placed into grizzly bear management "situations" in accordance with the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan (USFWS 1993). Over 1 million acres of the park (proposed wilderness) are established as Management Situation 1, in which management decisions will favor the needs of the grizzly bear when grizzly habitat and other land-use values compete, and grizzly-human conflicts will be resolved in favor of grizzlies, unless a bear is determined to be a nuisance. The remainder of the park, which is developed front-country, is established as Management Situation 3, in which grizzly habitat maintenance and improvement are not the highest management considerations, grizzly bear presence will be actively discouraged, and any grizzly involved in a grizzly-human conflict will be controlled. Impacts to grizzly bears, a federally threatened species, from the proposed action at Logan Pit, will be minor, adverse, short- and long-term and localized.

Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*). There is no evidence of recent wolf activity in the project area and the area is not considered primary wolf habitat due to a limited prey base for wolves. There are currently no known den or rendezvous sites near the alternative locations being considered. There are no expected adverse affects from actions proposed.

Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*). Bull trout is listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act and is also a "Species of Special Concern". Although bull trout can be found in Lower McDonald Creek and Lake McDonald, no bull trout have been observed by park biologists in Upper McDonald Creek above McDonald Falls, located approximately one half mile above the mouth of Upper McDonald Creek, therefore proposed actions will not adversely affect bull trout.

No surveys have been conducted in the immediate project area, but there have been no incidental sightings or track records in the general area for Canada Lynx (*Lynx canadensis*). A preliminary map of lynx habitat in the park defined moist conifer forest above 4,000 feet elevation as the most likely areas supporting lynx. Little is known about lynx habitat use in the park and these criteria are general in nature, however, the amount of development and human presence in the project areas (Logan Pit and the West Glacier Staging Area) makes it unlikely that lynx frequent the area. No adverse affects on Canada lynx are anticipated.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (Email dated 12/20/07) agreed that requirements under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act had already been met with the February 13, 2003 Biological Assessment for the GTSR project and the Biological Opinion issued by the USFWS on July 30, 2003.

Whether the action threatens a violation of federal, state, or local environmental protection law
The action does not threaten any federal, state, or local environmental protection laws or regulations.

Impairment

In addition to reviewing the list of significance criteria, the National Park Service has determined that implementation of the proposal will not constitute an impairment to Glacier National Park's resources and values. This conclusion is based on a thorough analysis of the environmental impacts described in the *Going-to-the-Sun Road Construction and Maintenance Staging and Stockpiling Site*, the public comments received, and the professional judgment of the decision maker guided by the direction in *NPS Management Policies* (NPS 2006). The project results in benefits to park resources and values, opportunities for visitor enjoyment, and it does not result in their impairment.

Public Involvement

The Environmental Assessment was made available to the public for a 30 day review and comment period on November 02, 2007. The announcement was also posted on the National Park Service's public comment website. Letters were sent to the park's mailing list for EAs, which included various federal, state, and local agencies, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Montana State Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation, the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe. The announcement was also posted on the National Park Service's public comment website.

Three comment letters were received on the environmental assessment, including confirmation from the NRHP. Comments from two members of the public are responded to below in Table 2.

Substantive comments were made on the need for clarification of staging and storage parameters. Additional changes were made to the document based on internal review comments. Changes to the document are addressed in an errata sheet attached to this FONSI.

Table 2. Summary of comment letters

Letter	Comment	Response
1	We support the selection of the preferred alternative.	Thank you for your comment.
2	If soil, gravel, or fill materials will be stored at the Logan Pit site, what would be the estimated volumes of the piles?	The GTSR rehabilitation projects, as described in the 2003 <i>Going-to-the-Sun Road Rehabilitation Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement</i> (GTSR/FEIS) is a multi-year project divided up into seven phases that range from 2 to 17 miles long. Some of these phases require more rock than others and some require more riprap and fill materials. Volumes of materials stored, especially soil, gravel and fill, change hourly as material is picked-up and dropped-off regularly and vary each day. We are unable to estimate the quantities that would be placed in Logan Pit from year to year. The scope of the Going-to-the-Sun Road Construction and Maintenance Staging and Stockpiling Site project is to analyze the impacts of using a certain amount of area at the pit for storage of materials. The GTSR/FEIS analyzed the materials and construction activities.
2	Will culvers [sic], expanded metal, road lining materials, explosives, large drills, loaders, dump trucks or other construction equipment be stored at the Logan Pit?	All types of road construction materials could be stored at the pit as it is a staging and stockpiling site. This will likely include culverts, rock, fill, mortar, rebar, riprap, and fencing. Loaders, dump trucks and other construction equipment may be left overnight while the Pit is in use. However during high water times, weather will be closely monitored. If weather indicates a potential high water event, vehicles and porta-potties will be removed from the Pit. Again, as stated in the EA, staging and stockpiling would occur after the normal high water times. We are not familiar with road lining materials. To our knowledge, expanded metal will not be used on this project. Explosives will not be stored in the Pit as they are federally regulated and according to NPS - Director's Order 65 "shall be in magazines of the proper BATF class (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms) for the particular explosive, detonator, or blasting agent. . .there shall be no overnight storage of explosives other than in appropriate BATF-class storage facilities", these types of facilities do not exist at the pit.
2	Where will supplies for the rock wall repair work and mortaring be stored?	These supplies are likely to be stored at Logan Pit. The rock for rock wall repair was noted in the response above. The mortar would be stored under cover and behind a temporary fence and will only be stored there after high water levels have subsided. It will be removed before potential high water events in the fall. We have discovered that deer are attracted to the mortar which is the reason it must be covered and behind a fence.
2	Will there be storage buildings, sheds constructed in the Logan Pit area? Will trailers be parked in the area?	Storage buildings and sheds will not be constructed at Logan Pit. But the contractor will continue to be allowed to temporarily park an office trailer at the site if requested. During the last construction season (2007), the contractor did not utilize this option, however the previous contractor did. In order to comply with other policies and regulations (36 CFR, NPS Management Policies 2006, OSHA), regarding human waste management, porta-potties are also allowed. The office trailer will not be in place until after the high water season is past and removed before it begins. Porta-potties may be located at the Pit once work begins but will be removed in the event of high water. Porta-potties must be set up at least 100 feet away from the creek and are a requirement at work sites.

Letter	Comment	Response
	Will lights be put up to extend the working day at the storage area?	We have never had a request for lights at Logan Pit. Lights are used occasionally at locations along the GTSR when night work is conducted. We would not permit permanent lights to be put in place at Logan Pit, but would consider temporary, short term lights. NPS Management Policies address protection of night sky, therefore if lights were temporarily needed, they would have to minimize impacts on night sky. Use of lights and impacts on night sky were analyzed in the <i>GTSR/FEIS</i> and were determined to be minor to moderate, short-term.
2	How close to the creek will vehicles be allowed to drive? Also, will water be removed from McDonald Creek at the Logan Pit site?	The park has included in the specifications for each construction phase on the GTSR, that a buffer must be maintained at all times with barrier rock to prevent vehicles from driving up to the creek. Calculations made off the aerial photograph (see map 2 in the EA) show the buffer will be approx. 30 m from creek; however this has not yet been measured on the ground. Vehicles will not be allowed to drive beyond the barrier. Water removal from McDonald Creek at Logan Pit was analyzed in the <i>GTSR/FEIS</i> . Pumps used to withdraw water will have screens to protect fish and are prohibited from leaking any fluids.
2	As far as the mapping of the site goes, I presume you have aerial photos that show disturbance prior to 2001. Could not these be used for mapping purposes?	While we do have aerial photos prior to 2001 that in fact show a larger disturbed area, we are using the 2001 photo because that was the baseline photo used for the <i>GTSR/FEIS</i> . Furthermore, the fact remains that the preferred alternative reduces the area that will continue to be disturbed.
2	Has there ever been any disturbance on the north side of McDonald Creek slightly downstream of the current Logan Pit area?	We are not aware of any disturbance caused by NPS operations, FHWA or contractors on the north side of the creek or downstream of the site.
2	When did the Park Service begin using the Logan Pit area as a maintenance site?	Anecdotal evidences suggest that Logan Pit has been used as a staging site for road construction needs since the 1930s.
2	Where will the helio-pad be delineated?	A specific area for helicopter landings is not currently marked on the ground. In the past a specific area was delineated for helicopter landings, however more recently they have used the area just inside the entrance to the Pit where the vehicles turn around. This area remains free of materials all the time to allow vehicles to maneuver in the Pit. When helicopter activity is occurring, only emergency vehicles are allowed to enter the pit.

A press release will be issued announcing the availability of the FONSI, errata sheet and SOF. A copy will be sent to all commenters, and placed on the NPS public web site.

Conclusion

The preferred alternative does not constitute an action that normally requires preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The preferred alternative will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Negative environmental impacts that could occur will be negligible to minor in intensity. There will be no significant impacts on public health, public safety, threatened or endangered species, sites or districts listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or other unique characteristics of the region. No highly uncertain or controversial impacts, unique or unknown risks, significant cumulative effects, or elements of precedence were identified. Implementation of the action will not violate any federal, state, or local environmental protection law.

Based on the foregoing, it has been determined that an EIS is not required for this project and thus will not be prepared.

Approved:

Michael D. Snyder

2/5/08

Michael D. Snyder
Director, Intermountain Region

Date

Errata Sheet

Going-to-the-Sun Road Construction and Maintenance Staging and Stockpiling Site

Glacier National Park

Comments to the Going-to-the-Sun Road Construction and Maintenance Staging and Stockpiling Site Environmental Assessment resulted in minor changes to the text and one correction. The impact determinations reached in the EA were reviewed and did not change as a result of these changes.

TEXT CHANGES

Page 10, line 30 under Preferred Alternative from “reduced from its current size of 2 acres to 1.5 acres” to “reduced from its current size of approximately 2 acres to approximately 1.5 acres”. This change was made to accommodate any incremental differences in acreage from electronic to actual on-the-ground surveys.

Page 10, line 7 under Actions Common to All Alternatives from “Hazardous materials would not be stored at Logan Pit overnight” to “Hazardous materials would not be stored at Logan Pit overnight during high water times and in the event of an off season flood. However construction vehicles may be parked at the Pit overnight at the pit. Weather conditions will be monitored to allow time to remove vehicles and porta-potties in the event of a high water.”

Page 18, line 14 and page 65, line 37 under mitigation measures from “No overnight storage of hazardous material or fuels would occur within the floodplain” to “No overnight storage of hazardous materials or fuels, with the exception of constructions vehicles, would occur within the floodplain during high water times and in the event of an off season flood. Weather conditions will be monitored to allow time to remove vehicles and porta-potties in the event of high water.”

CORRECTION

The EA and the SOF were not consistent in the determination of effect for wetlands; the EA stated wetlands would not be affected and the SOF stated the effect would be negligible. This was an error in the SOF and the SOF has been changed consistent with the EA. Wetlands would not be affected. Page 20 of the SOF under Wetlands has been changed from “Action proposed in this project would have negligible affects on the wetland....” to “Action proposed in this project will not affect the wetland....”