

Grand Canyon National Park seeks public comment on the Grand Canyon Railway wooden ballast bridge

GRAND CANYON, Ariz. - The National Park Service (NPS) is beginning a public review of a programmatic agreement to remove and replace the Grand Canyon Railway wooden ballast bridge at the South Rim in Grand Canyon National Park. Public comments will be accepted from Feb. 7 until midnight, March 7, 2024.

The wooden ballast bridge, constructed in 1925-26, is in poor condition and beyond repairs resulting in safety concerns. The bridge crosses over Bright Angel Wash, north of the historic Powerhouse building and Village Loop Bypass Road, in Grand Canyon Village. Trains cross daily over this bridge as they travel between Williams, Arizona, and Grand Canyon Village, providing the only train access into a United States national park.

The nearly 100-year-old wooden ballast bridge is a contributing feature to the Grand Canyon Railway Historic District and the Grand Canyon Village National Historic Landmark District. In consultation with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the NPS determined the removal of the wooden ballast bridge would have an adverse effect on the historic districts.

The programmatic agreement was prepared, in consultation with the Arizona SHPO, for the removal and replacement of the wooden ballast bridge in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The programmatic agreement defines that any proposed new bridge will be designed to meet Federal Railway Administration standards and be compatible with the affected historic districts.

For more details and to submit comments, visit the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/SouthRimWoodenBallastBridge> and click on "Open for Comment." During the comment period, any individual or group can submit comments electronically through the PEPC project website, the preferred method for submitting comments.

All comments are public records and may be made publicly available at any time to include personal information such as addresses, phone numbers, email addresses or other information included in comment submissions. The NPS will respond to substantive comments after the public review period via the PEPC website.