

Notice of Determination

This notice of determination is being issued by Parks Canada under the Impact Assessment Act. Parks Canada has decided that the project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects.

The Dixon Bridge Replacement project is located in a highly sensitive site within Grasslands National Park. Because of this sensitivity and the potential for the project to have adverse environmental effects, Parks Canada has determined that the level of analysis appropriate for this project is the DIA pathway. The DIA resulted in the following findings.

Analysis of potential impacts tied to the physical dimensions of the proposed project options were conducted early in the project planning, during the consideration of project alternatives. The preferred option will improve bridge hydrologic capacity while minimizing impacts to natural resource and cultural resource values.

The site is within SARA designated critical habitat and the EPO for greater sage-grouse, and is in close proximity to the last remaining lek in the West Block of Grasslands National Park. Construction and operation of the bridge has the potential to create sensory disturbance, increase the predation threat from raptors, and to destroy native vegetation. Mitigations regarding the timing of the work and the height of structures will maintain high-quality critical habitat and comply with EPO restrictions, resulting in no residual adverse effects to greater sage-grouse. The project is likely to destroy native vegetation and will be subject to a permit under SARA. The magnitude of this destruction is such that it is unlikely to impact the survival of greater sage-grouse.

The site is also within SARA designated critical habitat for prairie loggerhead shrike, and the project has the potential to have adverse effects on the availability of this habitat. Timing restrictions on the construction of the bridge replacement and the revegetation of disturbed native vegetation will avoid such potential impacts, resulting in no residual adverse effects to prairie loggerhead shrike.

Preliminary archaeological investigations found evidence of buried artifacts. An AIA will be conducted to assess potential impacts to all archaeological resources within the project area, including those discovered and undiscovered, in both surface and buried contexts. Mitigations to avoid or minimize impacts to cultural resources that arise from the AIA will be implemented in project construction, including the installation of the temporary bridge.

The Dixon Bridge provides a critical transportation link for locals, licensees, park operations, and visitors. Access will be maintained through bridge replacement construction by the installation of a temporary bridge, resulting in no residual adverse effects to visitor experience values within Grasslands National Park.

The project proposal has the potential for adverse effects on other VCs that, because of known impacts and mitigations, were considered to be of low risk. The DIA found that there are negligible to no residual adverse effects associated with these interactions.

Taking into account implementation of mitigation measures outlined the DIA, the project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects.

To request a copy of the Detailed Impact Assessment report, contact:
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