

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT – NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is developing a project to replace the Sun River Bridge in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), U.S. Bureau of Land Management (USBLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and Greenfields Irrigation District (GID). FHWA is serving as the lead agency preparing the Sun River Bridge Replacement Environmental Assessment (EA).

Project Location: The project is located 73 miles west of Great Falls, 19 miles west of Augusta, and 0.75 mile downstream from the GID Diversion Dam near Gibson Reservoir in Montana. The bridge crosses the Sun River and spans the boundaries of Lewis and Clark County and Teton County.

Lead Agency and File Number: FHWA, file number MT FLAP BOR 2980(1)

Purpose of the EA: The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requires that federal agencies consider the environmental impacts of their actions in their decision-making process. The EA is part of the NEPA process. The EA evaluates a No Action Alternative that would result in no improvements and a Preferred Alternative that would provide a new bridge crossing over the Sun River.

Project Description: FHWA and cooperating agencies propose to replace the existing bridge with a new bridge meeting current design and safety standards. The existing Sun River Bridge is in poor condition, and its outdated design poses safety hazards and limitations to users. A new bridge is needed to provide a crossing over the Sun River that safely and reliably accommodates all users.

Public Comment Period: Comments on the EA will be accepted from **February 1 to March 8, 2024**.

Document Availability: View or download the EA from the FHWA Project website at <https://highways.dot.gov/federal-lands/projects/mt/flap-bor-2980-1>.

A printed copy of the EA is also available to the public at:

Lewis and Clark County Library – Augusta Branch
205 Main Street
August, MT 59410

Comment Submission: Please send comments or questions to Jennifer Chariarse, Environmental Specialist at FHWA, at jennifer.chariarse@dot.gov or (360) 619-7700. Comments are requested by **March 8, 2024**.

In-Person Public Open House: Wednesday February 28, 2024, 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM at the **Augusta Community Center**, 132 Main Street, Augusta, MT, 59410. Attendees will have an opportunity to review project exhibits, speak with project representatives, and provide comments on the EA. No presentation will be provided.