



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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Improvements to Grand Canyon's South Entrance Road to Begin

Grand Canyon, AZ – Fann Contracting, Inc. of Prescott, AZ, was awarded a contract 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. Work on the project includes construction of an additional northbound lane, restriping the road from the park boundary to the entrance station, and adding an independent bypass lane. Construction activities are expected to begin early next week.

The South Entrance Road will be widened approximately 12 feet to accommodate a total of two northbound lanes (one existing and one new) and one southbound lane. Widening will occur beginning just south of the park boundary and extending north to the South Entrance Station. The existing and new lane will each be 12-foot-wide vehicle lanes with one, three-foot-wide paved shoulder on each side of the road.

A one-half mile long, independent bypass lane will also be constructed. This lane will diverge from the highway between the park boundary and the park sign and will merge back onto the highway approximately 500 feet north of the South Entrance Station. The bypass lane will also be 12-foot-wide with two-foot-wide shoulders on each side of the road. An automated gate will also be constructed to facilitate the use of the bypass lane. This lane will be used for local traffic, commercial deliveries and shuttle bus transit vehicles.

Currently, the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park receives about 4 million visitors annually, most of whom arrive through the South Entrance. An additional northbound entrance lane may be constructed at a future date if deemed necessary to accommodate increases in visitation.

The South Entrance Road improvements were originally considered in a larger planning effort for the upcoming South Rim Visitor Transportation Plan Environmental Assessment, expected to be released in mid-February. This project was separated from the larger plan in order to more quickly address crowding and safety issues that can occur during the high visitor use season, and to improve the experience of those entering the park through the South Entrance Station. This

project expands on improvements that were made last year at the South Entrance and will be compatible with future transportation options.

Construction activities associated with widening the roadway and with construction of the bypass lane will include surveying, tree removal, earth work, implementation of basecourse and pavement surfacing, and striping. All but the final paving is expected to be done by mid-May in time for the busy spring and summer seasons. Final paving, which will complete the project, will wait until fall in an effort to reduce impacts to the visiting public and the local community.

Delays are expected to be minimal with all lanes remaining open and the entrance station operating in a normal capacity. During construction, the existing lanes will narrow and some slowing of traffic may occur. The National Park Service and Fann Contracting are committed to keeping impacts to a minimum.

This project is one of several that are planned to improve and enhance the visitor experience at Grand Canyon National Park. For information on these projects, please visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/grca/parknews/newsreleases.htm or contact Vicky Stinson, Project Manager at 928-774-3026.

Note: Fann Contracting was also awarded the contract for the reconstruction of Grand Canyon's historic Hermit Road, which will begin this spring. Additional information on the Hermit Road project can be found on the web site listed above.

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