



Spruce Railroad Trail Environmental Assessment FONSI



The Spruce Railroad Trail (SRRT) is a popular year-round destination for day hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians.

The NPS Selected Alternative would

Improve the existing 3.5 mile long SRRT into an accessible trail that meets and exceeds accessibility guidelines for federal outdoor recreation facilities and provides safe outdoor recreation opportunities for pedestrians, equestrians, bicyclists and people traveling in wheelchairs.

Widen the existing trail to a total width of 11 feet, with an 8' asphalt surface and 3' unpaved surface.

Re-open the two historic railroad tunnels.

Establish an accessible, multipurpose trail in one of Olympic National Park's (ONP) most popular destinations, while still protecting the unique and nationally significant historic and natural values of Lake Crescent and the Spruce Railroad.

Spruce Railroad Trail Environmental Assessment

The 2012 Spruce Railroad Trail Environmental Assessment (SRRT EA) has been completed and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was released September 10. The selected alternative (Alternative 5) calls for improving the Spruce Railroad Trail for universal accessibility by building an eight-foot wide asphalt trail with an adjacent three-foot wide gravel shoulder. This project is part of President Obama's America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

The complete SRRT EA FONSI is available for public review and download at <http://tinyurl.com/SRRT-Olympic>.

Frequently Asked Questions

When will construction begin?

This project will be built as funding becomes available. It is possible that the trail would be constructed in phases, as funding is secured.

Is there funding for this project?

Olympic National Park and Clallam County will work together to seek funding from a variety of available sources. Olympic National Park would be pleased to partner with other entities to compete for available grants.

Potential NPS funding sources include the Recreation Fee Program, if this program is re-authorized beyond its current sunset date of 2014.

What about the America's Great Outdoors program?

Olympic Discovery Trail has been identified as an America's Great Outdoors project. Completion of the 2012 SRRT EA is part of the 2012 Workplan for the Olympic Discovery Trail America's Great Outdoors project. The NPS is proud to be a partner in this effort that links federal, state and local trails.

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

What accessibility guidelines are you using?

The selected alternative meets and exceeds the 2009 Draft Final Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas. These Guidelines are pursuant to the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) for outdoor developed areas. ABA standards apply to federal land management agencies including the National Park Service, US Forest Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management and are consistent with those of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

In 2004 the Architectural and Transportation Barrier Compliance Board (Access Board) harmonized ABA guidelines with the ADA guidelines and published them jointly as the Americans with Disabilities Act and Architectural Barriers Act (ADA-ABA) Accessibility Guidelines. Currently, the ADA-ABA Accessibility Guidelines only address standards for the built environment. The Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas are addressed in a separate document that has been formatted for incorporation into the ADA-ABA Accessibility Guidelines.

The Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas provide accessibility standards for facilities not addressed in the ADA-ABA Accessibility Guidelines, including trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, viewing areas and beach access routes. Outdoor developed areas can also contain elements and facilities such as drinking fountains, parking areas, restrooms, play areas, boating facilities, and fishing platforms that are addressed in the ADA-ABA Accessibility Guidelines.

Why did the preferred alternative change between the 2012 EA and the FONSI?

After reviewing the public comments and further analyzing maintenance requirements across the alternatives, the NPS selected Alternative 5 (8-foot wide asphalt surface with 3-foot wide gravel shoulder) in the FONSI. This alternative will provide for a more sustainable trail surface given the area's environmental conditions.

What's the difference between the park's preferred alternative in the 2011 EA and the alternative selected in the FONSI?

Trail Width

The selected alternative calls for an 8-foot wide paved trail surface with a 3-foot wide gravel shoulder on the upslope side.

The 2011 EA preferred alternative called for a 6-foot wide paved trail surface with a 4-foot wide gravel shoulder on the upslope side of the trail.

Accessibility

The FONSI selected alternative will provide a universally accessible trail along the entire 3.5 mile length of the SRRT. In contrast, one segment (Segment D) of the SRRT as presented in the 2011 EA preferred alternative would have been too steep (18% grade) to meet accessibility standards.

Sol Duc section

Construction of a section of new trail at the west end of Lake Crescent (the Sol Duc section) was dropped from consideration in the 2012 SRRT EA. The most feasible and lowest-impact option for trail development is to use the old Spruce Railroad grade, which provides an existing trail base and relatively even grade and would eliminate the need for new trail construction through forest and across variable and steep terrain.