

#25



Protect America's Climbing

Date: 8/12/2016

To: El Dorado County Transportation Board

Community Development Agency, Transportation Division

Board of Supervisors

Placerville Office

330 Fair Lane

Placerville, CA 95667

Submitted via email: edc.cob@edcgov.us

LATE DISTRIBUTION

DATE 8/12/16

BOS 8/16/14

Re: Agenda item 16-0629: DRAFT Feasibility Study for Public Access to the South Fork of the American River at Mosquito Road Bridge

The Access Fund appreciates this opportunity to comment on the El Dorado County Agenda item 16-0629: DRAFT Feasibility Study-Public Access to the South Fork of the American River at Mosquito Road Bridge. Currently the Mosquito Bridge affords access points for multiple recreational users including rock climbers, paddlers and other recreationalist. We understand the need for a new bridge to be built due to vehicle safety concerns and age of the existing bridge, however we request the existing Mosquito Bridge continue to be maintained as pedestrian and recreational access point opposed to being removed.

The Access Fund

The Access Fund is a national advocacy organization whose mission keeps climbing areas open and conserves the climbing environment. A 501(c)(3) non-profit supporting and representing over 6.8 million climbers nationwide in all forms of climbing—rock climbing, ice climbing, mountaineering, and bouldering—the Access Fund is the largest US climbing organization with over 13,000 members and 100 affiliates. We currently hold memorandums of understanding with the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and Forest Service to help define rules for how climbing will be managed on federal land.¹ The Access Fund provides climbing management expertise, stewardship, project specific funding, and educational outreach. California is one of our larger member states and many of our members regularly travel to climb

¹ See

http://www.accessfund.org/site/c.tmL5KhNWLrH/b.5000797/k.40E2/Collaboration_with_federal_agencies.htm

throughout California. In addition we are a member of Outdoor Alliance and often partner with other human powered recreation groups including American Whitewater. For more information on the Access Fund visit: <https://www.accessfund.org/>.

Comments

The existing Mosquito Bridge (aka the Swinging Bridge) has provided recreational access to the South Fork of the American River for decades. Recreational use in the area includes paddling/boat access as well as rock climbing and hiking opportunities. We recognize the need for a safe point of access for vehicular traffic to access Mosquito Road and support the development of a new bridge for safe vehicle access across the American River. We request that a project and funding be pursued to maintain the historic Mosquito Bridge for pedestrian use, rather than being removed all together. We also request additional analysis be conducted to address limited parking throughout this corridor of road to allow recreational users legitimate and safe places to park and access this section of the American River.

The Feasibility Study notes *'There is no adequate location to provide parking at either approach to the bridge on Mosquito Road. El Dorado County would need to acquire private land or expand the existing prescriptive easement on Mosquito Road to provide parking at or near the bridge. The closest feasible location is on the south side of the SFAR, approximately 1/2 mile from the bridge.'*² We recognize the additional cost and studies that would be required to complete a parking project, however given the level of recreational use in this corridor we strongly encourage El Dorado County to pursue developing additional parking for recreational use near the Mosquito Bridge. We encourage the Supervisors to extend the decision making period to thoroughly address the access issues and alternatives to removing the historic Mosquito Bridge and pursue additional parking options for recreational users.

² Final DRAFT Feasibility Study- Public Access to the SFAR at Mosquito Road Bridge. Page 7-8.

Access Fund Assistance

The climbing community and the Access Fund are ready, willing, and able to help planners identify and improve access opportunities.

* * *

Thank you for your consideration of these comments on Agenda item 16-0629: DRAFT Feasibility Study-Public Access to the South Fork of the American River at Mosquito Road Bridge. The Access Fund has the experience, local contacts, and resources to help planners craft alternatives that encourage recreational access while sustaining the health and safety of the landscape. Please keep us informed as the planning process proceeds. Feel free to contact me via telephone (303)552-2843 or email (katie@accessfund.org) to discuss this matter further.

Best Regards,



Katie Goodwin-Public Land Associate
Access Fund

Cc:

Brady Robinson-Access Fund Executive Director

Erik Murdock-Access Fund Policy Director

Theresa Simsiman-American Whitewater California Assistant Stewardship Director