

**APPENDIX F**  
**ST. CROIX NATIONAL SCENIC RIVERWAY**  
**CONSTRUCTION AND MITIGATION PLAN**

**APPENDIX F**

**ST. CROIX NATIONAL SCENIC RIVERWAY  
CONSTRUCTION AND MITIGATION PLAN**

for the

**Minong to Stone Lake (MS) Spread  
Construction and Mitigation Plan  
PART B**

of the

**Arrowhead to Weston  
345-kV Transmission Line**

**August 29, 2006**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2.0	PROJECT DESCRIPTION .....	6
3.0	NOTIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION .....	7
4.0	MEASURES TO MINIMIZE HARM .....	8
4.1	TIMING.....	8
4.2	BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.....	9
4.3	PROTECTION MEASURES.....	10
4.3.1	Water Quality .....	10
4.3.2	Soils .....	11
4.3.3	Wetlands .....	11
4.3.4	Vegetation.....	12
4.3.5	Fisheries .....	13
4.3.6	Wildlife .....	13
4.3.7	Special Status Species .....	13
4.3.8	Land Use.....	13
4.3.9	Recreation and Visitor Use .....	14
4.3.10	Soundscapes .....	14
4.3.11	Public Health.....	14
4.3.12	Social and Economic Values.....	14
4.3.13	Cultural Resources.....	15
4.4	ENHANCED VEGETATION PLAN.....	15
4.4.1	Plan Elements.....	15
4.4.2	Planting Plan.....	16
4.5	OTHER MEASURES .....	17
5.0	POST CONSTRUCTION MONITORING PLAN .....	19
6.0	COMPLIANCE SUMMARY .....	20

## ATTACHMENTS

Record of Decision for the Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line River Crossing/Right-of-way Request Final Environmental Impact Statement.....	21
---	----

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The October 2001 PSCW Order for the Arrowhead to Weston 345-kV Transmission Line Project approved a route that crossed the Namekagon River at a location falling within the Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS) Wild and Scenic River System (St. Croix National Scenic Riverway [the Riverway]). At the time of the second PSCW Order (Docket 05-CE-113), issued in December 2003, it was recognized that the NPS had yet to make a final decision as to whether they would approve a permit for the crossing (a right-of-way permit) and whether that permit would require the undergrounding of one or both of the transmission lines crossing the Namekagon River. At that point in time, the NPS was initiating the environmental impact assessment process that would evaluate five alternatives for the crossing, including three underground, one overhead, and a “no action” alternative. The range in cost for the four crossing alternatives ranged from standard construction costs of approximately \$350,000 to \$12.7 million for undergrounding both lines and the Optical Ground Wire (OPGW). To address the uncertainty surrounding the final design and cost of the Riverway crossing, the PSCW included the following in the December 2003 Order: “The applicants shall file with the Commission a protection plan for the Namekagon River crossing. Because of uncertainty in the estimated cost of any underground crossing of the Namekagon River, the plan shall also include a detailed estimate of costs associated with any underground crossing, if such crossing is required by the NPS for review and approval of the Commission.” (Order Point #8)

The NPS’s major concern was to minimize impacts on people recreating on the river. Their goal was to minimize the number of wires crossing the river and to minimize other visual impacts on those using the river, which would have been achieved by undergrounding the line. However, they were also concerned about the construction activity associated with undergrounding and its long term potential environmental impact on the river. The Applicants concerns were with a specialized, unique underground crossing in a remote area of a critical transmission line. These operational and environmental concerns resulted in a second overhead design being developed. The alternative developed was a Long-Span Conductor Option, which provides for a special

overhead crossing and funds for visual and other mitigation on the river. The Long-Span Option utilizes large-sized, special high-strength conductor rather than the standard two-wire bundled conductor. This allowed for a crossing span of approximately 1500 feet with the height of the crossing structures such that they are screened by shoreline vegetation and are not visible from the Riverway. Surge arrestors will be utilized in lieu of a shield wire and the OPGW placed underground. This approach met the NPS goal by minimizing the number of wires crossing the river (6 conductors) and removing existing and proposed transmission poles from the river viewshed. Additional detail regarding proposed final design elements is included in Section 2: Project Description.

The NPS prepared draft and final environmental impact statements (EIS) to reach their decision about the right-of-way permit requested by Minnesota Power, Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, and American Transmission Company (the Applicants/Permittees) to cross the Namekagon River along the State-approved route of the Arrowhead to Weston Project. The EIS process was initiated in Fall 2002. A draft EIS was released in March 2004. A Final EIS was released in December 2004. On February 22, 2005, the NPS issued a Record of Decision (ROD) on the *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line River Crossing/Right-of-Way Request* (see attached). The right-of-way was requested The NPS decision was to issue a right-of-way permit to the Applicants allowing construction of the Project within a 120-foot wide corridor across the Riverway in accordance with the selected action (Alternative 1: Long-span Option).

The approved ROD includes a description of the selected action and why it is the environmentally preferable alternative, synopses of other alternatives considered, the basis for the NPS decision, and an overview of public involvement in the decision-making process. In addition, the ROD references construction methods, timing, and compensatory mitigation measures described in the Final EIS that will be employed on the Project to minimize harm to the environment and to the public uses of the Riverway.

In addition to the ROD, the right-of-way permit itself must be issued before this portion of the Project can be constructed. It was in draft form at the time of this writing and was expected to include a set of Terms and Conditions that will (among other things) require that the mitigation measures set forth in the Final EIS, and referenced in the ROD, be implemented. The purpose of this site-specific Construction and Mitigation Plan (CMP) for the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway is to describe how the Riverway portion of the Project has been designed and will be constructed to comply with the ROD and the expected permit requirements.

As described above, the Alternative 1: Long-span Option was developed after the PSCW issued their December 2003 Order for the Project and was not considered in the Project budget. However, it is preferable to the undergrounding proposal initially favored by the NPS because it has fewer environmental impacts. Because of the unique nature of the NPS-approved Namekagon River crossing design and the required mitigation elements, the cost of the Long-Span Conductor Option exceeds the PSCW-approved Project cost, which was based on a standard overhead crossing of the Riverway.

## 2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The approved Long-span Option will double-circuit the new 345-kV line with an existing 161-kV transmission line crossing of the Namekagon River at a location approximately 10 miles west of Hayward (Figure 1-1, Part B for MS). A total of nine 70-foot-tall wooden H-frame structures associated with the existing 161-kV transmission line between USH 63 and Townline Road will be removed, and eight 125- to 145-foot tall single shaft steel structures (MS081-MS088) will replace them (App. E, Sheets 21 and 22). Six of the eight new structures will be within the Riverway boundary on land owned by the NPS and on private land upon which the NPS holds a scenic easement. The other two structures (MS081 and MS082) will be in an open field on private land between the north boundary of the Riverway and USH 63.

Concrete foundations 6 to 12 feet in diameter and 30 to 68 feet deep will be installed to support the new structures. A total of six overhead conductors will cross the Namekagon River. In order to minimize visual impacts and reduce the number of wires actually crossing the river, shield wires, whose purpose is to protect the transmission line against direct lightning strikes, will not be installed across the Namekagon River. Instead, an OPGW will be installed underground at the river crossing using a combination of trenching and Horizontal Directional Drill (HDD) construction techniques. The HDD portions of the installation may be 2000 to 2800 feet in length to a depth of 40 feet under the river. The HDD drill will extend for a longer distance than what was indicated in the ROD in order to reduce the amount of open trenching required for the installation. Reducing the amount of trenching will reduce ground disturbance and further minimize impacts during construction.

The entry and exit points will be approximately 200 feet from both the north and south banks of the river. The OPGW will also be installed 15 feet under the unnamed creek and wetland. Entry and exit points will be 50 feet north and south of the wetland boundary. For the remainder of the underground OPGW installation, the OPGW will be installed in a trench to a depth of approximately 40 inches below the ground surface.

### 3.0 NOTIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION

Item (4) of the draft right-of-way permit Terms and Conditions specifies a number of requirements for notification of the Riverway superintendent or other park personnel prior to various construction activities:

- The superintendent shall be notified in writing no less than 14 days prior to the start of initial construction on park lands
- An on-site meeting will be conducted no less than one week prior to start of construction between representatives of the park and the Permittee construction/maintenance supervisor to determine and clarify the scope of the project and any requirements of the Service
- The Permittee construction/maintenance supervisor will contact the park on the morning of the first day of work and each morning thereafter prior to entering the park, advising the location and extent of work crews and equipment in the park

Submittal of this document constitutes the required written notification prior to the start of initial construction. The Project construction schedule is specified in Section 4.0 of the CMP Part B for the MS Spread. The Project's Environmental Mitigation Planner will coordinate with the Permittees to ensure that the two remaining notification requirements noted above are complied with in a timely manner as specified.

In addition, the provisions of the ROD call for coordination with NPS staff on various issues. Plans for compliance with specific coordination requirements are presented under the corresponding topics in Section 4.0, below.

## 4.0 MEASURES TO MINIMIZE HARM

The approved ROD specifies a number of measures, set forth in the Final EIS, that must take place to minimize construction impacts. These include implementation of:

- Best Management Practices (per FEIS Appendix A.1.3)
- Applicant-committed Protection Measures (per FEIS App. A.1.4)
- Enhanced Vegetation Planting Plan (per FEIS App. A.1.6)
- Compensatory Mitigation Package (per FEIS Section 2.4.1.2)

The following sections describe how these and the ‘timing’ issue described in the ROD, will be addressed and implemented within the NPS right-of-way permit area.

### 4.1 TIMING

The route of the Arrowhead-Weston Project that the PSCW approved in their October 30, 2001 Order crosses approximately 10 miles of county-owned land in Washburn County and approximately 15 miles of county-owned land in Douglas County. The only part of the Project for which the NPS has decision-making responsibility is the Riverway crossing (less than one mile). However, the FEIS stated that Washburn and Douglas Counties have standing resolutions opposing the Project; and to address this, the ROD required that these controversies be resolved before construction begins on the Namekagon crossing, to avoid premature or unwarranted disturbance within the Riverway. County board approvals were granted by Washburn County on October 18, 2005, and by the Douglas County Board on September 15, 2005.

As required by the ROD (see “Timing of Construction”), construction of the Namekagon River crossing will take place during the winter to minimize impacts to resources and recreational use. The detailed schedule for construction work to take place between November 2006 and March 2007 was presented in Section 4.0 of the CMP Part B for the MS Spread. Also, in accordance with Item (4) of the draft permit Terms and Conditions, except in extraordinary situations and with the agreement of the park superintendent, or as determined at or prior to the on-site meeting (see Section 3.0, above), all Project-related

work on park lands will be limited to a construction schedule of Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

#### **4.2 BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

The six areas of concern listed in Appendix Section A.1.3 of the FEIS are being addressed for the entire length of the Project, and will also be addressed for the Riverway crossing:

- *Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Devices*
- *Protection of Water Quality in Wetlands*
- *Revegetation*
- *Final Grading, Clean Up, and Restoration*
- *ROW Maintenance*
- *Environmental Inspection*

Technical Standards (revised Wisconsin Best Management Practices) for soil erosion and sediment controls, protection of wetlands, and temporary and permanent revegetation are detailed in the *Erosion Control Plan for the Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line, Spread MS*, which will be submitted to WDNR for approval approximately one month before construction is due to begin in accordance with NR 216, WI Administrative Code. The *Plan* will include a site-specific erosion control plan for the Riverway crossing, as is noted in the Part B Graphic Index (Appendix E, Sheets 21 and 22). In addition, Section 3.1.6 of the CMP Part B for the MS Spread specifies that the approved *Erosion Control Plan* is to be followed. The *Plan* will be submitted to DNR approximately 30 days prior to construction. Once the plan is approved, it will be provided to the NPS superintendent.

Between the *Erosion Control Plan*, the *Handbook of Environmental Construction Protocols* for the Project and Section 3.6 of the CMP Part B for the MS Spread, all aspects of grading, cleanup and restoration of the ROW are thoroughly addressed. The Post-Construction Monitoring Plan in the Part B (Section 5.0) specifies inspection and management activities to be completed to assure the maintenance of healthy native plant communities following construction. Right-of-way maintenance procedures to take place during the operational life of the Project will be addressed at a later date.

Section 2.0 of the *Handbook* provides a detailed discussion of how the environmental inspection process will be handled. Construction elsewhere on the Project has been on going for the last 12 months using these protocols; consequently, the construction crews are well-trained regarding these established inspection and mitigation procedures, and they will be applied effectively within the Riverway.

### **4.3 PROTECTION MEASURES**

The FEIS Appendix A.1.4 lists and describes 13 categories of resource protection measures that the Applicants (now the Permittees) committed to implement during construction and/or operation of the project. Each section below indicates how the specific commitments within each category have been designed into the Project and/or have been incorporated into the CMP for this portion (and in most cases all portions) of the Project. Measures that pertain to post-construction or operational issues will be addressed in a separate document.

#### **4.3.1 Water Quality**

***Pipeline Corrosion/Spill Hazard:*** *This is an operational monitoring issue that will be addressed in next Project phase.*

***Structure Distance from River:*** No structures will be placed closer than 390 feet from the Namekagon River. MS084 is approximately 570 feet north and MS085 is approximately 800 feet south of the river (App. E, Sheets 21 and 22).

***SWPPP:*** Section 8.0 of the *Handbook* and the *Erosion Control Plan* discussed in Section 4.2, above, constitute the pollution prevention plans that will be implemented on the Project to minimize potential impacts to the Namekagon River and wetlands within the affected area.

***HDD Frac-out Prevention:*** A plan to minimize the potential for and the impact of a frac-out is included in the *Erosion Control Plan* discussed in Section 4.2, above.

### **4.3.2 Soils**

**BMPs:** Applicable Technical Standards will be implemented on the project in accordance with the approved *Erosion Control Plan for the Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line, Spread MS*.

**Topsoil Salvaging:** Implementation of this requirement will be detailed in the approved *Erosion Control Plan*.

### **4.3.3 Wetlands**

**Delineation and Permitting:** Field delineation of wetlands and waters within the Riverway was completed on July 17 and 18, 2006 by a Professional Wetland Scientist with Natural Resources Consulting, Inc. using methods set forth in the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual. None of the structures within the Riverway boundaries were found to be located in wetlands. The wetland boundaries were mapped using a GPS with sub-meter accuracy, and they are presented on Sheets 21 and 22 of Appendix E. Before this field delineation was conducted, however, MS084 was identified as a potential wetland structure and application was submitted to the Corps for Clean Water Act approval under Section 404. The Corps issued both a Section 404 permit for this structure and a Section 10 for the Namekagon River crossing on August 4, 2005.

**Avoidance:** Wetlands located within the Riverway that are indicated on Appendix E will be clearly flagged off prior to the first phase of construction (clearing) to prevent entry by mechanized vehicles.

**Heavy Equipment:** As noted on Sheets 21 and 22 of Appendix E, heavy equipment will not be operated within wetlands or within 200 feet of the Namekagon River. Woody vegetation will be hand cut and cleared; or if that is infeasible, then the lightest possible effective piece of equipment will be utilized.

**Clearing:** Vegetation clearing will be limited to the extent allowed by operational and safety guidelines, per Section 4.0 of the *Handbook* and as modified by Section 3.1.3 of the CMP Part B for the MS Spread.

#### **4.3.4 Vegetation**

***NPS Coordination:*** Prior to clearing, Permittees will meet with NPS personnel to review clearing plans and mark individual trees and shrubs for retention.

***Clearing and Cover:*** Clearing within 200 feet of the river will be completed by hand to limit mechanized vehicle travel in this area, to the extent practicable. Prior to the first scheduled vegetation level maintenance and in coordination with NPS, the Permittee will develop a special ROW maintenance plan for the Riverway segment of the Project. This plan would be implemented during the operational phase, with the goal being maintenance of vegetative cover (especially within 200 feet of the river) to the extent that it avoids interference with transmission reliability.

***Plantings:*** See Section 4.4 of this Riverway CMP.

***Invasive Species:*** During the site review and field survey conducted on July 17 and 18, 2006, the Permittee recorded the extent and type of invasive species observed within the Riverway. South of the Namekagon, the Project ROW itself is virtually clear of invasive species problems. However, the adjacent pipeline ROW has an abundant cover of spotted knapweed. North of the river, the portion of the ROW directly north of the Riverway boundary has had its topsoil removed and has revegetated with a near monoculture of spotted knapweed, as has the entire pipeline ROW to the west. Wetland 10c has a small patch of reed canary grass at the base of the sloping transition zone near the northern wetland boundary. This species is also abundant along the tributary to the Namekagon in W10c and is present in scattered clumps along the Namekagon River itself. Spotted knapweed reappears as a subdominant on the upland between W10d1 and the riverbank. To prevent the spread of invasive plant species to new areas, an invasive species management plan will be implemented. Small populations of invasive plants may be effectively removed by hand or avoided with an access shift. The plan will involve using matting and geotextile fabric to provide a barrier between vehicles and soil, removing soil and plant materials from vehicles and cleaning vehicles. Methods to minimize soil disturbance such as ice roads and tracked vehicles may also be used. The removal of soil and plant materials from vehicles can be accomplished by the use of brushing, scraping, compressed air, or pressure washing.

#### **4.3.5 Fisheries**

**Riparian Corridor:** As noted on Sheets 21 and 22 of Appendix E, construction activity will be strictly limited within 200 feet of the Namekagon River to protect and maintain the riparian buffer.

#### **4.3.6 Wildlife**

**Accidental Trapping:** Construction trenches or pits left open will be fenced, netted or otherwise covered in accordance with the CMP Part A Section 9.15 to prevent trapping of wildlife. Inspectors will monitor these areas and remove any trapped wildlife to a safe location, especially prior to backfill. If warranted, wildlife escape ramps may be incorporated into pit construction as practicable.

**Accidental Injury:** Shield wires will not be installed over the river crossing, where bird traffic is expected to be the highest. This design should minimize potential hazards to birds at the crossing.

#### **4.3.7 Special Status Species**

Habitat assessments for listed species have been conducted. If it is determined that suitable habitat exists, construction will proceed in accordance with standard protocols that have been developed in consultation with DNR.

#### **4.3.8 Land Use**

**Access:** Access to the Namekagon River is shown on page 21 and 22 of Appendix E. Construction access will be minimized within 200 feet of the river crossing. Construction vehicles will not cross the river, and will approach the construction site from either side of the riverway utilizing roads, existing cleared ROW, trails, and fields.

**Existing Facilities:** Permittees will consult with owners of the existing utility corridors and facilities during construction. The pipeline owner will be consulted regarding construction vehicle use of the pipeline ROW. Road crossing construction will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Canadian National Railroad will be consulted regarding railroad crossings and construction vehicle use of railroad ROW.

#### **4.3.9 Recreation and Visitor Use**

**Construction Activity:** Impacts to Riverway visitors will be minimized by scheduling construction activities during later winter and fall during a period of low recreational use. Signs will be posted to advise Riverway users of construction activity. During stringing activities a flagman or guard structures will be utilized to reduce potential hazards to visitors.

**Aesthetics:** The long span conductor alternative has been designed to minimize visual impacts to Riverway users. The number of wires has been reduced, due to the lack of shield wires and the structures have been set back a greater distance from the river to provide visual mitigation.

#### **4.3.10 Soundscapes**

**Noise:** Exhaust systems on all construction vehicles will be kept in good working order. Unless otherwise authorized by the NPS, construction will be conducted during the regular work week, Monday through Friday, and during daylight hours, 8:00am to 5:00pm. Construction related noise impacts will be minimized through these measures.

#### **4.3.11 Public Health**

**EMF and Magnetic Field:** The existing 161 kV circuit and the new 345 kV circuits will be installed on one structure. This double circuit design will result in a lower magnetic field as compared to parallel transmission line construction. The transmission line has been designed to minimize EMF to the extent practicable.

**Induced Current/Voltage:** Grounding equipment will be installed where appropriate.

**TV/Radio:** Reasonable measures will be utilized to ensure that the transmission line does not negatively effect television or radio reception.

#### **4.3.12 Social and Economic Values**

**ROW and Environmental Impact Fees:** Fees will be paid to the NPS for the transmission line crossing. Environmental Impact fees will be paid to Washburn County and Stinnet Township.

### **4.3.13 Cultural Resources**

*Cultural material and human remains:* If cultural material is found during construction, ground disturbing activities will cease within 300 feet of the discovery and the NPS cultural resource specialist will be notified. If the site is determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the state Historic preservation Officer (SHPO) will determine the appropriate avoidance, mitigation, or recovery procedure. Human remains on NPS lands would be handled according to the provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) and Wisconsin Statute 157.70. Work would continue in the vicinity of the find only if authorized by the NPS.

## **4.4 ENHANCED VEGETATION PLAN**

The Permittees have committed to the development and implementation of an “Enhanced Vegetation Planting Plan.” Appendix A.1.6 of the FEIS specifies that the objective of Plan implementation is to provide a visual screen between Namekagon River recreationists and “certain aboveground physical features associated with the [Project].” Since neither of the new transmission poles adjacent to the river will be visible from the river when the Project is completed (see FEIS, App. I Visual Simulations), the visible “aboveground features” of the Project will be limited to the cleared ROW and the overhead wires.

Although nothing can completely screen out boaters’ view of overhead transmission wires that cross the river, lush riverbank vegetation can provide the sense of an uninterrupted riparian corridor. The current ROW maintenance regime along the existing 161-kV line involves mowing the width of the ROW all the way out to the top of the riverbank. By re-establishing a vegetative screen along the top of the riverbanks, the location of the transmission corridor will be less noticeable from the river. As a result, boaters’ attention will be less likely to be drawn away from the riparian surroundings to the overhead wires, thus reducing overall visual impact.

### **4.4.1 Plan Elements**

The existing riverbank and bank-top vegetation, which has matured substantially since the views in the FEIS were prepared (see Existing Scenes in Appendix I of the FEIS), will be retained and protected during construction of the Project with the exception of

tall-growing species. Its value as a visual screen will then be enhanced by planting a variety of relatively mature and/or fast-growing indigenous species, and managing for a denser and more mature woody riparian buffer zone.

The Permittees had originally committed to implement the suggestion made during the FEIS process that the visual screening be extended across the pipeline ROW that abuts the west edge of the Project ROW by establishing a woody buffer there as well.

However, that ROW is not under the control of the Permittees. The holder of that easement will need to be consulted and will need to approve any such planting to occur. Therefore, the Plan will focus on the Project ROW only.

In addition to monitoring and remediating the success of the plantings during the first two years, a ROW maintenance plan will be developed to ensure that the established vegetation and the rest of the Riverway portion of the Project is not subject to standard mowing practices (see Sec. 4.3.4).

#### **4.4.2 Planting Plan**

A number of native tree and shrub species have been chosen for inclusion in the planting plan. The criteria for selection included one or more of the following:

- Mature height less than 15 feet
- Mature height less than 30 feet and/or slow growing
- Dense branching and/or foliage
- Value for wildlife food and/or cover
- Commonly grow in Project vicinity

A buffer strip of at least 40 feet wide will be planted along each bank of the Namekagon River. Both banks are well-drained sandy uplands that currently support gray dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*), pin cherry (*Prunus pennsylvanica*), black chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*), American hazelnut (*Corylus americana*), and speckled alder (*Alnus rugosa*). The existing cover will be supplemented with additional plantings consisting of these species plus the following:

- Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*)
- Ironwood (*Ostrya virginiana*)
- Bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
- Jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*)
- Northern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*)

The last three species can grow as high as 50 feet, but are relatively slow growing on sandy soils in this part of the state. They have been included to provide some year-round visual buffering. The bur oak tends to retain a portion of its leaves into the winter, and the jack pine and cedar are, of course, evergreen.

Three to seven individuals of each species will be planted in clustered groupings, with horizontal spacing ranging from 8 to 25 feet on center (depending on the species), in an overlapping pattern with the other species. The taller growing species, which will have to be trimmed in the future to maintain required clearance below the conductor wires, will be planted only in the outer 30 to 40 feet of the ROW to minimize the frequency of required trimming.

The size of commercially available nursery stock can vary in availability from year to year. In general, the largest available specimens will be procured for planting to hasten the development of visual buffer effectiveness.

Once the list of commercially available species is developed, a graphic representation of the planting plan will be produced for NPS review prior to installation in the spring of 2007.

A ROW maintenance plan will be addressed in a separate document that will be provided to the NPS at a later date.

#### **4.5 OTHER MEASURES**

Several other details of facility construction and operation were outlined and/or specified for implementation on the Project, beyond the broader issue areas discussed above.

These include (source specified):

- Work force and schedule (FEIS App. A.1.1) - To minimize environmental impacts and impacts to Riverway users, construction activities in the vicinity of the Namekagon crossing are planned to be conducted in late fall and winter. Pending approvals, construction will commence November 2006, with heavy construction activities completed by March 2007. Work activities will be scheduled in coordination with the NPS. The contractors hired to construct the project will be Wisconsin and Upper-Michigan based companies that have extensive experience with transmission line construction.
- Hazardous material and waste management (FEIS App. A.1.2) - Hazardous materials will be handled, transported, and stored to prevent contamination of natural resources and in a manner consistent with applicable federal, state, and local regulations. In the event of a spill, cleanup and notifications will proceed in accordance with the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan (Construction and Mitigation Plan, Part A and the Handbook of Environmental Construction Protocols). Disposal of hazardous materials will be in accordance with applicable regulations. Documentation of releases of reportable quantities will be provided to the DNR and NPS.
- Cathodic Protection Systems (FEIS App. A.1.5) - A cathodic protection study will be conducted to determine impacts to the existing pipelines in the corridor. The study will take place post-construction, once the line is energized. If it is determined that additional cathodic protection is required to minimize impacts to the pipeline, permittees will coordinate with the pipeline owner to determine the cathodic system mitigation measures to be implemented. Results of the study and will be provided to the NPS.

## 5.0 POST CONSTRUCTION MONITORING PLAN

Section 2.4.1.2 of the FEIS requires implementation of a compensatory mitigation package in which the Permittees will:

- Work cooperatively with the owners of overhead distribution lines to remove them from view from the river at up to eight locations along the upper Riverway at a cost of \$400,000;
- Provide \$211,000 to fund a scenic quality analysis for the Riverway to identify special and at risk landscapes;
- Work cooperatively with the Louisiana-Pacific Particle Board Plant in Hayward, Wisconsin to provide noise abatement measures at a cost of \$110,000 to \$125,000;
- Place \$2,750,000 in an interest- and dividend-bearing account (endowment) to be administered by the NPS to cover recurring costs for efforts to enhance the scenery and recreation on the Riverway.

In coordination with the appropriate parties, substantial progress has been made toward implementation of each of the above mitigation measures. The Permittee expects to fulfill each of these four mitigation commitments to the satisfaction of the NPS.

## **6.0 COMPLIANCE SUMMARY**

As detailed above, the ROD for the right-of-way permit request to cross the Riverway references a number of impact minimization and compensatory mitigation measures that the Applicants have committed to implement. This CMP for the Riverway crossing specifies how each commitment will be or has already been implemented.

**RECORD OF DECISION FOR THE ARROWHEAD-WESTON TRANSMISSION  
LINE RIVER CROSSING/RIGHT-OF-WAY REQUEST FINAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

**RECORD OF DECISION**

**ARROWHEAD-WESTON TRANSMISSION LINE**

**RIVER CROSSING/RIGHT-OF-WAY REQUEST**

**FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**St. Croix National Scenic Riverway**

**Wisconsin**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS), has prepared this Record of Decision (ROD) on the *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line River Crossing/Right-of-Way Request* at the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, Wisconsin. This ROD includes a statement of the decision made, synopses of other alternatives considered, the basis for the decision, a description of the environmentally preferable alternative, and an overview of public involvement in the decision-making process.

## **DECISION (SELECTED ACTION)**

The NPS has decided to issue a right-of-way (ROW) permit to allow the Arrowhead to Weston 345-kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Project to cross the Namekagon River, which is part of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (Riverway). The transmission line is proposed by Minnesota Power, Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, and American Transmission Company (the Applicants). In 2001, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) approved the overall Arrowhead-Weston Project, which runs approximately 210 miles through Wisconsin.

The NPS selected action is the preferred alternative, as described in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement* (FEIS) issued in December 2004. This decision is made no sooner than thirty (30) days after publication of the notice for a FEIS (December 17, 2004) in the *Federal Register* by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Under the selected action, the NPS will issue a 120-foot wide ROW permit to the Applicants to allow for construction and operation of Alternative 1: Long-span Option as described in the FEIS. The Long-span Option is double-circuit, alternating current, 161- and 345-kV transmission lines supported by single shaft steel structures. The 161-kV line is an existing line owned and operated by Xcel Energy. The 345-kV line will be the new line. A total of nine 70-foot-tall wooden H-frame structures associated with the existing 161-kV transmission line between US Highway 63 and Townline Road will be removed, and eight 125- to 145-foot tall single shaft steel structures will replace them. Six of the eight new structures will be within the Riverway boundary on land owned by the NPS and on private land upon which the NPS holds a scenic easement. The other two structures will be in the open field on private land outside the boundary between the north boundary of the Riverway and US Highway 63. Concrete foundations 8 to 10 feet in diameter and 30 to 40 feet deep will be installed to support the new structures. A total of six overhead conductors will cross the Namekagon River. No shield wires will cross the Namekagon River. An Optical Ground Wire (OPGW) will be installed underground at the river crossing using a combination of trenching and Horizontal Directional Drill (HDD) construction techniques. The HDD portions of the installation will be approximately 550 feet in length to a depth of 40 feet under the river. The entry and exit points will be approximately 200 feet from both the north and south banks of the river. The OPGW will also be installed 15 feet under the unnamed creek and wetland. Entry and exit points will be 50 feet north and south of the wetland boundary. For the remainder of the underground OPGW installation, the OPGW will be installed in a trench to a depth of approximately 40 inches below the ground surface. The selected action

also contains a commitment to a variety of mitigation measures described in the mitigation section of this decision document.

## **TIMING OF CONSTRUCTION**

The only part of the entire 210-mile Arrowhead-Weston Project that the NPS has decision-making responsibility for is the Riverway crossing (less than 1-mile). As stated in the FEIS, “Areas of Controversy,” Washburn and Douglas counties have standing resolutions opposing the Arrowhead-Weston Project. The route of the Arrowhead-Weston Project that the PSCW approved in their October 30, 2001, order crosses approximately 10 miles of county-owned land in Washburn County and approximately 15 miles of county-owned land in Douglas County. These county-owned lands lie mostly between the Namekagon River crossing location and the northern terminus of the Project at the Arrowhead Substation near Duluth, Minnesota.

The Applicants do not have condemnation authority over county-owned land. If the Applicants do not reach agreement with Washburn and Douglas counties to cross county-owned land the Project may need to be rerouted and the PSCW process reopened. This would likely cause a delay in Project construction with uncertain effects on the final route.

To avoid any premature disturbance of the Riverway, construction cannot begin on the Namekagon crossing until routing issues in Washburn and Douglas County have been resolved. Confirmation that the issues in Washburn and Douglas County have been resolved may be shown either by 1) Part B of the Construction and Mitigation Plan cooperatively developed between the Applicants, the site-specific landowner or manager, and all appropriate agencies for Washburn and Douglas county-owned lands, as required by the PSCW order; or 2) by PSCW approval of a reroute which results in a Namekagon River crossing in the location evaluated in this FEIS. In addition, construction of the Namekagon River crossing must take place in the winter to minimize impacts to resources and recreational use.

## **OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

Four other alternatives for crossing the Namekagon River, as well as the no action alternative, were evaluated in the draft and final environmental impact statements.

The **no-action alternative** describes a continuation of existing conditions at the Namekagon River crossing and provides a baseline for evaluating the changes and impacts of the other alternatives. Under this alternative, the existing 161-kV transmission line, 70-foot tall wooden structures that support three conductors and two shield wires would remain in place in a 100-foot-wide right-of-way used for operation and maintenance. No ROW permit would be issued and no new construction would be authorized. The Applicants would have the option to pursue one of the other systems level alternatives evaluated by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) or the Arrowhead-Ashland-Weston system alternative dismissed from further consideration early in the PSCW process.

**Alternative 1: Short-span Conductor Option** was the Applicants' original proposal. It would include construction of double-circuit, alternating current, 161-kV and 345-kV transmission lines supported by 130- to 150-foot tall single shaft steel structures in a 120-foot wide ROW. The 70-foot tall wooden H-frame structures associated with the existing 161-kV transmission line would be removed and eight single shaft steel structures would replace them. A total of nine overhead conductors and two shield wires would cross the affected area. One of the two shield wires would be an OPGW.

**Alternative 2** would include the construction of a 345-kV single-circuit, overhead transmission line supported by single shaft steel structures, and a 161-kV underground transmission line at the river crossing. A total of six overhead conductors and two shield wires for the 345-kV transmission line would cross the affected area. Two transition stations, one located on the north side approximately 1,250 feet back from the river and one located on the south side approximately 800 feet back from the river would be constructed. The total ROW width would be 120 feet at the river crossing. Up to 135 feet of ROW would be required for the transition stations.

**Alternative 3** would include construction at the river crossing of a 161-kV single-circuit, overhead transmission line supported by single shaft steel structures, and a 345-kV underground transmission line encased in pressurized dielectric insulating fluid. A total of three overhead conductors and two shield wires for the 161-kV transmission line would cross the affected area. Two transition stations, one located on the north side approximately 1,250 feet back from the river and one located on the south side approximately 800 feet back from the river would be constructed. The total ROW width would be 120 feet at the river crossing. Up to 130 feet of ROW would be required for the transition stations.

**Alternative 4** would include the construction of a 161-kV and 345-kV underground transmission lines at the river crossing. The 345-kV line would be encased in pressurized dielectric insulating fluid. Two transition stations, one located on the north side approximately 1,250 feet back from the river and one located on the south side approximately 800 feet back from the river would be constructed. The total ROW width would be 120 feet at the river crossing. Up to 145 feet of ROW would be required for the transition stations.

## **BASIS FOR DECISION**

In reaching its decision to select the preferred alternative, the NPS considered the purposes for which the Riverway was established, and other laws and policies that apply to the management of the Riverway, including the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, National Environmental Policy Act, 2001 *NPS Management Policies*, and the General Management Plan (GMP) for the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, Upper St. Croix River and Namekagon River. The NPS also considered public comments received during the environmental impact statement process.

The NPS considered whether the various alternatives were consistent with the following purposes of the Riverway:

Preserve the St. Croix and Namekagon rivers in a natural condition and as relatively free-flowing rivers;  
Protect and enhance the exceptional natural, scenic and cultural resources of the Riverway for current and future generations; and  
Provide high-quality recreational opportunities that do not detract from the exceptional natural, scenic, cultural, and aesthetic resources and values of the Riverway.

The NPS believes that the preferred alternative allows for a transmission line crossing of the Namekagon River along the overall route selected by the PSCW while minimizing and compensating for impacts to the Riverway. The river crossing will have no impact on the free-flowing characteristics of the Namekagon River. The 345-kV line will share a crossing corridor with an existing 161-kV line, and require an additional 20 feet of ROW. An additional river crossing, a crude oil pipeline corridor, is located immediately to the west (downstream). This is consistent with the GMP which calls for new crossings to be consolidated in existing crossings. Alternative 1: Long-span Conductor Option will allow supporting structures to be set back from line-of-sight of the river. Mature trees will be planted along the river bank in both the transmission line ROW and the adjacent crude oil pipeline ROW. The preferred alternative will require less ground, vegetation, and ongoing maintenance disturbance than the underground alternatives. The compensatory mitigation package will eliminate up to eight distribution line crossings, at a cost of up to \$400,000 along the Riverway, provide noise abatement measures on a nearby stretch of the Riverway, and provide funds for studies and activities to enhance scenery and recreation along the Riverway. Alternative 1: Long-span Conductor Option provides the best combination of limiting impacts in the crossing area and providing enhancements throughout the Riverway.

The no-action alternative would not allow for a crossing of the Namekagon River along the PSCW-approved route for the Arrowhead-Weston Project. Additional impacts would not arise from a new 345-kV crossing and enhancements would not be provided through mitigation.

Alternative 1: Short-span Conductor Option would allow for a crossing of the Namekagon but would add 6 additional overhead conductors at the river crossing for a total of 9 conductors and 2 shield wires. The supporting structures would be visible from the river.

Alternative 2 would place the 161-kV line under the river, but 6 conductors and 2 shield wires would cross the river and the supporting structures would be visible from the river. The transition stations would require ground and vegetation disturbance, and ongoing disruption from maintenance activities.

Alternative 3 would place the 345-kV line under the river, encased in a pressurized dielectric insulating fluid. Supporting structures would be visible from the river. The transition stations would require more ground and vegetation disturbance, and ongoing disruption from maintenance activities.

Alternative 4 would place both the 161-kV and 345-kV lines under the river. The 345-kV line would be encased in a pressurized dielectric insulating fluid. No conductors or shield wires would cross the river and no supporting structures would be visible from the river. The transition

stations would require ground and vegetation disturbance, and ongoing disruption from maintenance activities. Although slight, there would also be some risk of release of the dielectric insulating fluid.

## **ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Regulations of the President's Council on Environmental Quality, as well as NPS Director's Order 12 and its handbook (*Conservation Planning, Environmental Impact Analysis, and Decision Making* January 2001) require the NPS to identify the environmentally preferred alternative in its records of decision. The environmentally preferred alternative is defined as the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in §101 of the National Environmental Policy Act. Section 101 states that it is the continuing responsibility of the Federal Government to:

- 1) fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
- 2) assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
- 3) attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences;
- 4) preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
- 5) achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and
- 6) enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

All of the alternatives would meet the first goal of NEPA. The second goal of NEPA is best met by the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1: Long-span Option and Alternative 4. All alternatives address the third goal of NEPA, but none do so without at least some degree of degradation to the crossing area. All alternatives also address the fourth goal of NEPA, with Alternative 1: Long-span Conductor and Alternative 4 addressing it most fully. All alternatives meet the fifth goal of NEPA. The sixth goal of NEPA is not applicable as the proposed action does not involve the use of renewable or recyclable resources.

Any one of the action alternatives might be considered environmentally-preferred if their compensatory mitigation package were considered in arriving at the decision. However, the NPS does not believe it is justified to consider the compensatory mitigation packages in arriving at a decision on the environmentally-preferred alternative. These packages would not be necessary if it were not for the impacts at the river crossing. Furthermore, the greater the impacts at the crossing, the larger the compensatory mitigation package to adequately offset impacts. Based on information contained in the FEIS, the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1: Long-span Option, and Alternative 4 best meet the goals of NEPA by minimizing impacts or maintaining the status quo. Any one of the three could arguably be selected as environmentally-preferred. To further narrow the field, the NPS considered a statement from NPS NEPA guidance that states, "Simply

put, this (environmentally preferred) means the alternative that causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment.” By maintaining the status quo, the No Action Alternative causes the least damage to the biological and physical environment. While an argument could be made that the No Action Alternative could result in greater impacts because a different route with greater environmental impact than Arrowhead-Weston could be selected, it is also speculative. Therefore, the NPS limited consideration of the environmentally-preferred alternative to the effect on the small piece of the project that is subject to NPS decision-making. The NPS has selected the No Action Alternative as environmentally-preferred.

## **FINDINGS ON IMPAIRMENT OF PARK RESOURCES AND VALUES**

The NPS may not allow the impairment of park resources and values unless directly and specifically provided for by legislation or proclamation establishing the park. Impairment is defined as an impact that, in the professional judgment of the responsible NPS manager, would harm the integrity of park resources or values, including the opportunities that otherwise would be present for the enjoyment of those resources or values. In determining whether an impairment would occur, park managers examine the duration, severity and magnitude of the impact; the resources and values affected; and direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the action. According to NPS policy, an impact would be more likely to constitute an impairment to the extent that it affects a resource or value whose conservation is:

necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation or proclamation of the park,  
key to the natural or cultural integrity of the park or to opportunities for enjoyment of the park, or  
identified as a goal in the park’s general management plan or other relevant NPS planning documents (*NPS Management Policies 2001*, §1.4.5).

This policy does not prohibit all impacts to park resources and values, so long as the impacts do not constitute an impairment.

After analyzing the environmental impacts described in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line River Crossing/Right-of-Way Request* and the public comments received, the NPS has determined that implementation of the preferred alternative will not constitute an impairment to the resources and values of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. The magnitude of adverse impacts associated with the selected alternative does not warrant a finding of impairment to overall Riverway resources and values.

## **MEASURES TO MINIMIZE ENVIRONMENTAL HARM**

Construction will take place during the winter and will take 2-3 months to complete. To minimize the impacts of construction, the Best Management Practices and Applicant-committed Protection Measures as described in Appendix A of the FEIS will be implemented. Examples of these measures include:

Best Management Practices for soil erosion, sediment control, and revegetation;  
Monitoring of construction activities by independent environmental managers and inspectors responsible for ensuring that the requirements and specifications of all environmental permits are met; and  
No heavy equipment will be used within wetland habitats or within 200 feet of the Namekagon River. Trees and shrubs will be removed by hand.

The Applicants will also implement the Enhanced Vegetation Planting Plan as described in Appendix A of the FEIS. Mature trees and shrubs will be planted along the north and south banks of the Namekagon River in both the transmission line and adjacent pipeline rights-of-way.

In addition, a compensatory mitigation package will be implemented as described in the FEIS. The Applicants will:

- work cooperatively with the owners of overhead distribution lines to remove them from view from the river at up to eight locations along the upper Riverway at a cost of \$400,000;
- provide \$211,000 to fund a scenic quality analysis for the Riverway to identify special and at risk landscapes;
- work cooperatively with the Louisiana-Pacific Particle Board Plant in Hayward, Wisconsin to provide noise abatement measures at a cost of \$110,000 to \$125,000;
- place \$2,750,000 in an interest- and dividend-bearing account (endowment) to be administered by the NPS to cover recurring costs for efforts to enhance the scenery and recreation on the Riverway.

Ongoing ROW management will include regular inspections. Shrubs will be allowed to reestablish themselves within the entire ROW between structures 8 and 10 (the two closest to the river on the north side and the one closest to the river on the south side). Tall growing trees (with a mature height exceeding 18 feet) within this area will be controlled by selective hand-cutting with chainsaws and brushsaws. The growth of trees and shrubs within the remainder of the ROW will be controlled by mechanical means.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The NPS provided a number of opportunities for the public to participate in the environmental impact statement process for the ROW request. The notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement for the ROW request appeared in the September 23, 2002, *Federal Register*. The NPS accepted scoping comments throughout the EIS process, but initial scoping comments were requested to be received between October 9, 2002, and November 20, 2002. The NPS used letters to interested parties, press releases, the Internet, and meetings to solicit public comments on the EIS. During the course of the EIS, letters were sent to the agencies, organizations, and individuals on the Riverway's mailing list for the ROW Request, which consisted of about 100 names. Documents were available in hardcopy and CD-ROM. Comments were taken at public meetings, by U.S. Mail, by fax, and in person. An e-mail link was created for electronic comments.

Two meetings were held with members of the public and organizations during the course of the EIS process. A public meeting was held during the scoping period on November 6, 2002, in Hayward, Wisconsin. Approximately 40 people attended. A second public meeting was held to provide information and take comment on the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement* on April 20, 2004, in Hayward, Wisconsin. Approximately 35 people attended. An opportunity for oral input was provided. Fifteen people spoke and their comments were tape recorded. A transcript of the oral comments is included in the FEIS.

The *Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Arrowhead-Weston Transmission Line River Crossing/Right-of-Way Request* was distributed to the public on March 25, 2004, for a 60-day comment period beginning on April 2 and ending on May 31, 2004. Approximately 165 copies of the draft document (including CD's) were distributed to government agencies, public interest groups, businesses, media, libraries, and individuals. Written comments on the draft document were accepted through June 4, 2004. A total of 75 individual letters and 251 pre-formatted postcards providing comment on the Draft EIS were received during the comment period.

The notice of availability for the FEIS was published in the December 17, 2004, *Federal Register*. The 30-day "no action" period ended on January 17, 2005.

## **AGENCY CONSULTATIONS**

The NPS made numerous efforts to seek input from affiliated American Indian tribes, including meetings, telephone calls, and written correspondence, as documented in Appendix G of the FEIS. The Lac Courte Oreilles Band of the Lake Superior Ojibwa (LCO) made it clear that they are officially and unequivocally opposed to the construction of the Arrowhead-Weston Project. Of greatest concern to the LCO are the effects of the transmission line on "the land, water, and health of the people and a loss of their traditional subsistence lifeways." This opposition is recognized in the FEIS in "Areas of Controversy." The NPS planned to conduct informant interviews with LCO tribal members to assist in identifying possible traditional cultural properties in the affected river crossing area. However, the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer indicated that there has been a break in use and memory of the river crossing area due to the LCO's perceived loss of tribal rights. Therefore, he knew of no one that could provide information about potential traditional cultural properties in the area. The NPS also consulted with the St. Croix Chippewa Indians. Their Tribal Historic Preservation Officer indicated that they had no knowledge of any sites in the crossing area. The St. Croix Band expressed interest in the outcome of consultation with the LCO, general concern about the transmission line, and requested to be kept informed. The Draft EIS and Final EIS were sent to the LCO, St. Croix Chippewa, and the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Commission. However, neither the tribes nor the Commission provided comments on the documents.

The Wisconsin Historical Society was contacted by letter, e-mail, and telephone about the river crossing several times during the EIS process as documented in the FEIS. An archeological survey of NPS land in and near the river crossing corridor was conducted in 2002. No artifacts or cultural remains were found on either side of the river. If subsurface cultural material is

discovered during construction, activities will be halted within 300 feet of the discovery and the NPS cultural resource specialist will be notified. A review of the area and a literature search revealed no historic resources within the Area of Potential Effect. As previously stated, consultation with Tribal Governments did not identify any cultural properties. Therefore, the NPS found that no historic properties will be affected by the river crossing. The State Historic Preservation Office concurred with this finding on January 5, 2005.

In accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the NPS consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding species known or potentially occurring along the Riverway. Section 7 consultation was initiated in August 2002 with a request for a species list. The NPS again consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in April 2004, sending the DEIS for review. The FEIS was sent to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in December 2004. By memorandum of January 7, 2005, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with the NPS finding of not likely to adversely affect any federally-listed species or its critical habitat.

## CONCLUSION

The NPS has selected the preferred alternative which is Alternative 1: Long-span Option as the method for crossing the Riverway with the Arrowhead-Weston Project. Among the alternatives considered, this alternative provides the best combination of limiting impacts in the crossing area and providing scenic and recreational enhancements throughout the Riverway.

The preferred alternative will not result in the impairment of resources and values. The official responsible for this decision is the Regional Director, Midwest Region.

## AVAILABILITY

This Record of Decision will be made available to those on the project mailing list, in the *Federal Register*, and on the Riverway website.

Recommended: Tom Bradley Date: 2/16/05  
Tom Bradley, Superintendent  
Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway, National Park Service

Approved: Ernest Quintana Date: 2-22-05  
Ernest Quintana, Regional Director  
Midwest Region, National Park Service