

7.1 Two Road Types Recommended for Detailed Study

The Special Purpose Park Road was eliminated from further study due to the problems associated with a very long road (roughly 30 miles) that provides travel in only one direction. A road would provide new vehicular access for emergency service vehicles attending to both visitor and vehicular incidents; however, the one-way road would not be able to provide a quick return route. The return route would include NC 28 and US 19/US 74 which, as compared with a two-way road, would delay the return of emergency services. Also, motorists are not expected to utilize a long one-way road due to the inconvenience of this return route. The use of a pair of one-way, one-lane roads could reduce travel time and improve the usefulness of the road; however, the area of impact would be greater than that of the two-lane road types recommended for further study in the DEIS.

The Administrative Access Road was also eliminated from further study. Since the Administrative Access Road would not be opened to the public on a regular basis, the benefits for local communities and GSMNP visitors are not expected to justify the anticipated cost and environmental impacts associated with construction of the roadway. In addition, the roadway's designated use is inconsistent with the intent of the 1943 Agreement.

The remaining two road types, Principal Park Road and Primitive Park Road, are recommended for further study in the DEIS for the partial-build and build corridors (refer to Figures 2 through 5).

7.2 Elimination of the Cable Cove Bridge Corridor

The Cable Cove Bridge Corridor was proposed to cross Fontana Lake via a major bridge crossing to tie into Cable Cove Road within the Nantahala National Forest lands. Upon review, the USFS has determined and stated in a June 29, 2004, letter that the Cable Cove Bridge Corridor is not consistent with their current standards and guidelines as defined in the Nantahala/Pisgah Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The USFS manages many of these areas for wildlife habitat and quality scenery, with limited disturbance from motorized vehicles. Many of these areas are also classified as Retention Visual Quality Objective because of visibility from Fontana Lake, which does not allow visual evident or differentiate impacts to the surrounding characteristic landscape. In addition, the USFS' Transportation System Management guidelines require limited areas for motorized vehicles, which the area affected by the proposed alternative already exceeds.