

7.4 Addition of the Forney Creek Crossing Option

Based on the public's concern regarding the aesthetic impact and cost associated with major bridge crossings, two options for crossing Forney Creek are under consideration for the Partial-Build Alternative to Bushnell and the Northern Shore Corridor Alternative (refer to Figure 9). In addition to the original crossing proposed at the Forney Creek embayment, an option has been added to avoid the major bridge crossing by following a northern route to cross Forney Creek upstream of the impounded waters. This northern route will be considered the baseline for the Partial-Build Alternative to Bushnell and the Northern Shore Corridor in the detailed analysis. The option around the Forney Creek embayment is roughly two miles longer than the option that crosses the Forney Creek embayment.

8. Detailed Study Alternatives

The detailed study alternatives are described below. The partial-build and build alternatives are shown in Figure 9. The lengths of the partial-build and build alternatives may change as the project progresses and the alignments are further refined. Updated lengths will be provided in the DEIS.

All detailed study alternatives would include continued cemetery access into GSMNP. Annual ferry service, as it is currently provided by the NPS, would continue if an alternative does not include provisions for a new road, does not intersect an administrative road, or an alternative only reaches a portion of the cemeteries.

Several enhancement features are recommended for all detailed study alternatives, including the No-Action, Monetary Settlement, Laurel Branch Picnic Area, Partial-Build Alternative to Bushnell, and Northern Shore Corridor. These include coordinating with the TVA to rehabilitate and enhance interpretive exhibits currently housed at the Fontana Dam visitor information center to include local history; adding informational exhibits at the GSMNP boundary, in the vicinity of Bryson City, to orient the public; and providing scheduled, ranger-led programs.

8.1 No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative, as required by NEPA, is recommended for detailed study. This alternative remains the same as described in Sections 3.1 and 4.3.1.