



Without the bridge, students walk for miles to catch the bus.

A careful engineering investigation explored the most cost-effective means of replacing the bridge in conformance with current design, safety, and accessibility standards. The estimate to complete the work is \$560,000. Under the leadership of San Juan County, private donors, and the Navajo Tribe, a fundraising effort has been launched and partners in the effort have been recruited. Monies are being sought at the local, state, and federal levels as well as through individual, corporate, and philanthropic donations. As of April, 2008 we have raised approximately \$320,000 in cash and in-kind donations..

We hope that you will join this effort and help build an important lost connection, create a wonderful amenity on the river, and leave a lasting legacy for many more generations.

Partners in this effort include:



San Juan County Commission



The Navajo Nation

Bluff & San Juan County Volunteers

Brown & Caldwell Engineers

The Greenway Team, Inc.

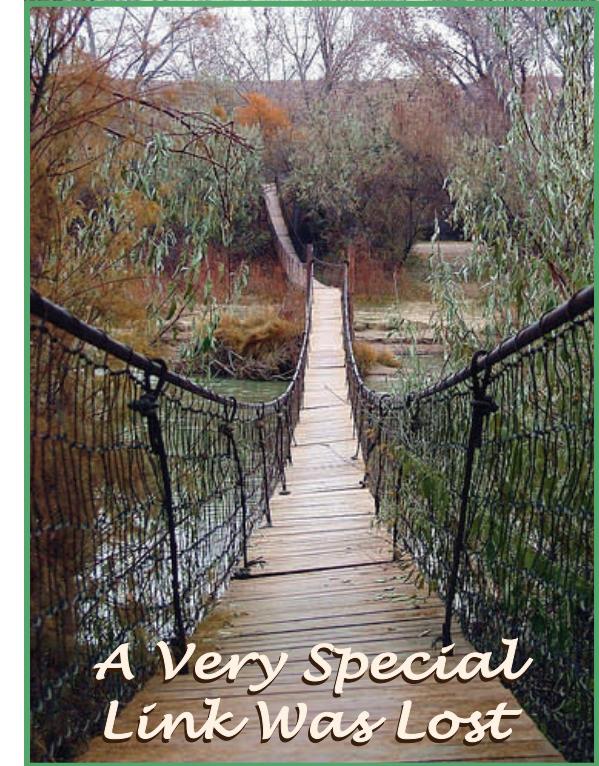
Twin Rocks Trading Company



Economic Development & Visitor Services

Seeking to re-establish a bridge between the Navajo and Anglo cultures of southeastern Utah.

San Juan County Economic Development
P.O. Box 490
Monticello, UT 84535



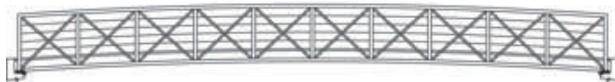
A Very Special Link Was Lost

You can help us reconnect!

A half century ago a group of community-spirited engineers and business leaders constructed a cable suspension bridge across the San Juan River linking two nations and two communities ~ the Navajo Nation and the community of Bluff, Utah.

For more than three generations, the bridge served as a way for Navajo children to get to school. In the early days the kids attended St. Christopher's Mission School and more recently the bridge provided easy access to the public elementary school in Bluff. The link also provided a way for Navajo families to access other amenities in town and Navajo workers to get to work on the north side of the river. Sure, there was always a dirt road to accomplish the same things.

However, since the bridge fell, children now have a two hour ride to and from school and emergency medical services, which took minutes when using the bridge, can now take hours to reach those in need.



Artist's conception of reconstructed bridge.

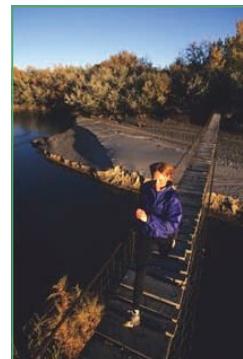


The Swinging Bridge was originally constructed to allow Navajo workers to reach job sites. Soon after its construction it became evident that others would use the bridge as well. It even became a sought after experience for visitors as they crossed the San Juan River to reach Fourteen Room Ruin on the Navajo side.

For five decades the bridge endured, in part with the help of volunteers. In 2006 the Boy Scouts replaced bridge decking. Sadly, within the year, a flood totally destroyed the bridge and severed a vital link. From the Navajo side it is a twenty to twenty-five mile drive going west and a forty-five mile drive going east. Quick and easy access to and from Bluff for nearby Navajo residents is no longer an option. Navajo residents cannot easily reach medical facilities, senior centers, restaurants, gasoline, and other necessities. Likewise, visitor access to an interesting archaeological site is curtailed.

Twenty-five students used the bridge to cross the river and avoid the one and one-half hour one-way bus ride to and from school. Emergency Medical Technicians also used the bridge to quickly access Bluff for emergency response. Technicians now must drive the long way around or stay in Bluff away from their homes and families when on call. And, of course, inclement weather makes the trip even more difficult.

The folks in San Juan County, both Anglo and Navajo residents, are now diligently working to replace the bridge, re-establish a vital physical link and symbolic connection between the peoples of this remote area, and provide an alternative crossing for people living on the



south side of the river. Replacement costs have skyrocketed since original construction in 1957 and new standards have been developed, both of which have increased construction costs many fold.

Our goal is to build a new pedestrian bridge which will, by the end of 2008, restore the lost special cultural and economic link between cultures. The bridge will be designed to provide safe crossing of the 350 foot wide river. It will be placed above the 100 year floodplain and securely anchored to alleviate the risk of again being washed out by high water. The bridge will meet ADA standards, allowing everyone access.

Plans include creation of an informative interpretive panel at the bridge presenting the history, culture, and values of the Navajo people as well as the history of the bridge itself. Information about the nearby archaeological site and the ancient people who inhabited this river valley will be provided. Partners in this cross-cultural effort will be recognized.

The proposed new pedestrian crossing will be a key component of the *San Juan River Trail* now being developed, along with the associated *Bluff Community Preserve*. The pedestrian bridge and the interpretive site will be a significant destination along the eastern portion of the trail system. When completed, the system will access dramatic and colorful sandstone formations, the San Juan River, intriguing side canyons, an ancestral Puebloan site, and desert plants and animals.



The bridge after the flood in 2006.

The Bridge at Bluff is situated in the Four Corners region of the western United States. It is found in San Juan County, in the southeastern corner of the state of Utah, at the community of Bluff.



If you would like to receive more information about this innovative and important project or if you would like to make a donation to bridging cultural differences in the real world, please contact:

San Juan County Economic Development
P.O. Box 490
Monticello, UT 84535
435-587-3235, Ext: 5006

Please indicate with your contribution that it is for the Bluff Bridge Reconstruction.

