

IDAHO

The mice are still traveling west across the continent. They have arrived in the beautiful state of Idaho, but now they have a real problem. The Snake River has eroded a deep channel called Hells Canyon. At 8,000 feet, it is the deepest river gorge in North America and it is blocking their way to the Pacific Ocean. Using only local materials, can you help them get to the other side of the river?

Set-Up: Place two tables 12 inches apart. These will be the two “banks” of the Snake River.

Challenge: Construct a bridge to get the mice across Hells Canyon.

Time: Part One: You will have 5 minutes to design and build a bridge that spans the distance between the two tables (the “banks” of the Snake River).
Part Two: You will have one minute to show your bridge to the appraisers.

Materials: a 5-pound bag of smallish potatoes
a box of toothpicks

Scoring: 50 points if your bridge extends across the gap (“Hells Canyon”)
up to 25 points for technical innovation of the bridge design
up to 25 points for positive team work