

LITTLE MISSOURI *River Crossing*

NEWSLETTER

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What is the project?

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been initiated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) and Billings County for a proposed river crossing (bridge) of the Little Missouri River in conjunction with upgrading existing roadways and/or creating new roadways to connect east river and west river, from ND Highway 16 to US Highway 85, within the study area. The Elkhorn Ranch Unit of Theodore National Park has been excluded from the project study area.

What is the purpose of the proposed project?

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and commerce through promotion of a reliable transportation system within Billings County. Specifically, the purpose of the proposed project is to:

- Provide the public with a centrally accessible, safe, efficient, and reliable link between ND Highway 16 and US Highway 85 within the study area (system linkage); while connecting the transportation network on the east side of the Little Missouri River to the transportation network on the west side of the Little Missouri River (internal linkage).
- Upgrade existing roadways and/or create new roadways and construct a river crossing over the Little Missouri River to best meet roadway and structure design standards.

Why is the proposed project needed?

- The need for the proposed project is driven by inadequate system linkage within Billings County, specifically the lack of reliable river crossings, and increased traffic demands from the oil and gas industry. Historically, Billings County has seen a need for a new crossing of the Little Missouri River as early as the 1970s. The County documented concerns that roadways in the area were unreliable in inclement weather, which made them virtually impassable, while the ability to cross the river has had to be negotiated with landowners of private fords. The County also identified the need for a river crossing to meet socioeconomic demands within the area, such as industry development.

Project Updates

What is new since the last newsletter?

- The last newsletter was sent July 2008 announcing the Alternatives Public Workshops. At the workshops, four alternatives, including the no-build alternative were presented. Since this time, other alternatives have been added within the study area to be carried forward for further analysis in the EIS. The project also endured a period of inactivity; and currently is moving forward.

What alternatives have been selected to be carried forward?

- Six alternatives and three options, including a no-build alternative, have been selected to be carried forward in the EIS. These alternatives will be discussed in greater detail at the Alternatives Public Workshop.

When and where will the next public meetings be?

Alternatives Public Workshops have been scheduled to be held in both Bismarck and Medora. The dates, times and locations of these workshops are:

BISMARCK, ND:

Tuesday, June 5, 2012
Open House: 5:00-7:00 pm
Formal Presentation: 5:30 pm
Kelly Inn
1800 North 12th Street

MEDORA, ND:

Thursday, June 7, 2012
Open House: 5:00-7:00 pm
Formal Presentation: 5:30 pm
ND Cowboy Hall of Fame
250 Main Street

What is the purpose of the Alternatives Public Workshops?

The focus of the workshops will be on the proposed alternatives for the project. The purpose and need and methodology for selecting alternatives will also be discussed. However, the focus of the workshops will be the proposed alternatives.

What are the next steps in the project process?

Fieldwork will be completed this summer and a full analysis of potential environmental and social impacts will be conducted on the proposed alternatives. These impacts, purpose and need and a detailed description of the alternatives will be disclosed in the EIS.

Comments/Concerns

Where can I find additional information?

Additional information can be found on the project website, located at www.billingscountynd.gov.

Who can I direct my concerns to?

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