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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

and

STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL/SECTION 4(f) STATEMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
FOR

PROJECT R.S. 68(6) - BRIDGE SITE STUDY
NORTHWEST OF WINIFRED



This highway improvement is proposed for funding under Title 23, United States Code. This statement for the improvement was developed in consultation with the Federal Highway Administration and is submitted pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C).

H. J. ANDERSON, DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS

1-12-73
DATE

BY Jack R. Borchert
ADMINISTRATOR, ENGINEERING DIVISION

APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY:

1-15-73
DATE

H. Stewart
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION ENGINEER

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this statement is to assure that the human environment is carefully considered and environmental goals are met when developing highway improvements.



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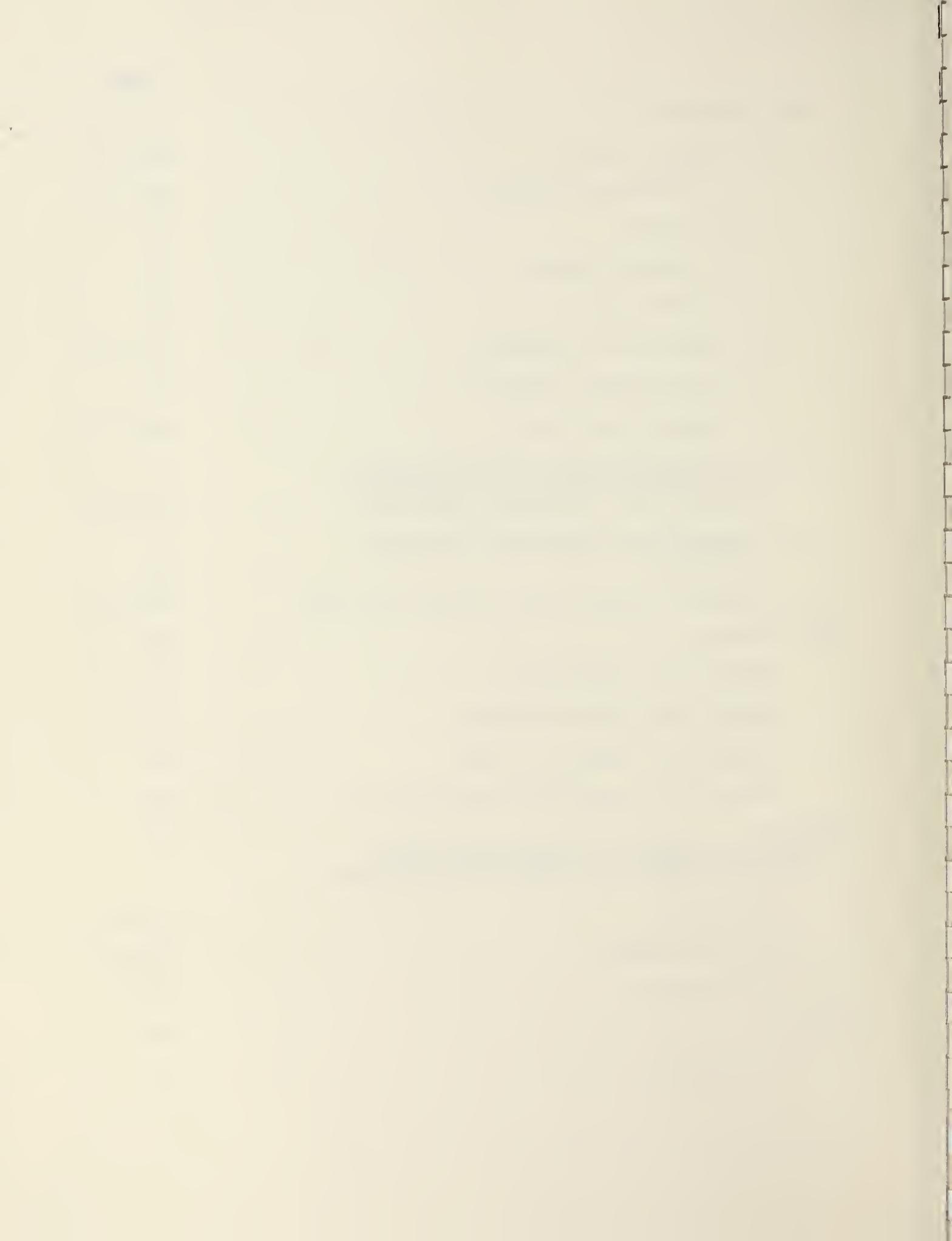
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SUMMARY SHEET

I. TYPE OF ACTION

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Draft | <input type="checkbox"/> Final |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Statement | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Combination Environmental/Section 4(f) Statement | |

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project deals with the study of a proposed bridge site northwest of Winifred. The bridge would cross the Missouri River at the Lohse-P.N. Ferry crossing and would eliminate this ferry and the Jensen Ferry some 12 miles downstream. The bridge would be located on Montana Secondary Route 236 directly between Chouteau and Fergus Counties at the county line. Also included in the study is a spur road connecting FAS 236 and the Blaine County road system. This spur would be located on the north side of the river and run somewhat parallel to the river.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The project would provide a fast, safe, and efficient transportation system for the traveling public. Due to local traffic, tourist traffic, and ranchers from the highline area going to Lewistown for weekly cattle auctions, the present road and ferry receive a moderate amount of traffic. The construction of a bridge at the proposed site would facilitate those who travel this route and would probably increase travel along this road. There could be an adverse visual impact of the structure and approaches as viewed by those floating the river. However, the structure, approaches, and the connecting spur would be developed in a manner which should make them aesthetically pleasing to the area and to those who visit or live in the area.

A recent memorandum of understanding (December 12, 1972) between the Federal Highway Administration and the U. S. Coast Guard requires early

coordination between the Department of Highways and the U. S. Coast Guard on comment concerning navigational and other impacts of a bridge crossing navigable waters. Since this memorandum is very recent, the coordination necessary between the Department of Highways and the U. S. Coast Guard will be accomplished during the environmental impact statement review process.

IV. ALTERNATES

Considering that if the bridge was not built, then the only other alternates are:

1. It may be possible to develop one (1) larger ferry system to replace the two (2) existing ferries. However, a study done by the Corps of Engineers in 1970, in the area of the Lohse-P.N. Ferry, indicated that due to bank erosion the use of the present ferry was at its physical limits and that an improved ferry system would only be a temporary solution. Also, the present or improved ferry would have to be removed from the river during winter due to ice conditions.
2. The "do-nothing" alternate would appeal to a number of people who do not wish to see any changes made in this area but does not appeal to those desiring to cross the river.

If the structure is to be built, then the alternates become a matter of bridge location and location of the spur.

V. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS FROM WHICH COMMENTS WERE REQUESTED

Governor's Office
Capitol Building
Helena, Montana 59601

Director, Department of Natural Resources
and Conservation
Sam W. Mitchell Building
Helena, Montana 59601
Attention: Lawrence M. Jakub

Fletcher E. Newby,
Executive Director
Environmental Quality Council
Capitol Station
Helena, Montana 59601 (2 copies)

Corps of Engineers
Missouri River Division
Division Engineer
U. S. Army Engineer Division
Missouri River
P.O. Box 10 (Downtown Station)
Omaha, Nebraska 68101

Department of Health, Education and
Welfare
9017 Federal Office Building
19th and Stout Street
Denver, Colorado 80202

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation
Mid-continent Region
Denver Federal Center
Building 41
Denver, Colorado 80225

Director,
Montana Department of Fish and Game
Sam W. Mitchell Building
Helena, Montana 59601

Agricultural Stabilization and
Research Services
112 West 13th Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601

Director,
State Department of Health
Helena, Montana 59601

Department of Planning and
Economic Development
Capitol Post Office
Helena, Montana 59601

Dr. T. C. Byerly
Office of Secretary of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 98109

Board of County Commissioners
Chouteau County Courthouse
Fort Benton, Montana 59442

Board of County Commissioners
Blaine County Courthouse
Chinook, Montana 59523

Board of County Commissioners
Fergus County Courthouse
Lewistown, Montana 59457

Board of County Commissioners
Hill County Courthouse
Havre, Montana 59501

Mayor
City of Fort Benton
Fort Benton, Montana 59442

Mayor
City of Big Sandy
Big Sandy, Montana 59520

Mayor
City of Havre
Havre, Montana 59501

Mayor
City of Chinook
Chinook, Montana 59523

Mayor
City of Lewistown
Lewistown, Montana 59457

Mayor
City of Winifred
Winifred, Montana 59489

Mr. Ole Ueland, Executive Secretary
State Soil Conservation Committee
Capitol Station
Helena, Montana 59601

Assistant Secretary - Program Policy
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240
Attention: Director, Environmental
Project Review (12 copies)

Environmental Protection Agency
Room 916, Lincoln Tower
1860 Lincoln Street
Denver, Colorado 80203 (5 copies)

Center for Planning and Development
Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana 59715

Economic Development Administration
Chicago Title Building
909 17th Street, Suite 505
Denver, Colorado 80202

U. S. Coast Guard Commander (dpa)
Thirteenth Coast Guard District
618 Second Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98104

The Wilderness Society
4260 East Evans Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80222

Sierra Club
Upper Missouri Group
1400 North Benton
Helena, Montana 59601

Montana League of Conservation Voters
Box 80
Missoula, Montana 59801
Attention: William Tomlinson

U. M. Student Environmental Research Center
University of Montana
Room 212, Venture Center
Missoula, Montana 59801

Montana Wildlife Federation
410 Woodworth Avenue
Missoula, Montana 59801
Attention: Donald Aldrich

Lewistown Area Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 878
Lewistown, Montana 59457
Attention: Lee S. Belding

U. S. Department of Agriculture
Soil Conservation Service
P.O. Box 970
Bozeman, Montana 59715

Big Sandy Conservation District
Big Sandy, Montana 59520
Attention: Marvin Works, Chairman

Fergus County Conservation District
703 Hill Crest Drive
Lewistown, Montana 59457
Attention: Bradley Parrish, Chairman

Blaine County Conservation District
Red Rock Route
Chinook, Montana 59523
Attention: Roy Nash, Chairman

A. G. Erskine
1024 Locust Street
Missoula, Montana 59801

Postmaster
Winifred, Montana 59489

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Big Sandy, Montana 59520

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School Board
Winifred, Montana 59489

School Board
Big Sandy, Montana 59520

Documents Librarian
Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana 59715

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation
Northwest Region
1000 Second Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98104

VI. DATE DRAFT STATEMENT AVAILABLE TO CEO

January 26, 1973



LOHSE-P.N. FERRY

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED BRIDGE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

A. DESCRIPTION

The project is located in Fergus, Chouteau, and Blaine Counties. The bridge (see Exhibits A and B) would span the Missouri River between Fergus and Chouteau Counties just west of the present location of the Lohse-P.N. Ferry. This location is on FAS Route 236 between Big Sandy to the northwest and Winifred to the southeast.

Another route crosses the Missouri River by ferry (Jensen Ferry) about 12 miles downstream from the Lohse-P.N. Ferry. If the bridge were built at the Lohse-P.N. Ferry site, the services of the Jensen Ferry could be discontinued if a spur could be constructed to connect the Jensen Ferry route with FAS 236.

The spur that would connect the two roads would leave the Jensen Ferry route in Blaine County about four miles north of the ferry at a point called Ragland Bench. It would run somewhat parallel to the Missouri River in a westerly direction until it joined FAS Route 236 in Chouteau County.

The present average daily traffic on the existing road is approximately 35 vehicles and the design year (1998) count is expected to be approximately 120 vehicles per day.

The design of the new bridge and road will be in accordance with the Montana Department of Highways Standard Drawing and Standard Specifications and the American Association of State Highway Officials Design Standards.

Adjacent to and within the project is a site of local significance which may be protected by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1968, and thereby gives special consideration.

The site is described as follows:

(See Exhibit "B" page 44 to 48, and Exhibit "C", page 49)

Judith Landing Recreation Area

Before Proposed Project

Type Use: Overnight Camping, Picnicing

Patronage: Local, Regional, and National

Available Activities: Camping, Picnicing, Hiking,
Fishing, etc.

Size: 6+ Acres

After Proposed Project

Type Use: Overnight Camping, Picnicing

Patronage: Local, Regional, and National

Available Activities: Camping, Picnicing, Hiking,
Fishing, Boating, etc.

Size: 6+ Acres

Description: The Judith Landing Recreation Area is a partially developed overnight campground located on the north (left) bank of the river and just upstream of the present Lohse-P.N. Ferry site landing. It is an irregular shaped tract of land being that portion of Lot seven (7), Section twenty-five (25), Township twenty-three (23) North, Range sixteen (16) East, in the county of Chouteau, lying west of the road (FAS 236) and adjacent to the river (see Exhibits "B" and "C").

Being located adjacent to FAS 236 and the Missouri river the area receives use by those traveling by road

or by river as an overnight campground and picnic area.

At this recreation area services available are a boat ramp just east of the north landing for the Lohse-P.N. Ferry. Also, there is a parking area, picnic and camping area west of the secondary highway. In the camping area there are picnic tables, fireplaces (metal), chemical toilets, a well, and garbage cans.

The Missouri River from Fort Benton to Ryan Island is presently being considered for inclusion in the Wild and/or Scenic Rivers Act. This section of the river, approximately 125 miles in length, could, within the act, be classified as wild, scenic, or recreational. In Section 10, "Government Reports", of this statement, there is an explanation of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

A U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation letter, dated August 28, 1972, which is included in this statement, implies that the segments of the Missouri River in the area near its confluence with the Judith River would probably be classified as recreational in the event the river is included in the national system. The proposed bridge site is just downstream of the confluence of these rivers.

B. PROJECT HISTORY

The portion of the road, FAS 236, that is included in the study also constitutes the only major road in the area. FAS 236, this section of study, extends northwest from Winifred to Big Sandy, a total of 70 miles.

A twenty-mile section from Big Sandy south is paved. The remaining portion is improved gravel to the river. On the south side

of the Missouri is a seven-mile stretch of unimproved road to Reeds Hill. The road turns into improved gravel after this point and continues into Winifred in this condition. Many private, unimproved roads connect to this road and serve the ranchers in this area.

At the confluence of the road with the Missouri River, a ferry known as the Lohse-P.N. Ferry carries the vehicles across the river. This ferry is open from March to October. This is the proposed site for the bridge.

C. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING PROJECT ENVIRONMENT

1. Geology

It is generally accepted fact among geologists that the Missouri River had its beginning before the first ice age (about a million years ago). At that time, it flowed into the Hudson Bay. After the last ice age (there were four invasions of glaciers into this area), the Missouri was channeled into its present course.

The river runs considerably below the elevation of the plains around it, and it is eroding a deeper channel still. This area in the breaks changes drastically because the canyon was cut in a relatively short time.

Faulting occurs throughout this stretch of river as a result of faulting in the Bearpaw Mountains. Many plugs, stocks, and dikes of tertiary instrusive rocks are visible along the route. These features resemble massive concrete walls.

There are sedimentary layers of upper Cretaceous Age. This was caused by the action of what was an ocean about 70 million years ago.

The non-marine strats along the Missouri here are samples of a widespread series of sandy deposits dropped by ancient rivers of which there are no traces left today. The margin of the sea moved back and forth as the sea expanded and contracted over millions of years. These varied rocks; some marine with sea animal fossils; other land deposits with coal and dinosaur fossils; represent a rather complete record of changing geographical conditions.

A variety of rock formations can be found along this stretch of river. Between Fort Benton and Virgelle, there are low bluffs of thick marine shale of the Colorado group. For about fifteen miles downstream from Virgelle the rocks of the Colorado group are concealed and yield to a white eagle sandstone with a few exposed coal veins. This condition continues until the confluence of Arrow Creek. At this point, exposure of Claggett shale becomes more predominant and continues to about ten miles downstream of the Judith River.

Because of the bentonite beds and dark marine shale, there is evidence of considerable amount of volcanic activity far west of this area and high powerful winds carried the residue to this area.

* Paleontological interpretive values are little known. The continental beds might well be found to contain fossils of dinosaurs such as Ornithomimus and Trachodon, and possibly fragmentary remains of very primitive mammals. They could also contain quantities of fossil plants. It was this period which witnessed the rise of modern plants, angiosperms, and the

fall of the dinosaurs. 1/

The marine beds (shale) might be found to yield such typical fossils of this period as sea going reptiles (Mososaurs and Plesiosaurs); such conspicuous invertebrates as ammonites and baculites are known to be locally abundant.

The Claggett and Colorado shales that are crossed by roads exhibit a history of slide activity. Failures in the Claggett are not easily recognized as individual slide masses because of slope changes by erosion. Individually failed masses in units of the Colorado shale apparently slide along a single failure arc and are more distinct. More recent and active failures are usually the result of construction activities.

2. Archaeology

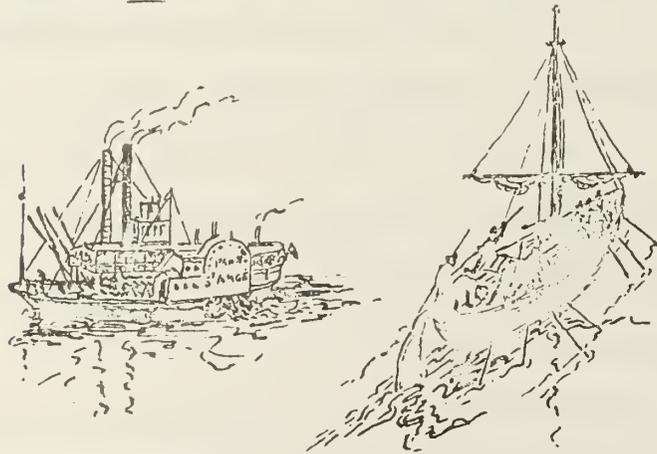
This land, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was, for the most part, relatively untouched. However, many Indian tribes did travel through the area. Along the river there are scattered burial sites indicating the land was used for this purpose. A variety of camp sites were located along here, probably temporary hunting camp locations.

Apparently, from scanty evidence gathered, the pre-historic occupants were nomadic bands of hunters. They exemplified no signs of settling in this region as there was no indication of horticulture and no evidence of river area exploitation.

3. History

The Missouri breaks area extends from Fort Benton downstream to the point where Armell's Creek empties into the

1/ Refer to Appendix B



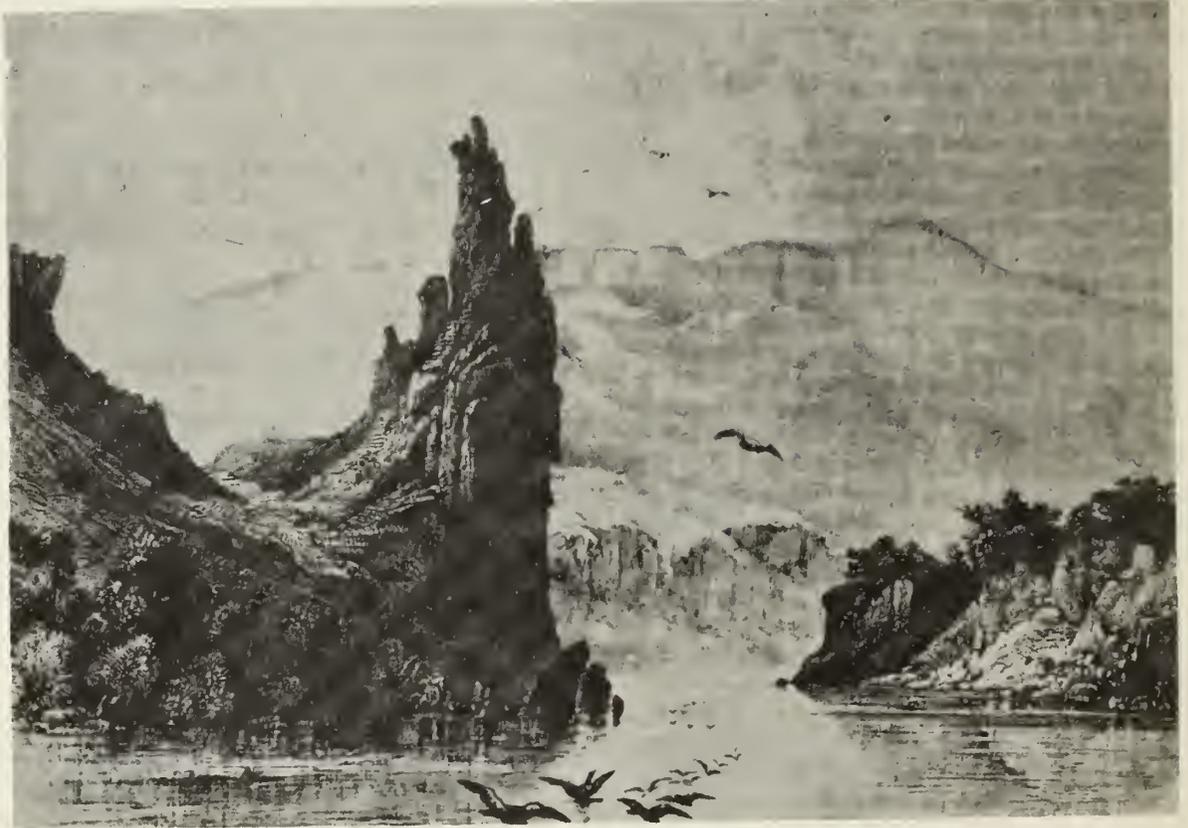
Missouri River (the mouth of Armell's Creek is located approximately one mile down the Missouri from the Robinson Bridge on FAP 16). This stretch of river is essentially unchanged since the time of Lewis and Clark Expedition explored this region. Along the two thousand mile route, this is the only stretch left in its natural state.

Lewis and Clark spent three weeks in this 125-mile stretch of river. They were here from May 24, 1805, to June 12, 1805. On May 28th Lewis and Clark discovered the Judith River. About 20 miles upstream from this point they came upon the White Rocks area and the now famous Cathedral Rock. The following week the party embarked on the spot where the Marias River joins the Missouri. After a lengthy exploration of the Marias River, they concluded the Missouri was the correct channel and continued up it.

Approximately three quarters of a mile downstream from the mouth of the Judith River is the site of the 1855 Treaty. This treaty was signed between eight tribes and marked the beginning of a peaceful coexistence between them. The eight tribes involved were the Blackfeet, Bloods, Piegans, Gros Ventre, Nez Perce, Koo-Te-Nay, Pend D-Oreilles, and Flatheads.

There were three military sites also located at the mouth of the Judith River. They were Fort Claggett, Camp Cooke, and Fort Chardon.

Camp Cooke was probably the most important site. It was established in July of 1866 as an integral part of the Missouri River protective system. After four years, due to poor living conditions and lack of strategic use, it was abandoned.



Bodmer sketch
1833

"...we came to a remarkable place where the Missouri seems to issue from a narrow opening, making a turn round a dark brown rugged pointed tower-like rock on the south, to which the traders have given the name of the Citadel Rock."

Maximilian - 1833

Fort Claggett, located near Camp Cooke, was essentially a trading post. It was started by T. C. Power. He had a trading business in Camp Cooke, and when it closed he moved to this site. The stone warehouse, remnant of the business, is still standing.

The third military site was Fort Chardon. It was downstream about two miles from Camp Cooke. Fort Chardon was started by a fur trader, Francois Chardon, who was run off another fort in the area, Fort McKenzie. Fort Chardon was abandoned two years later in 1845 due to poor location.

The site of the old P.N. Ranch, originally owned in part by T. C. Power, is also located at the mouth of the Judith River. This ranch, considered by noted historian William Ludlow to be of major historical significance in this area, is one of the largest ranches around.

This section of river held particular interest to those who traveled it by boat. Fort Benton was as far as boats could go, and the area in the breaks contained many rapids. Some of the rapids are: Kipp's Rapids, approximately 30 miles upstream from the mouth of the Judith River; Elbow Rapids, located below the famous "Hole-In-The-Wall" rock formation (the "Hole-In-The-Wall" is located about 17 miles above the confluence of the Judith River with the Missouri); the Deadman Rapids, occuring about two miles above the mouth of the Judith River.

The rapids created many problems for the early streamboats and a good number of them fell victim to the river. When a boat would become hung up on a sandbar, the crew and passengers were at the mercy of the Indians.

Another expedition was lead by Prince Maximillan of Germany in 1833. He had an artist by the name of Karl Bodmer accompany him. Bodmer sketched the sights along the river. From his sketches, it can be verified that the Missouri has not changed.

With the advent of the railroad in the 1880's, the Missouri lost its importance as a major transportation route. From this point on very little occurred and the main activity in the area turned to, and continues to be, agriculture.

4. Vegetation

* This area lies in the prairie biome, were specifically the mixed prairie, which is composed predominantly of mid and short grasses. This is part of the Great Plains, one of the largest grasslands in the world. This region extends from Canada south to Texas and from the Rocky Mountains east to what is called the True Prairie, where tall and mid grasses predominate. The vegetation is varied with the representation of woody plants on the broken slopes and river bottom.

Overall, it is typically semi-arid, with the erosional pattern providing what suitable habitat there is for woody growth. Grasses and forbs predominate. Trees and shrubs play a lesser although complementary role, and accent the scenic character of the eroded bluffs and canyons, the striking rock formations, and the river itself.

The native trees here are Ponderosa Pine, Limber Pine, Douglas Fir, Rocky Mountain Juniper, Cottonwood, Ash, Willow, and Boxelder. The conifers grow predominately on the bluffs, while the deciduous types are found along the river banks and on islands.

Predominant shrubs are Greasewood, Shrub Willow, Wild Rose, Squawbush, Snowberry, Rabbitbush, Shadscale-Saltbush, and various types of sagebrush.

The most common grasses are Buffalo, Blue Grama, Western Wheatgrass, Junegrass, Needlegrass, and Prairie Sandweed. 1/

There is some hay grown at the bottom of the "breaks", but only where the terrain permits. Outside of the breaks there is much dry land farming with wheat and barley being the principle crops.

5. Economy and Land Use

Basically, the land is used for agricultural purposes. Wheat and barley are the principle cash crops grown. There are also sections of farmed land where vegetables are grown, but mostly for personal use. The growing of corn is occasionally attempted, but usually proves unsuccessful. In a few open areas along the river hay is grown. Cattle are also grazed on this land using a moderate percentage of the area.

There have been indications of oil and natural gas in the area, but there has been no extensive exploration or development. Some mining has been done in the area, but only on a small scale. The principle metals mined were gold and silver with smaller amounts of lead and zinc taken. Some coal is mined and used within the area for heating purposes. Exploration in the area

1/ Refer to Appendix B



Bodmer sketch
1833

"...we saw, on the north bank, a jagged conical rock, which stands quite isolated on a hill covered with short grass...A herd of wild sheep looked down upon us from these heights."

Maximilian - 1833

yielded findings of iron ore, limestone, clay, bentonite, light weight aggregate, and gem stones (sapphires).

6. Climate

The climate in the "breaks" area is typical of the plains region of Central Montana. It is characterized by severe windy winters broken with occasional warm chinook winds, hot summers, and relatively sparse precipitation. The temperature has varied from a low of -59° in winter to a high of 113° in the summer. The average January temperature is 26° , while the average temperature in July is 70° .

The normal frost free period averages 121 days. This rather unique climate is usually sufficient to produce good yields of range forage. However, crop production is marginal, depending on the individual year's precipitation. Most dry land farming within the area must rely on strip farming and summer fallowing practices because of the prevalent winds and the limited moisture available. The average amount of precipitation in the area is about 12.42 inches.

7. Fish and Wildlife

Because the area is primarily a wilderness area, there is a great abundance of fish and wildlife.

The variety of fish include, in relative abundance, catfish, sauger, sturgeon, fresh-water drum, goldeye, paddlefish, bullhead, burbot, buffalofish, carp, and suckers. Perch, crappie, and trout occur but in smaller numbers.

Mule deer, white-tailed deer, antelope, elk, and big horn sheep are found along this segment of the river. Mule deer are the most common specie and are present in varying numbers on



From the Fort Benton bridge (above) to the Robinson bridge (below) lies a 150-mile stretch of the Missouri River crossed only by ferry.



areas in this study. White-tailed deer are distributed on the islands and wooded bottom lands along the river and along major tributary streams. Elk are more limited in distribution and numbers and are confined, for the most part, to the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Range in the rougher breaks adjacent to the river. Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep have been released on the wildlife range in the Two Calf Creek drainage. Antelope range mainly along the edge of the breaks and are seldom seen in the rougher portions along the river.

A variety of upland-game birds are found in this area. Native species, such as sharp tailed grouse and sage grouse, are scattered along the breaks. Pheasants are increasing along the river bottom where cultivated crops such as alfalfa and small grains are grown. Hungarian partridges occur adjacent to grain-fields. Wild turkeys were introduced to the area some time ago and are increasing in numbers. Chukar partridges are also found, but in smaller numbers. Also, morning doves are found along the river.

Cottontails and jackrabbits are common throughout the area. Beavers are the only semi-abundant fur bearing animals. Mink, Muskrats, raccoons, and otters are present, but in very small numbers. Bobcats are the principle terrestrial fur bearing animals. Coyotes, skunks, badgers, and weasels are also found in this area.

8. Population

Locally the study area has been one of slow growth. The population grew relatively fast until 1920. After this time, there has been a constant decline in population with the majority of these people moving to the urban areas.

The only towns located in this area are Big Sandy and Winifred. Big Sandy, located 44 miles north of the Missouri River, has a population of 827. Winifred is located 26 miles south of the Missouri and has 220 persons. Scattered ranches in the breaks area make up the rest of the population of this area. (These figures are based on the 1970 census.)

Unless there were to be a massive exploitation of the natural resources in this area, the population should remain constant.

Larger towns, not directly in this area, but ones that would definitely use the road, are Lewistown, Chinook, Havre, and Fort Benton. These towns showed significant increased in population over the years. The respective population figures are Lewistown - 6,437, Chinook - 1,813, Havre - 10,558, and Fort Benton - 1,863. Other towns along the "highline" of smaller population would also utilize this road.

9. Recreation

No section of this stretch of river has been commercially developed for recreation. Many people hunt deer in this area. Fishing is also a popular form of recreation along the river. Float trips from Fort Benton to the Fort Peck Reservoir are conducted many times during the summer. The people who float the Missouri can see the only section of the river that is essentially the same as it was when Lewis and Clark traveled through.

The State of Montana, through an easement from the property owner, has partially developed a river recreation area, Judith Landing Recreation Area, on the left river bank and just upstream from the Lohse-P.N. Ferry landing. This area is being used for a camping and picnic site for those floating the Missouri River or touring the area by vehicle.

The tentative location of the bridge is such that it would cross this area and thus a Section 4(f) determination is required. A request for this determination was asked for from the Recreation and Parks Division of the Department of Fish and Game. The request and the reply are included in Appendix "A".

The section of the Missouri River from Fort Benton to Ryan Island, approximately 125 miles in length, is now being studied for inclusion into the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968. The act is designed to classify the proposed river section into one or more areas. These areas or segments of the total section are wild, scenic, or recreational. In Section 10, "Government Reports", of this statement, there is a description of the three classifications for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

10. Government Reports

In the early 1960's (1962-1963) the Army Corps of Engineers made an extensive study of the entire Missouri River breaks area. The Corps was making the study to determine the feasibility of building one or more dams along this section of river. Mainly, because of environmental concerns, it now appears that the dam proposals have been abandoned.

The National Park Service in 1962 made a study of this area also. There is currently a proposal that the area from Fort Benton to the Robinson Bridge be designated the "Lewis and Clark National Wilderness Waterway". It would be under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service.

During the mid 1960's a study was done by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. This report, "The Middle Missouri: A Rediscovery", was published before the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was enacted and it recommended the establishment of a Missouri Breaks National River. In October, 1968, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was enacted. This legislation called for the study of some 27 rivers as potential additions to the system created by the act. One of the study rivers was the Missouri River from Fort Benton to Ryan Island. In November of 1972, public hearings were held in Montana by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation on the study area.

The construction of a bridge crossing the Missouri River in the Winifred area would not preclude or would not be precluded by possible designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The act states under Section 2 that a proposed river may be classified in one of the following:

1. "Wild river areas, those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with water sheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America."
2. "Scenic river areas, those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds, still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads."
3. "Recreational river areas, those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines

and that may have undergone some impoundments or diversion in the past."

Therefore, it seems very probably that a compatible system could be developed between the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and this proposed project.

II. PROBABLE IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Broad impacts of this project would be increased traffic along this route (FAS 236), and economic increases should be felt by the towns of Big Sandy and Winifred and the entire area after the completion of the project. Also, this project will create an alternate year around route for traffic between "highline" communities and central and southern Montana.

The historic sites of Camp Cooke and Fort Claggett are located at the confluence of the Judith and Missouri Rivers. The sites are on the south side of the Missouri and on the west side of the Judith River. Also, the historic sites of Fort Chardon, and the 1855 Indian Treaty Council site are located on the north bank of the Missouri River across from the mouth of the Judith River as shown in Exhibit D. The impact on these sites created by this project should not significantly change the character of the sites since there is an improved road system in the area. Use of these sites will change with normal traffic growth even if the structure was not built. The proposed project follows the existing alignment except at the bridge approaches and does not come into direct conflict with these sites.

Some people feel that access to the river in this area should not be changed so that the existing character of the area would not change. However, there are existing roads to this area and means of crossing the river at the two area ferry crossings during a period of March through October. With the existing road system and with consideration

of normal traffic growth, there will be increased traffic through this area even if the bridge were not built.

There would be a visual impact of seeing the bridge by those who are floating the river or camping in the area. This impact as viewed by these people might be considered detrimental but through good planning and design, this impact can be greatly minimized.

At the request of the commissioners of Fergus and Chouteau Counties, the Corps of Engineers, in 1970, did a study for corrective measures for the erosion problems at the Lohse-P.N. Ferry. The erosion problem at the ferry site and upstream of the site is destroying both the left and right banks to a point where the ferry will soon be unoperable and this erosion problem is also removing land from the recreation area at a rapid rate. The erosion problem could be corrected during construction of the structure and be so designed to minimize all adverse impacts.

This structure would be the only bridge crossing of the Missouri between Fort Benton and the Fred Robinson Bridge on U. S. 191. This is a section of river approximately 125 miles in length. The structure could diminish the wild river characteristics; however, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation has stated that the area of the proposed bridge would probably be classed as recreational river if this section of the Missouri, Fort Benton to Ryan Island, were included into the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The impact of the structure on navigational requirements would be the vertical clearance of the structure from water surface, the span width between piers, and the approaches to the structures. It is not known at this time if the U. S. Coast Guard does presently consider this section of the Missouri River as a navigable river. All

necessary requirements for clearances and impact comments from the U. S. Coast Guard will be accomplished during the review process of the draft of the environmental impact statement.

The proposed project will not require the relocation of people or homes.

III. PROBABLE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

This project should not have any long-lasting significant effect on noise, air, or water pollution.

The majority of any air or water pollution that does occur will take place while the project is under construction. However, the contractor will be required to adhere to all applicable state and national laws pertaining to these matters. The Montana Department of Highways' Standard Specifications clearly define the methods the contractor is to use to prevent water and air pollution.

There are few farmsteads located in the near proximity of this project. Therefore, taking this into account along with the average daily traffic, this improvement will not exceed the design noise levels and can be classified as a "Low Noise Level" highway in accordance with the draft of PPM 90-2.

The commitment of right-of-way for the structure, approaches, and spur will remove this land from its present use. It will not preclude the river from being used for recreational or navigational purposes as long as the bridge exists.

Visual impact of the bridge as related to recreational activities might be considered detrimental. However, the structure would be designed in such a manner as to make it and the approaches aesthetically pleasing to the surroundings and to minimize its impact. A structure

developed as a welded plate girder or welded box girder would possibly be used. This structure, in addition to being a pleasing design, could be painted a shade of brown, green, or some other color that would blend with the surroundings. It would not have to be silver in color.

The structure could have an adverse impact on navigation, but coordination with the U. S. Coast Guard to eliminate these impacts will be accomplished during the review process of the draft. Also, this structure will be crossing an approximate 125 mile section of the Missouri River, Fort Benton to Fred Robinson Bridge, which presently is bridged only by ferry. The impact of this crossing could be adverse to the concept of a long stretch of wild river. However, it is probable that the structure could be designed to minimize the adverse impact on the river and the present access does reduce the concept of a long stretch of wild river.

With the location of the proposed bridge presently being just west of the Lohse-P.N. Ferry, it would cross a parcel of land leased to the State of Montana for a river recreation area. In crossing this parcel of land used for recreation, a Section 4(f) determination is required. Measures to avoid, replace, or minimize the impact on these lands is discussed fully in Section VIII.

IV. ALTERNATIVES

A. LOCATION CRITERIA

In determining the most suitable location for this project, the following items were considered:

1. Horizontal Curvature

There is no horizontal curvature involved in the bridge as it will be on a tangent. However, the road leading to the

bridge will most definitely have horizontal curvature. The actual figures have not been determined.

2. Grades

There will be no appreciable grade on the structure except for a slight grade that will provide for drainage. However, there will be steep grades involved on the connecting roads.

3. Existing Roadway

The existing secondary road will, for the most part, remain intact and the proposed road will follow this one.

4. Landslides

As pointed out earlier in the geology study of the area, there are and will continue to be landslides. Some have been caused by construction activities, but many occur naturally. All slides vary in degree and activity.

In construction of the new connecting road or improvement of the existing road, the cut and fill sections must be kept to an absolute minimum. This will be necessary because of probable failure by sliding. In holding cut and fill sections to a minimum, the character of the road will be one of fairly steep grades and sharp curvature.

B. DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATES

The site for the bridge has been limited to the area of the Lohse-P.N. Ferry due to the following:

1. It is the accepted traffic corridor through this area.
2. The commissioners of the three (3) counties involved (Fergus, Chouteau, and Blaine) are in agreement that a

bridge site at or near the Lohse-P.N. Ferry crossing on FAS 236 would be the best location and that this site would provide the best service to the most people.

3. The preliminary geologic reconnaissance done by the State of Montana, Department of Highways, indicated that the present ferry crossing near the P.N. Ranch is at a narrow, more stable part of the Missouri River channel, the channel both up and downstream being more divided and meandering.

Consideration of four different sites for a structure(s) crossing the river has been studied with the alternate of severing the Section 4(f) lands being the most economic and least degrading to the total area. The alternates are shown in Exhibit B.

Alternate A

One alternate considered would begin on the south side of the Missouri River, at a point on FAS 236 approximately two miles south of the P.N. Ranch headquarters. It would progress northwesterly crossing both the Judith and Missouri River. It would then turn and progress northerly until it intersects FAS 236. This alternate would require building two structures and the building of an additional 2+ miles of new roadway on the south side of the river. Also, it would be necessary to improve approximately 3+ miles of existing roadway on the north side of the river.

Alternate B

Another alternate considered would be to cross the river just northeast of the P.N. Ranch headquarters. This alternate

would require a very long structure to cross the main channel and the flood channel along with the flood plain between these channels. Also, approximately one-fourth⁺ miles of additional new roadway would have to be constructed on the north side of the river.

Alternate C

This alternate is the proposed crossing which would sever the Section 4(f) land. This alternate would closely follow the existing road alignment and would cross the river just west of the present Lohse-P.N. Ferry site.

Alternate D

This crossing would be located just downstream of the Lohse-P.N. Ferry. At this location, it would be necessary to cross Dog Creek, on the south side of the river, at least once and more likely twice, or channel change Dog Creek. This would mean additional structure(s). Also, at this site irrigated land on the north side of the river would be severed and removed from present use. This route would require an additional 1⁺ mile of roadway.

Section D of ALTERNATIVES discusses the cost estimates of these alternates.

Under the assumption that the bridge would be built, the following description of alternates for the connection road between FAS 236 and the Blaine County road system are described.

The connecting road between Blaine County and FAS 236 would leave FAS 236 at a point approximately one-half mile north of the Lohse-P.N. Ferry. From this point, the road would run basically

easterly until reaching the Birch Creek drainage. At this point, three (3) alternates are available for consideration. (see Exhibit B on pages 46 and 47.)

Alternate No. 1

The route would then go northeasterly up the Birch Creek drainage to a point where it would again turn easterly. It would then cross over Birch Creek Hill to a point called Iron City.

Alternate No. 2

The route would cross the Birch Creek drainage and continue basically easterly to Iron City.

At Iron City, Alternate No. 1 and No. 2 would connect to one route, again proceeding easterly to a point on the Blaine County road system approximately four miles north of the Jensen Ferry.

Alternate No. 3

The route would then go northeasterly up the Birch Creek drainage to the confluence of Birch Creek and Black Coulee. The route would continue northeasterly up Black Coulee to a point where the first major drainage enters Black Coulee from the east. The road would then continue up this side drainage in a southeasterly direction until connecting to the Blaine County road system.

The three alternates would all connect to the Blaine County road system on Ragland Bench approximately four miles north of the Jensen Ferry. Alternate No. 3 will be approximately 1½ miles longer than the other two but will have the least percent of grade of the three alternates.

The connecting road would have only a minimal impact on the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act or by those floating the river. The alternates would not be visible from the river with the exception that it may be possible to see the road when floating pass the mouth of Birch Creek. However, this is not probable due to the difference in elevation and the terrain in the area of Birch Creek. Also, Alternate No. 2 (the alternate least likely to be used) could possibly be seen while floating the river since its alignment is on the river side of the ridge used to climb from Birch Creek drainage to Ragland Bench. The other alternates will not be visible from the river except, as previously mentioned, at the mouth of Birch Creek. The road will basically parallel the river but will be one-half + miles or greater distance from the river. It therefore should in no way interfere with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The three alternates that have been described do not have a direct relation to the usage of Section 4(f) lands. As shown in Exhibits "B" and "C", the portion of the project which is involved is the structure and its approaches.

The Section 4(f) land (see Exhibit "C") involved is a portion of Lot seven (7), Township twenty-three (23) North, Range sixteen (16) East, which lays west and south of FAS 236. This land developed for river recreation by the State of Montana was obtained by easement from the landowner. The land has been developed with a parking area adjacent to FAS 236 and the Lohse-P.N. Ferry and with camp sites and picnic areas on the westerly portion of the land.

Consideration of an improved ferry system at this site could also be given. However, as with the present ferry system, the facts stand that the ferry has to be removed from the river during the winter due to ice. Also, the hours of operation of the ferries are, as free ferries, limited from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. These hours normally are for March or April through October, but due to weather conditions, this time period may be shorter or longer.

From a study done in 1970, by the Corps of Engineers, on erosion control at the Lohse-P.N. Ferry crossing, it was stated that:

* The primary concern of local interests is the preservation of the Lohse-P.N. Ferry, which operates from March to October, and transports tourists, plus farm-to-market traffic. In recent years, the traffic count has averaged about 6,000 vehicles per year. Erosion occurring along both banks of the Missouri River upstream from the ferry has caused channel widening to such an extent that continued operation of the ferry crossing at this location is in jeopardy. Both landing abutments of the ferry have been relocated landward as erosion continued; however, the maximum ferry operating width, using existing equipment, has been reached. The addition of new ferry equipment has been considered, but complete modification would provide only a temporary solution. As the channel widens, it will develop a split flow with a central high bar and eventually eliminate ferry operations due to inadequate ferry draft clearance. 8/

8/ Refer to Appendix B

Since the time that the study was done by the Corps of Engineers, the commissioners of Chouteau, Fergus, and Blaine Counties have requested that the Department of Highways do a feasibility study for a bridge over the Missouri River in the area of the Lohse-P.N. Ferry crossing.

C. THE "DO-NOTHING" ALTERNATE

The "do-nothing" alternate would have appeal to anyone who would prefer that the bridge not be built. This could present a hardship to the area, might limit economic opportunities in the area, and would greatly inconvenience future residents of the area.

D. ESTIMATED COST ANALYSIS

Approximate costs for the various alternates are tabulated as follows:

Item Alternate	Structure Cost	Approach & Connecting Road Cost	Total Estimated Initial Cost	Total Annual Construction Cost	Total Annual Maintenance Cost	Total Annual Road Users Cost	Total Annual Cost
Alternate A	1,886,000	740,000	1,826,000	115,800	2,000	558,000	675,800
Alternate B	2,285,000	500,000	2,785,000	176,600	1,200	558,000	735,800
Alternate C: -----							
(1) Alternate where structure spans Section 4(f) land	1,083,500	500,000	1,583,500	100,500	1,200	558,000	659,700
(2) Alternate where structure does not span Section 4(f) land (same location)	962,500	500,000	1,462,000	92,800	1,200	558,000	652,000
Alternate D	1,114,000	635,000	1,749,000	111,000	1,200	558,000	670,200
Alternate using existing ferry service with erosion control at Lohse-P.N. Ferry (both ferries)		122,000	122,000	8,000	14,000	623,000	645,000
Alternate where ferry service is one improved larger ferry (at Lohse-P.N. site)	38,000	392,000	430,000	27,000	7,000	623,000	657,000

In the preceding estimated cost analysis the road users cost where developed with a trip from Havre to Lewistown as a control distance. With \$.14/mile as the operating cost of the vehicle. The annual maintenance and construction costs where developed on a 50 year life at 6% interest. The traffic volume was the average daily traffic between the present average daily traffic of 35 and the design year average daily traffic of 120.

With the existing or an improved ferry it is not possible to have year around services due mainly to the inability of a ferry to operate during the winter freeze up of the river. Also, ferry services are not operated as free services 24 hours a day. There is a nominal fee to cross by ferry between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. This, therefore, creates an imposition to the road user. During the months which the ferries operate a person could cross between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. at no cost other than a time delay while crossing or waiting to cross. During the night a road user has three alternatives: (1) pay the fee to cross; (2) wait until the next day to cross; or (3) go by a different, longer route. All of these are additional cost to the road user above normal operating cost. During that time when the ferries are completely out of service the road user has a choice of not going or having to go by a different route, which would be longer. The additional cost all depends upon where the trip originates and what its destination is. This makes every road user's case different.

V. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES OF MAN'S ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Construction of the bridge and approaches will require some minor disruption of the landscape and a temporary increase in air and water

pollution. However, when completed and when vegetation has been established, the project will provide a bridge with proper drainage, adequate driving widths, and a minimum amount of environmental degradation. The bridge will provide a fast, safe, and efficient transportation facility for the traveling public.

A long term loss would be the bridging of a long stretch of unbridged river. However, not bridging this stretch of river would not hold to the long-term growth of the area. It could very well hinder man's productively in this area.

VI. IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

The concrete and steel used in the construction of the bridge will be irretrievable, but the quantities involved are minimal. Also, the bridging of this long stretch of unbridged river would be a commitment of resources which could not be reversed.

Due to the fact that this area has never been exploited by many roads, there is the point that the aesthetics of the area will be altered.

VII. MEASURES TO MINIMIZE HARM TO SECTION 4(f) LANDS

With the proposed project at the feasibility study level, no actual development of plans has been undertaken. Therefore, the actual measures to minimize harm to Section 4(f) lands are not known. This section will therefore state the measures to minimize harm to Section 4(f) lands as a series of alternates that could be used to minimize the harm.

With the proposed structure located just west of Lohse-P.N. Ferry (see Exhibit "C"), there are several alternates that can be considered.

1. Replace the land removed from Section 4(f) usage with other land adjoining the Section 4(f) lands.

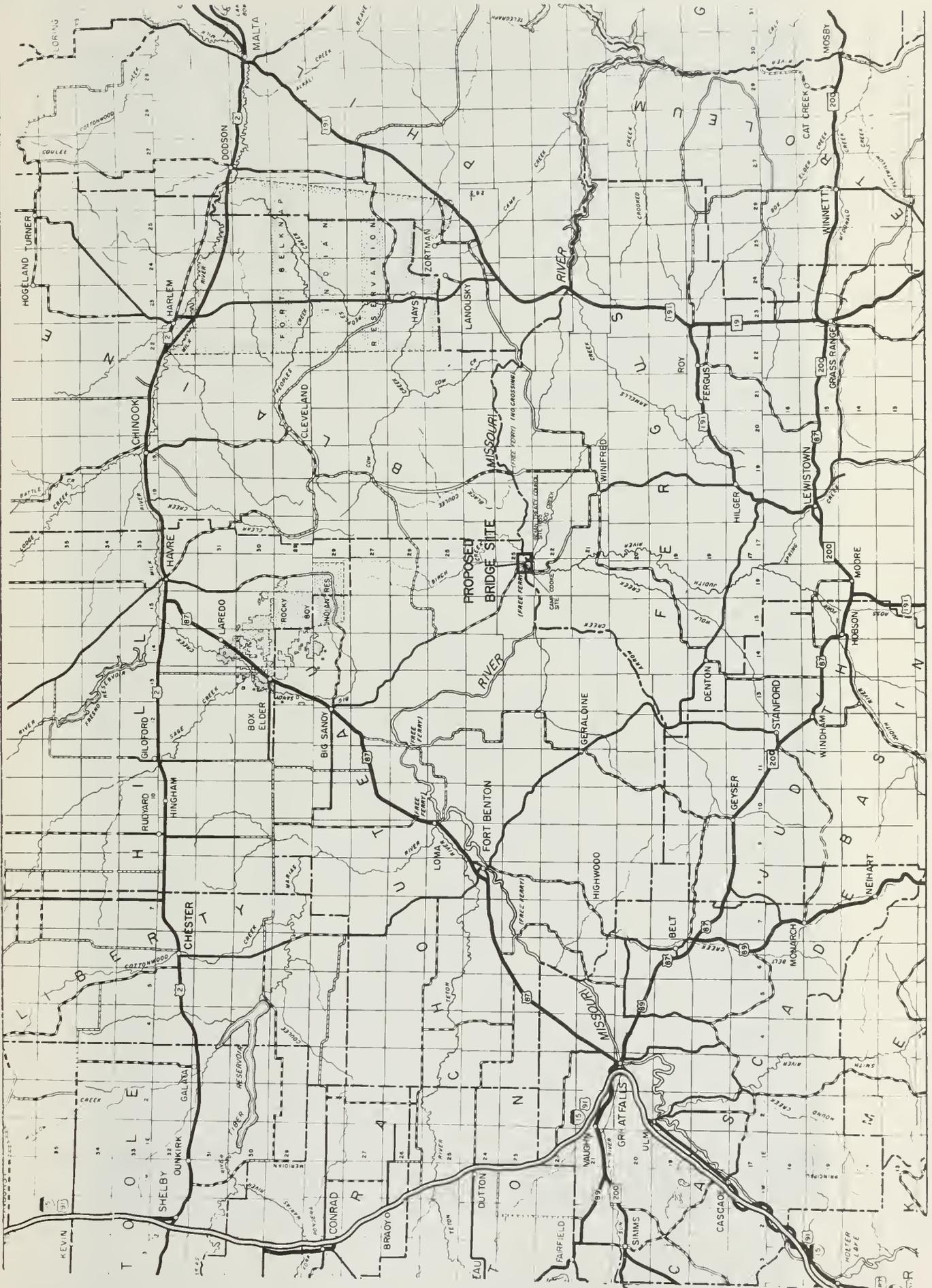
2. Span the Section 4(f) lands with the structure and allow multiple use of the land. This would allow for a minimal amount of detrimental impact on the lands.
3. Consider that there is no adverse effect to the lands and build the structure water's edge to water's edge. This, however, would not be an acceptable alternate to minimize harm to the Section 4(f) lands.

The structure could be relocated just downstream of the Lohse-P.N. Ferry to avoid the Section 4(f) land. But at this location it would be necessary to cross Dog Creek on the south side of the river at least once and more likely twice, or channel change Dog Creek. This would mean additional structure(s). Also at this site irrigated land on the north side of the river would be severed and removed from present use.

If the structure were moved upstream from its proposed location to avoid the Section 4(f) lands, it would be necessary to build two structures; one to span the main channel and one to span the overflow channel of the Missouri. If the structure is moved upstream far enough to miss the overflow channel of the Missouri, then it would be necessary to build a structure over the Judith River. This would also require the use of two structures and additional road construction.

It seems, therefore, that the present proposed site would be the better of those discussed and that all necessary steps be taken to minimize the harm to the Section 4(f) lands.

VIII. EXHIBITS







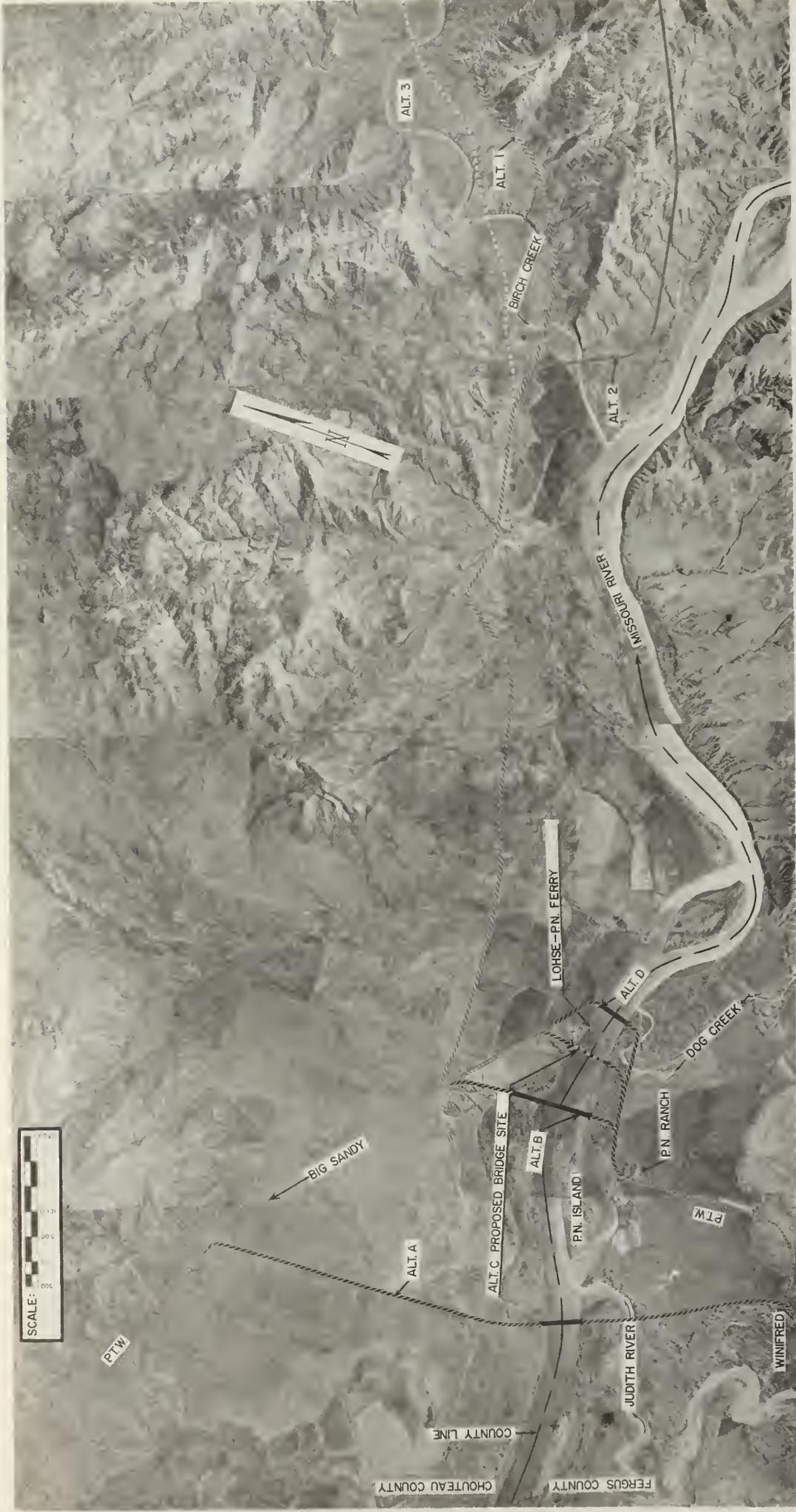
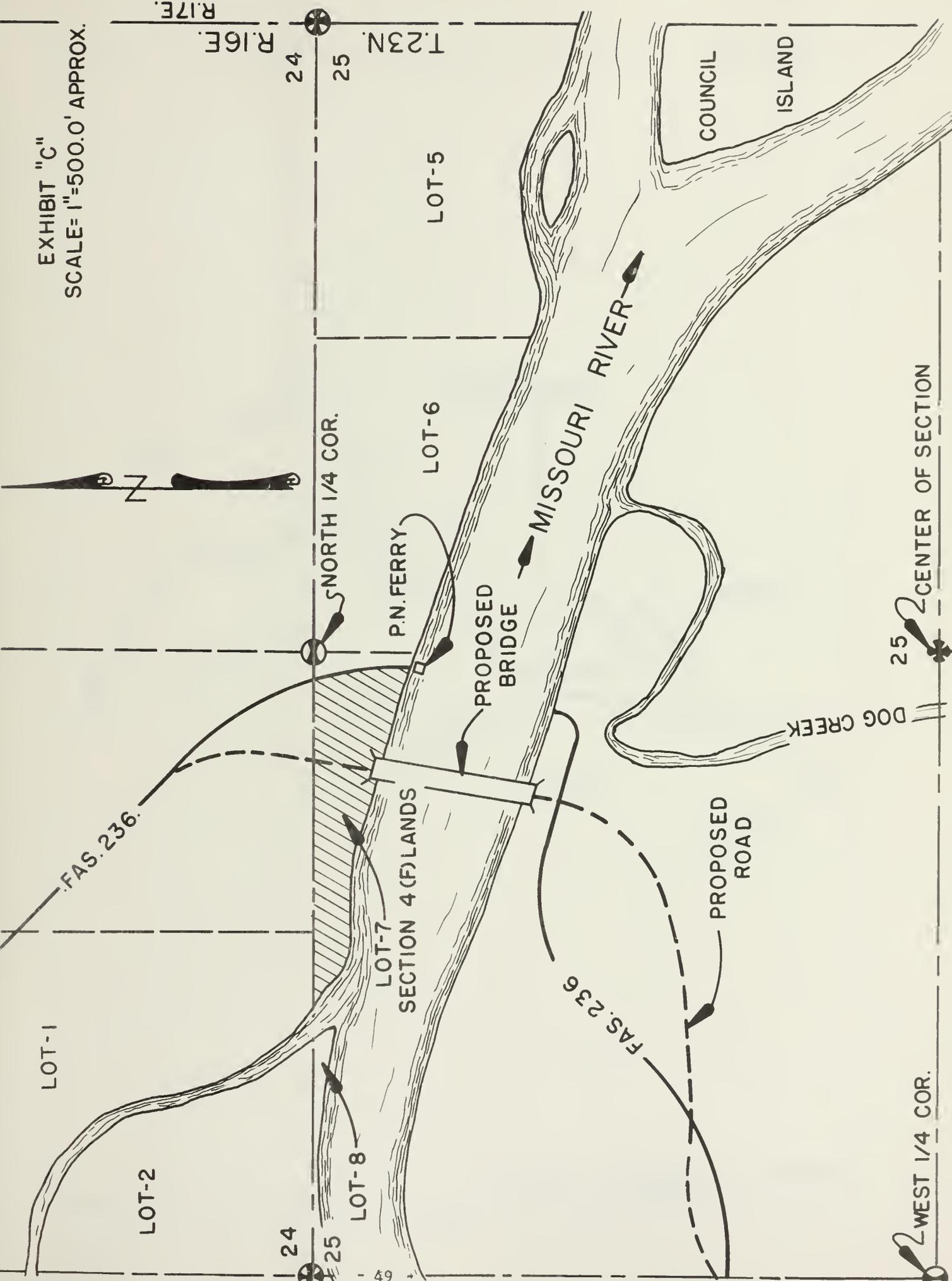






EXHIBIT "C"

SCALE= 1"=500.0' APPROX.



NORTH 1/4 COR.

WEST 1/4 COR.

WEST 1/4 COR.

R.17E.

R.16E.

24

25

T.23N.

COUNCIL ISLAND

LOT-5

LOT-6

MISSOURI RIVER

P.N. FERRY

PROPOSED BRIDGE

DOG CREEK

PROPOSED ROAD

SECTION 4 (F) LANDS

FAS. 236

LOT-1

LOT-2

LOT-8

LOT-7

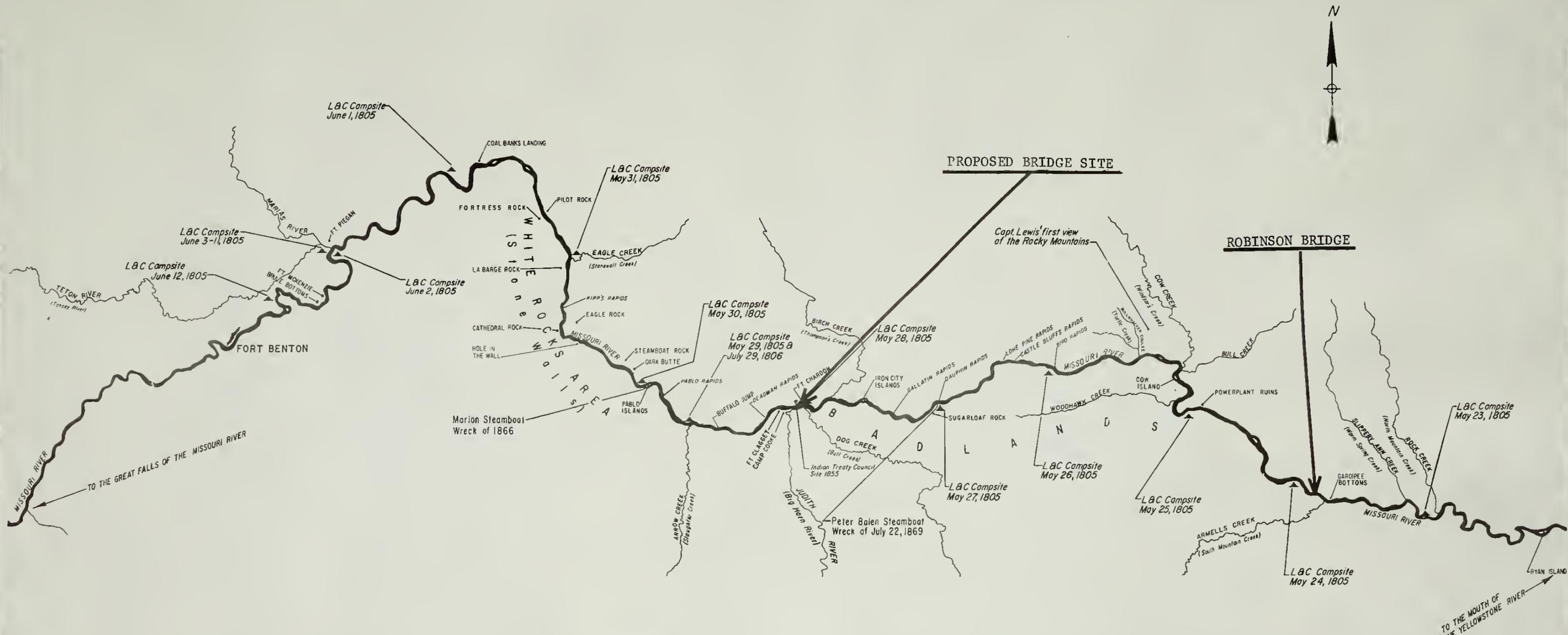
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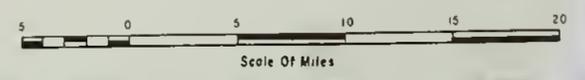
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HISTORIC AND NATURAL FEATURES
OF THE PROPOSED
**LEWIS AND CLARK
NATIONAL WILDERNESS WATERWAY**
MONTANA

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NOTE: Parenthesis indicates original Lewis and Clark names now obsolete

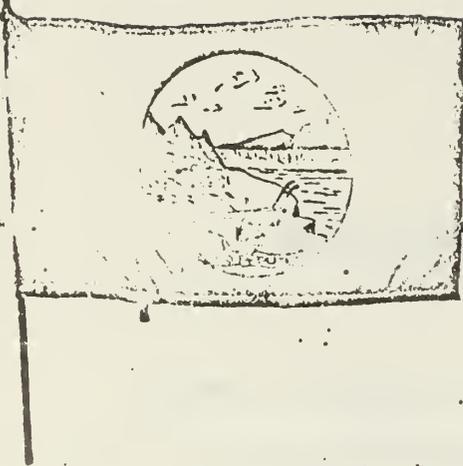


APPENDIX "A"

PRELIMINARY REQUEST FOR COMMENTS FROM FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL
AGENCIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

I. DISTRIBUTION

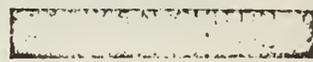
The following letter and list shows the request for comments on the proposed project. Comments were received from some of these agencies and organizations. Also, comments were received from organizations not shown on the list.



MONTANA HIGHWAY COMMISSION

HELENA, MONTANA 59601

April 28, 1972



H. J. ANDERSON
DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS

32-GOP

S 68 (6)
Bridge Study
Northwest of Winifred

Sent to enclosed list.

This is with regard to a possible bridge crossing of the Missouri River northwest of Winifred, Montana.

There are presently no bridges crossing the Missouri River between Fort Benton and Robinson Bridge, a distance of about 95 miles by air or about 125 miles by river. Vehicles cross the river by ferries which operate during the summer months only, and even then problems are encountered during periods of low water.

The County Commissioners from Chouteau County, Blaine County, and Fergus County feel that this is a very serious problem and have recently requested that some \$20,000 of their Secondary Road funds be utilized for a feasibility study for the eventual construction of a new bridge, which would cross the Missouri River on or near Secondary Route 236 northwest of Winifred. It is hoped that the bridge together with appropriate connecting roads would eventually eliminate the need for two ferries; the one north of Winifred and the one northwest of Winifred.

Our purpose in writing to you is to let you know about the study that we are initiating and to ask that you advise us of anything that you know about the area or of anything planned for the area that might help us in our studies. Any views or opinions either for or against the project will also be appreciated.

It is our current feeling that the project will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment so we plan to prepare a Negative Declaration rather than an Environmental Statement. However, any information or comments relating to environmental matters that you might furnish will be appreciated and utilized.

GEORGE W. CANTONICH, CHAIRMAN
HELENA

HELENA, MONTANA 59601 WILLIAM M. ANDERSON JOHN D. WHEELER, JR. SECRETARY

For orientation purposes, we are enclosing a map of the State of Montana. On the centerfold you will find the area being discussed.

The following list indicates those agencies to which this letter is being sent. If you are aware of other agencies or groups that might be affected or concerned and are not on the list, please let us know and we will contact them:

Director, Department of Natural Resources
and Conservation
Attention: Lawrence M. Jakub
Sam W. Mitchell Building
Helena, Montana 59601

Fletcher E. Newby, Executive Director
Environmental Quality Council
Capitol Station
Helena, Montana 59601

Corps of Engineers
Missouri River Division
Division Engineer
U.S. Army Engineer Division,
Missouri River
P.O. Box 10 (Downtown Station)
Omaha, Nebraska 68101

Department of Health, Education & Welfare
9017 Federal Office Building
19th and Stout Street
Denver, Colorado 80202

Federal Water Quality Administration
Northwest Region
Room 501, Pittock Block
Portland, Oregon 95205

U. S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Helena, Montana 59601

Director
Montana Fish and Game Department
Sam W. Mitchell Building
Helena, Montana 59601

Agricultural Stabilization & Research Services
112 West 13th Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601

Director
State Department of Health
Helena, Montana 59601

Department of Planning & Economic
Development
Capitol Post Office
Helena, Montana 59601

Dr. T. C. Byerly
Office of Secretary of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 98109

Board of County Commissioners
Chouteau County Courthouse
Fort Benton, Montana 59442

Board of County Commissioners
Blaine County Courthouse
Chinook, Montana 59523

Board of County Commissioners
Fergus County Courthouse
Lewistown, Montana 59457

Board of County Commissioners
Hill County Courthouse
Havre, Montana 59501

Mayor
City of Fort Benton
Fort Benton, Montana 59442

Mayor
City of Big Sandy
Big Sandy, Montana 59520

Mayor
City of Havre
Havre, Montana 59501

Mayor
City of Chinook
Chinook, Montana 59523

Mayor
City of Lewistown
Lewistown, Montana 59457

Mayor
City of Winifred
Winifred, Montana 59489

Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1524
Billings, Montana 59103

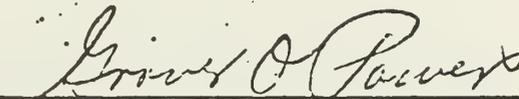
National Park Service (DOI)
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, Nebraska 69102

Mr. Ole Ueland, Executive Secretary
State Soil Conservation Committee
Capitol Station
Helena, Montana 59601

Very truly yours,

H. J. ANDERSON
DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS

By



Grover O. Powers, P.E.,
Supervisor - Preconstruction
Section

32:GOP/SCK/pi
Attachment

II. RETURNED COMMENTS

November 17, 1972

32-CAS

RS-68 (6)
Bridge Study
Northwest of Winifred

Mr. Wesley R. Woodgerd, Administrator
Recreation and Parks Division
Department of Fish and Game
Sam W. Mitchell Building
Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Mr. Woodgerd:

The Department of Highways is presently completing its development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed bridge across the Missouri River northwest of Winifred.

Tentatively a bridge site has been selected at a point just upstream from the present location of the Lohse-P.N. Ferry. In our studies it was found that this site would divide an easement which the state has for a river recreation area. In a discussion held November 15, 1972, here at the Department of Highways in Mr. Stephen Kologi's office with Mr. Don Hyppa and Mr. Ashley Roberts of your office, it was felt by those present that due consideration to this matter should be given. We therefore are asking for your review, suggestions, and comments.

Also, as required by the Department of Transportation through the Federal Highway Administration, it is necessary that the Department of Highways obtain a determination concerning Section 4(f) usage of land from the Department of Fish and Game. Since it is required by the Federal Highway Administration that this determination be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, your early reply on these matters will be greatly appreciated.

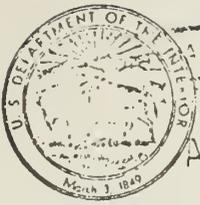
Very truly yours,

H. J. ANDERSON
DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS

32:GOP/SCK/CAS/pi

cc: J. R. Beckert
S. C. Kologi
J. Gipe
C. A. Swanson

By Grover O. Powers
Grover O. Powers, P.E.,
Supervisor - Preconstruction Section



MONTANA HIGHWAY COMMISSION
RECEIVED
 AUG 30 1972
 HELENA, MONTANA

UNITED STATES
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

NORTHWEST REGION
 1000 SECOND AVENUE
 SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98104

IN REPLY REFER TO
 D42
 D36

Your reference 32-GOP
 S-68 (6)

AUG 28 1972

ACTING	RETURN TO
	MAIL ROOM
	DIRECTOR
	GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE
	ADMINISTRATIVE
	DATA PROCESSING
	PLANNING & RESEARCH
	INSPECTION
	LEGAL COUNSEL
	RECORDS MANAGEMENT
	TRAINING
	OFFICE OF WAY
	CONSTRUCTION
	GENERAL
	PROPERTY
	RECREATION
	ADMINISTRATIVE

Grover O. Powers, Supervisor
 Preconstruction Section
 Montana Highway Commission
 Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Mr. Powers:

This is a belated response to your letter of June 2, 1972, concerning your feasibility study of a possible bridge crossing of the Missouri River northwest of Winifred, Montana. A recent realignment of our Bureau's regional boundaries has shifted responsibility for Bureau of Outdoor Recreation's activities in Montana to our Mid-Continent Regional Office in Denver. However, since it now appears that our office will continue its involvement in the study of the Missouri River below Fort Benton under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, we are responding to your request.

We are enclosing a copy of the 1968 Bureau of Outdoor Recreation study report "The Middle Missouri: A Rediscovery." That report recommended the establishment of a Missouri Breaks National River along the 100-mile portion of the Missouri River between Coal Banks Landing, near Virgelle, Montana, and the western boundary of the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Range. Following the publication of that report, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was enacted on October 2, 1968. This legislation called for the study of some 27 rivers as potential additions to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. One of the study rivers is the segment of the Missouri, Montana between Fort Benton, Montana and Ryan Island, which is a few miles below Robinson Bridge. A copy of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and of the guidelines adopted for evaluating river areas proposed for inclusion in the system are enclosed.

The study of the segment of the Missouri River below Fort Benton under

the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is presently underway. The study leader is Arthur Stewart of our Washington, D.C. staff. The state of Montana is represented on the study team by Wesley R. Woodgerd, Chief, Recreation and Parks Division, Department of Fish and Game. The study is scheduled for completion in March of 1973.

The segment of the Missouri River near its confluence with the Judith River is one which probably would be classified as recreational in the event the river is included in the national system. You will note in Section 2 (b) (3) of the Act that recreational rivers are those "... that are readily accessible by road..." and the guidelines, in the summary on page 12, point out that recreational rivers are "...readily accessible ... with likelihood...of bridge crossings."

As far as our wild and scenic river study is concerned, we do not foresee any conflict with your feasibility study. As to the possible impact of bridge construction, this would depend on factors such as the type of structure proposed, its effect on the free flowing characteristics of the river and its actual location.

We believe that an environmental statement should be prepared on a bridge project such as this one since it would involve one of the rivers listed for study by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. We would want to be sure that the proposal includes proper safeguards for the protection of this highly significant recreation resource. Also, there could be an opportunity here to enhance the impact of such a project through the provision of access to the river from the bridge approaches for boat launching and other purposes and by continuing to permit public access to the river over the existing roads to both of the ferry crossings.

If you should decide to prepare an environmental statement, 12 copies of the draft should be submitted to Mr. John W. Larson, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Program Policy, Washington, D. C. 20240. Mr. Larson's office will circulate the statement for review by Interior agencies and consolidated Departmental comments will be transmitted to the Montana Director of Highways. A review by our Bureau will be completed by our Denver office and incorporated into the Department's comments.

Our Denver office's address is as follows:

Regional Director
Mid-Continent Region
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation
Denver Federal Center
Building 41
Denver, Colorado 80225

If you should have any questions about the wild and scenic river study on the Missouri River and its impact on your proposed study we would be pleased to hear from you.

Sincerely yours,

Maurice H. Lundy
Regional Director

M. H. Lundy

Enclosures

Date Recd. Preconst. 8-30-77		Act	Info	Assign	Index
			MAIL ROUTE		
			30 COP/AMH		
			31 11/10/77		
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by Ansel Adams in This Is the American Earth

SIERRA CLUB

Mills Tower, San Francisco 94104

Open Missouli
400 W. Boston
Helena, Montana

DEAR MR POWERS,

WE WOULD LIKE YOU AND THE DEPARTMENT TO KNOW OF OUR ABSOLUTE CONVICTION THAT AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT MUST BE WRITTEN ON THE PROPOSED BUILDING OF A NEW BRIDGE ACROSS THE MISSOURI RIVER ALONG ROUTE 236, NORTHWEST OF WINIFRED. WE SUBMIT ALSO, THAT THIS STATEMENT MUST BE WIDELY DISTRIBUTED - MUCH MORE WIDELY THAN YOUR INITIAL MAILING ON THE SUBJECT, WHICH WAS TO BUT A FEW OF THE PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS WHICH HAVE A SPECIAL INTEREST IN THIS VERY SPECIAL AREA - AND THAT YOU PROVIDE FOR OPEN, ACCESSIBLE HEARINGS SO THAT ALL MAY HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO STATE THEIR VIEWS.

ALTHOUGH THE ROAD ITSELF MAY HOLD A SECONDARY ROUTE STATUS; IT IS LOCATED, AT THE BRIDGING POINT, IN A TRULY FIRST CLASS RECREATION AND WILDLIFE AREA. THIS FREE FLOWING STRETCH OF THE MISSOURI IS INDEED OF HISTORICAL

IMPORTANCE, INTEREST AND SIGNIFICANCE AND MUST BE SO
 EVALUATED AND HANDLED BY YOUR AGENCY. WE AS A STATE
 MUST BE MOST ACUTELY AWARE OF THE POTENTIALLY INCREASING
 LOSS OF OUR NATURAL AREAS AND UNWISSELY STRIVE TO
 PROTECT AND ENHANCE THEM TO THE VERY REAL BENEFIT OF
 OUR COUN AND OUR FELLOW CITIZENS.

WE MOST EAGERLY REQUEST THAT YOU KEEP US
 FULLY AND PROMPTLY INFORMED OF ANY FURTHER ACTION YOU
 MAY TAKE ON THIS MATTER.

THANK YOU.

SINCERELY,

Phyllis Cantelmo
 CHAIRMAN
 UPPER MISSOURI GREAT
 SIERRA CLUB
 HELENA

Date Recd. Preconst.	8-2-72	Initial	
Attach			
MAIL ROUTE			
Info	30 CPT 10MH		
Act	30 Field Design		
	30 Sub. Eng. Design		
	31 Sub. Eng. Plans		
	32 New Region		
	32 Landmarks		
	33 East Region		
	34 H. Historic		
	Pub. Hearings		
	Consultant Design		
	File		

HIGHWAY
 RECEIVED
 JUL 26 1972
 HELENA, MONTANA

24 July 1972

FOR INFO	RETURN TO M & F	DATE RECEIVED	PROJECT NO.	PROJECT NAME	PROJECT LOCATION	PROJECT STATUS	PROJECT TYPE	PROJECT CLASS	PROJECT CODE	PROJECT UNIT	PROJECT DISTRICT	PROJECT DIVISION	PROJECT OFFICE	PROJECT FIELD	PROJECT AREA	PROJECT STATE	PROJECT COUNTY	PROJECT TOWNSHIP	PROJECT RANGE	PROJECT SECTION	PROJECT QUARTER	PROJECT CORNER	PROJECT MONUMENT	PROJECT MARKER	PROJECT BEARING	PROJECT DISTANCE	PROJECT AREA	PROJECT PERMITS	PROJECT RECORDS	PROJECT FILES	PROJECT DRAWINGS	PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS	PROJECT CONTRACTS	PROJECT AGREEMENTS	PROJECT ORDINANCES	PROJECT RESOLUTIONS	PROJECT MEMORANDUMS	PROJECT LETTERS	PROJECT REPORTS	PROJECT STUDIES	PROJECT SURVEYS	PROJECT MAPS	PROJECT PHOTOS	PROJECT VIDEOS	PROJECT AUDIO	PROJECT OTHER
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Mr. Grover O. Powers, P.E.
 Supervisor, Preconstruction Section
 Department of Highways
 Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Mr. Powers:

It has come to our attention that a new bridge on the Missouri River is being planned, northwest of Winifred, Montana. We feel that action of this nature is definitely a "major action" under the Montana Environmental Policy Act and hence an environmental impact statement should be filed.

As you are aware, there are presently no bridge crossings on the Missouri River between Fort Benton and the Robinson Bridge. I am sure that you are also aware that the Missouri River between Fort Benton and Ryan Island is under study for addition to the United States Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-542) sets the following criteria for wild rivers:

1. Free of impoundments
2. Generally inaccessible except by trail
3. Watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive
4. Waters unpolluted

The criteria for scenic rivers are:

1. Free of impoundments
2. Accessible in places by road
3. Shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped

The basic differences between a "wild" and a "scenic" river are degree of development, type of land use, and road accessibility.

While the construction of a bridge may have a small impact on the local physical environment, this particular construction could have a much wider impact. The impact of the bridge on the entire area and especially on the river system should be considered. On September 11, 1970, Secretary of the Interior Hickel and Secretary of Agriculture Hardin discussed the selection of rivers for study as potential wild and scenic rivers. They stated:

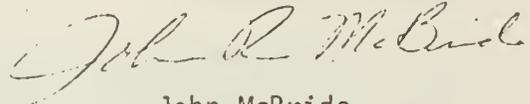
"Selection of these rivers in no way prohibits planning, construction or programs to change existing uses in the river areas. However, such programs must proceed on the basis of a complete understanding of how existing values in the river areas would be altered."

While the secretaries may have been referring to Federal activities in their comments, the same criteria should definitely apply to actions by

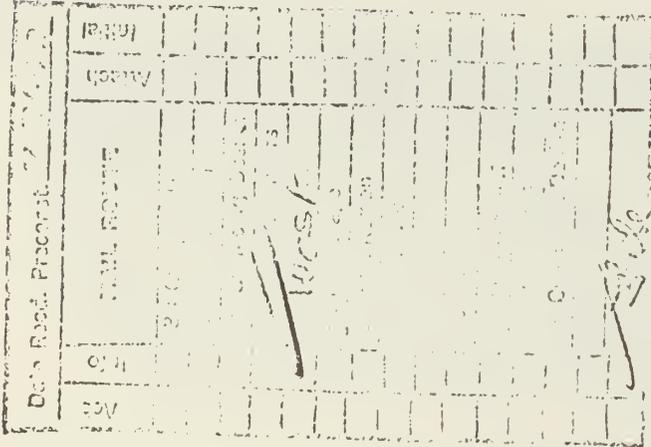
the state of Montana. We feel that the only way to obtain a complete understanding of how existing values in the Missouri River area would be altered by a bridge northwest of Winifred is to file a complete environmental impact statement.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John McBride
for the
Student Environmental Research Center
Room 212, Venture Center
University of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59801

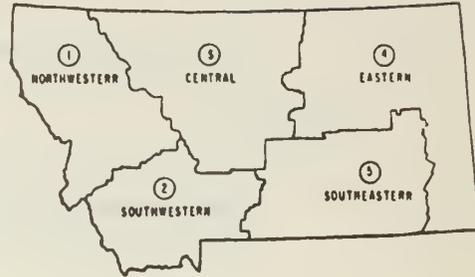


cc: Fletcher Newby

Montana Wildlife Federation

AFFILIATE OF NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

410 Woodworth Ave.
Missoula, Montana
July 14, 1972



Mr. Grover O. Powers, P.E.
Supervisor - Preconstruction Section
Department of Highways
Helena, Montana

Dear Mr. Powers:

The Montana Highway Department does not think it necessary to make an environmental impact report for a proposed bridge crossing the Missouri River northwest of the town of Winifred, Montana.

It is my understanding the Section 102 specifies that to the fullest extent possible all agencies of the Federal government shall make impact reports on any project significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

As you know, there are no bridges across the Missouri for 95 air miles. North-South travel must either go the long way around or use ferries which operate during the summer months only.

A bridge crossing will make considerable changes in traffic patterns, necessitate improvement of Secondary Route 236, and both increase and reroute much of the North-South traffic originating in the Havre, Lewistown, and Great Falls areas.

Since there are alternate routes available, I would recommend that an impact statement be prepared and that hearings be held so that the involved public may have an input prior to the construction of an expensive bridge and highway improvement.

Sincerely,

Donald Aldrich
Donald Aldrich

Executive Secretary
Montana Wildlife Federation

cc: Governor Anderson
Fletcher Newby
George Darrow
John Cilpatrick
Ray Nitz

ACT	IRF	RETURN TO P & M
		MAY BE RETAINED
		DIRECTOR
		CENTRALIZED SERVICES
		ACCOUNTING
		DATA PROCESSING
		PLANNING & RESEARCH
		ENGINEERING
		PRECON. SECTION
		BRIDGE
		CONSTRUCTION
		MATERIALS
		PRECON. SECTION
		RIGHT OF WAY
		GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT
		LEGAL
		MAINTENANCE
		TRUCK POOL
		PERSONNEL
		OTHER

THE WEALTH OF THE NATION IS IN ITS NATURAL RESOURCES
CONSERVATION DOES NOT END WITH CONVERSATION



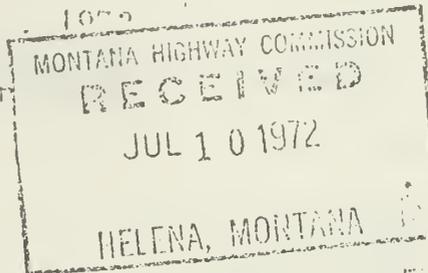
LEWISTOWN
AREA

Chamber of Commerce

MUSEUM BUILDING • P. O. BOX 818 • LEWISTOWN, MONTANA 59457 • PHONE (406) 338-5436

7 July 1972

Mr. Grover O. Powers, Supervisor
Pre-Construction Section
Montana Highway Department
Helena, Montana 59601



Dear Mr. Powers :

Our committee on Roads and Highways is very much interested in the proposed bridge over the Missouri North of Winifred in Fergus County, and is anxious to know what your present plans are in this regard.

We have seen a letter from the Department dated 20 April, 1972 with a tentative schedule of steps with regard to the project.

Would it be possible for you to give us an up-date of that schedule, and any other information you might have that would assist our committee in cooperating with the Commission and Department in the project.

There is considerable interest in the bridge both in Fergus County and in the Counties to the North of the river, and we would hope that any hearings could be held in Lewistown, Chinook, Big Sandy.

At the present time, there is activity in the Winifred and Chinook area on getting signatures on a petition to the Commission, showing interest, and urging action on the matter in the shortest possible time.

Our committee has worked with the Commission and the Highway Department on numerous matters over a period of many, many years, and we understand many of the problems and procedures, and are always anxious to assist and not hinder progress.

Will be looking for your response.

Sincerely

Lee S. Belding, Executive Vice President

ISP/mc
Serving CENTRAL MONTANA since 1908

MONTANA HIGHWAY COMMISSION
RECEIVED
 JUN - 6 1972
 HELENA, MONTANA

Mr. H. J. Anderson
 Director of Highways
 Montana Highway Commission
 Highway Building
 Helena, Montana 59601

Big Sandy, Montana
 June 1, 1972

ACT	INF	RETURN TO M & F MAY BE RETAINED DIRECTOR	CENTRALIZED SERVICES	ACCOUNTING	DATA PROCESSING	PLANNING & RESEARCH	ENGINEERING	PROGRAM	INSPECTION	CONSTRUCTION	MATERIALS	PRECONSTRUCTION	RIGHT OF WAY	CROSS VEHS	LEGAL	MAINTENANCE	TRAFFIC CONTROL	PERSONNEL	OTHER

Dear Mr. Anderson:

In reference to the letter received from Grover Powers, we the board of supervisors of the Big Sandy Conservation District do wholeheartedly endorse the construction of a bridge across the Missouri River on Secondary Route 236 northwest of Winifred and the closing of the two Ferrys: Northwest of Winifred and North of Winifred.

We feel that the feasibility study of this project should not cost \$20,000 of the Secondary Road fund.

We are of the opinion that this bridge is very feasible noting it would supply a direct route from Canada and Havre to Lewistown and points south. This along with the fact that it would be a "year around route" crossing the Missouri makes it even more desirable.

Yes, we believe this to be one of the most necessary improvements yet to be made in Northern Montana and should have top priority.

Sincerely,


 Keith Edwards, Chairman
 Big Sandy Conservation Dist.

cc: Chouteau County Commissioners
 Blaine County Commissioners
 Fergus County Commissioners.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

MIDWEST REGION
1709 JACKSON STREET
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68102

IN REPLY REFER TO:
D30 MWR CF
Your 32-GOP

MAY 23 1972

Grover O. Powers, P. E.
Montana Highway Commission
Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Mr. Powers:

We inadvertently omitted the following information in our May 11, 1972 response to your April 28 letter of inquiry concerning our interest in a possible bridge crossing of the Missouri River on or near Second Route 236 northwest of Winifred.

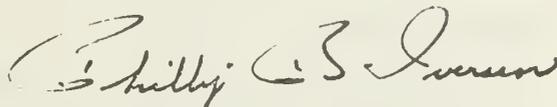
The National Park Service has had a long time interest in the portion of the Missouri River between Fort Benton and the Robinson Bridge. Our interest began with a 1960 preliminary survey followed by an indepth study and report in 1962 en-titled "A Proposed Lewis and Clark Wilderness Waterway". In 1968 the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, in their study "The Middle Missouri - A Rediscovery: A Study of the Outdoor Recreation Potential", recommended preservation of this portion of the river, and following this, a 1968 restudy by the National Park Service formulated concepts and established guidelines for preservation and use of the river.

More recently, this reach is under consideration as a Unit in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System as recommended by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of October 2, 1968 (P.L. 92-452). A report is presently being prepared on this portion of the river. We suggest you consult the Pacific Northwest Region, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Seattle, Washington, concerning your bridge plans.

MAIL ROUTE	
30 GOP MWR	
30 Field Design	
30 Surfacing Design	
31 Office Engineers	
32 West Region	
32 Landscape	
33 East Region	
34 Hydraulic	
35 Timber	
37 Public Planning	
38 Rec. Roads	
39 Consultant Design	
File	

We also believe that an Environmental Impact Statement is required for this project in view of the number of agencies and organizations, private, state as well as Federal, that are interested in the preservation and wilderness aspects of this reach of the Missouri River. The statement is needed to assess the impact this proposal will have on the existing scenic, recreational and historic values.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Phillip R. Iversen". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Phillip R. Iversen
Acting Director
Midwest Region


 MONTANA HIGHWAY COMMISSION
RECEIVED
 MAY 24 1972
 HELENA, MONTANA

DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND GAME
 Helena, Montana
 May 23, 1972

AG, MS	RETURN TO M & P
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	DIRECTOR
	CENTRALIZED SERVICE
	ADVISORY BOARD
	PLANNING & RESEARCH
	ENGINEERING
	INVESTIGATIONS
	CONSTRUCTION
	MATERIALS
	PERMIT SECTION
	RIGHT-OF-WAY
	CROSS VEHICLE WELLS
	TRAILER
	WATER CONTROL
	WATER QUALITY
	PERSONNEL
	CHIEF

Mr. H. J. Anderson
 Director of Highways
 Department of Highways
 Helena, Montana 59601

Attention: Grover Powers

Dear Mr. Anderson:

I have a copy of the letter to you from Mr. Iversen, Acting Director of the Midwest Region of the National Park Service.

I was very surprised at this letter, inasmuch as there are a number of well-known historic sites which may be affected by a bridge construction in that area. In this immediate vicinity, we have Camp Cooke, Fort Chardon, Fort Clagett, the 1855 Council Site, and the old P. N. Ranch. I feel that when location for the bridge is determined, these sites and perhaps others should be taken into consideration.

I presume you will write an environmental impact statement on this project which will consider these historic sites in determining location. I would be happy to help in any way that I may.

Sincerely,

Wesley R. Woodgerd

Wesley R. Woodgerd
 State Liaison Officer for the
 Preservation of Historic Sites

WRW/bd
 cc: Mr. Nels Thoreson
 Mr. Phillip Iversen

Date Recd. Processed: 5-24-72

Act	Info	Attach
		RAIL ROUTE
		30 GOLF LINK
		30 HIGHWAY
		30 SURFACE DESIGN
		31 CIVIL ENGINEERS
		32 HIGHWAY
		32 LUMBER
		33 CIVIL
		34 HYDRAULIC
		35 TRAILS
		37 PUB. PLANNING
		38 SOC. PLANNING
		39 SURFACE DESIGN



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

MIDWEST REGION
1709 JACKSON STREET
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68102

MAY 11 1972

IN REPLY REFER TO:
D30 MWR CF
Your 32-GOP

MONTANA HIGHWAY COMMISSION
RECEIVED
MAY 15 1972

HELENA, MONTANA

RETURN TO MONTANA	GENERALIZED SERVICE	PLANNING	AREA PROCESSING	MANAGEMENT	RECORDS	TRAINING	OFFICE	PROPERTY	INSPECTION	ADVISORY	PHYSICAL PLANNING	ROUTE OF WAY	CONSTRUCTION	GENERAL
MAY BE REFILED														
REGION														

Grover O. Powers, P. E.
Montana Highway Commission
Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Mr. Powers:

Thank you for your letter concerning a possible bridge crossing of the Missouri River northwest of Winifred, Montana.

No established or studied Units of the National Park System would be affected by this proposed project. No eligible sites for registration as National Historic, Natural or Environmental Educational Landmarks are involved. Accordingly, we have no objections to the performance of this work as related to this area.

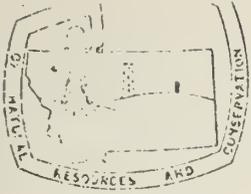
However, we do suggest that you consult the State Liaison Officer appointed by the Governor of Montana for the National Register of Historic Places, for information concerning this program of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-665) as it may be influenced by the proposed construction.

The State Liaison Officer for Montana is Mr. Wesley R. Woodgerd, Chief of the Recreation and Parks Division, Department of Fish and Game, State of Montana, in Helena.

As one of the concerns of the National Park Service is archeological studies, we feel that some thought should be given to archeological resources in project planning. As the proposal develops we will be concerned that action is taken or proposed to determine whether archeological resources are present in the construction area. If feasibility evolves and detailed project studies are undertaken, recommendations and proposed actions resulting from a professional archeological survey should be included in considerations of impacts upon the cultural environmental values.

Sincerely yours,

Phillip R. Iversen
Acting Director
Midwest Region



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

FORREST H. ANDERSON, GOVERNOR

GARY WICKS, DIRECTOR

449.2608

SAM W. MITCHELL BUILDING
HELENA, MONTANA 59601

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

JOSEPH B. REBER, CHAIRMAN
JOSEPH W. SABOL
DEAN HANSON
RILEY OSTBY
HERBERT HUENNEKENS



Mr. H. J. Anderson
Director of Highways
Montana Highway Commission
Highway Building
Helena, Montana 59601

Attention: Grover O. Powers, P.E.
Supervisor, Preconstruction Section

Dear Mr. Anderson:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on a possible bridge crossing of the Missouri northwest of Winifred, Montana.

I had the opportunity to participate in the Governor's Council of Natural Resources float trip and hearings relative to a Wild River designation. I know that a bridge is highly desired by the residents of the area. Apparently there is not too much opposition to a bridge from the proponents of Wild River designation. There are federal dams proposed in the area which would provide a bridge crossing, but apparently this is well in the future. I certainly think a bridge crossing is needed and would serve the need to utilize the natural resources of the area.

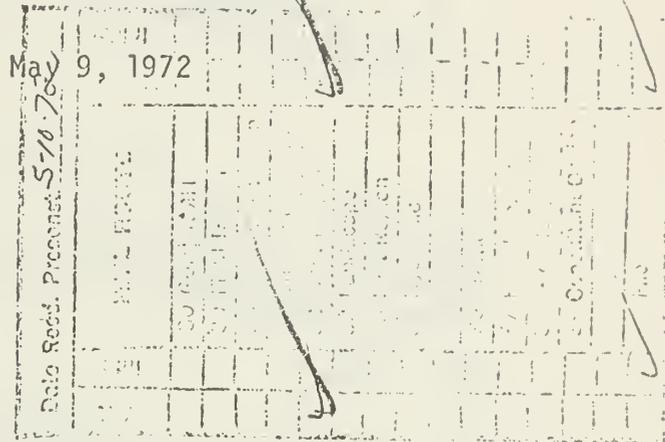
I would appreciate if you would send copies of your letter asking for comments on this and similar projects to the Conservation District in the counties involved. Most are organized along county lines. They have responsibility for natural resource conservation and development matters at the local level. I am sure their comments on highway matters in addition to those of others would be very helpful. I enclose a directory of Conservation Districts.

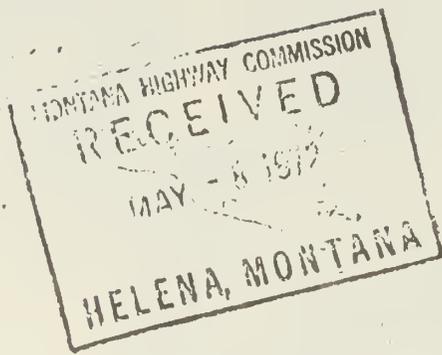
Sincerely,

O. M. Ueland
O. M. Ueland, Chief
Soil Conservation Bureau

cc: Bradley Parrish, Chairman
Fergus County Conservation District

Narvin Works, Chairman
Big Sandy Conservation District





AG	MF	RETURN TO M & F
		MAY BE RETAINED
		DIRECTOR
		GENERALIZED SERVICES
		ACCOUNTING
		DATA PROCESSING
		PLANNING & RESEARCH
		INSPECTION
		CONSTRUCTION
		TRAFFIC CONTROL
		ROADS
		BRIDGE
		MAINTENANCE
		NOTICE
		PERSONNEL
		OTHER

May 5, 1972

Mr. Grover O. Powers, P.E.,
Supervisor - Preconstruction Section
Department of Highways
Helena, Montana

Dear Grover:

This letter is in reply to your letter of April 28, 1972 concerning a possible bridge crossing of the Missouri River northwest of Winifred, Montana.

We have no views either for or against the project at this time.

We are, however, of the firm opinion that such a proposal is a "major action" under the terms of The Montana Environmental Policy Act and will definitely require the preparation of an environmental impact statement for the following reasons:

Construction of such a bridge will ultimately require construction or reconstruction of substantial portions of Secondary Route 236.

It is reasonable to assume that improvement of the river crossing and general highway conditions will greatly increase travel through this previously little traveled area. As a result, recreation use will increase correspondingly with the usual variety of impacts on the land, and people and wildlife of the area.

The proposal should be carefully evaluated as it relates to the various state and federal proposals for future management of the Fort Benton-Fort Peck reach of the Missouri River.

A statement should be prepared to consider all possible alternatives to the project. At this early stage is the ideal time rather than after construction of the bridge has committed the Department of Highways to further actions.

If at all possible, I would like to report the intentions of the Department of Highways on this matter to the EQC at its next meeting June 2, 1972. Thank you very much for enabling us to comment at this early stage.

Sincerely yours,

Fletcher E. Newby
FLETCHER E. NEWBY
Executive Director

FEN/mb
cc: Rep. George Darrow, Chairman
Environmental Quality Council

Visit
MONTANA
 the BIG SKY Country

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
 HILL COUNTY
 HAYRE, MONTANA

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MONTANA HIGHWAY COMMISSION
RECEIVED
 MAY - 8 1972
 HELENA, MONTANA

5 May, 1972

Montana Highway Commission
 Grover O. Powers, P.E.
 Supervisor - Preconstruction Section
 Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Mr. Powers:

In reply to your letter of April 28, 1972, in regard to 32-GOP, please be advised that as a Board of County Commissioners, we have no objection to a Bridge northwest of Winifred, Montana. We encourage such a structure as we feel it is necessary and well warranted to have a bridge in that location, both for the present and the future.

Sincerely yours,

Dean McFadden

Dean McFadden
 Chairman of the Board
 HILL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ACCT. INF.	PROPERTY TO M 2 F	STAY BE RETAINED	DIRECTOR	CENTRALIZED SERVICES	ACCOUNTING	DATA PROCESSING	PLANNING & RESEARCH	ENGINEERING	BRIDGE	CONSTRUCTION	MATERIALS	INSPECTION	RIGHT-OF-WAY	CROSS-VEHICLE HEIGHT	LEGAL	MAINTENANCE	NOTICE	PERSONAL	OTHER

Date Recd. Account: S-872

Initial	Attach	FILE	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

CITY OF LEWISTOWN

312 4TH AVENUE SOUTH — LEWISTOWN, MONTANA 59457 — (406) 538-8788

ROBERT L. DISSLY, MAYOR

March 8, 1972



- FIRST WARD ALDERMEN
- SARAH NEUMANN
- C WILBUR LINDSTRAND
- SECND WARD ALDERMEN
- FRANCIS J. BERRER
- ROBERT H. GREEN
- THIRD WARD ALDERMEN
- FRANK SIMONFY
- CITY TREASURER
- ROBERT C. BROOKS
- POLICE JUDGE
- DOROTHEA M ABEL
- CITY CLERK
- LEONARD H. MCKINNEY
- CITY ATTORNEY
- THOMAS W. HUFF
- POLICE CHIEF
- C. E. PENTECOST
- FIRE CHIEF
- LOYD BOWEN
- SUPT. OF OPERATIONS
- MARJORY J. KELLER
- WATER CLERK
- EDWARD F. BERGER
- RECREATION DIRECTOR
- E. RICHARD IBERN
- SANITARY OFFICER

Mr. Harry J. Anderson
 Director of Highways
 Montana State Highway Commission
 Helena, Montana 59601

Dear Mr. Anderson:

The Lewistown City Council in regular session March 6th, on motion duly made, seconded and carried, went on record as being in favor of a bridge over the Missouri River to be constructed in the general area North of Winifred, Montana in line with a proposal by Fergus County Commissioners and the two counties North of Fergus County.

It is the feeling of the City Council and the Mayor of Lewistown that a study should be made at the earliest opportunity for locating and constructing the bridge in this general area. It was noted that Fergus County has a paved road extending North from the City of Lewistown to the City of Winifred, and there is a paved road South of Big Sandy towards the river.

The first step, of course, would be to make a feasibility study of the best site. Items considered for the need for this bridge is the lack of continuous ferry service both during the winter time (due to ice), and the summer time (due to low water). The City of Lewistown would appreciate any help that you can render on this project.

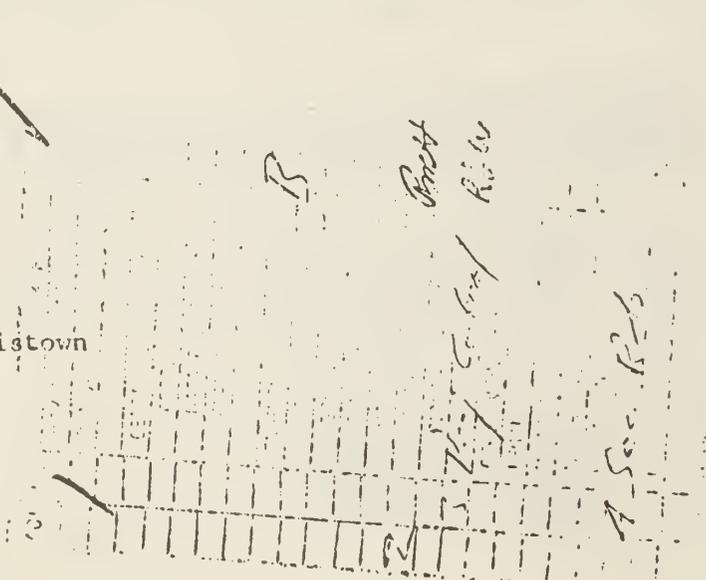
Sincerely yours,

CITY OF LEWISTOWN

Robert L. Dissly
 Robert L. Dissly, Mayor

RLD:dma

cc: State Highway Commission, Lewistown



III. NEWS ARTICLES

Both sides of river show interest in bridge proposal

Montanans living north of the Missouri River, as well as those on this side, have expressed considerable interest in the proposed bridge across the river.

This was disclosed at a meeting of the Lewistown Area Chamber of Commerce Roads and Highway Committee Wednesday.

The Rotary Club in Big Sandy has written that they are behind the project 100 percent. That they have been trying to get such a bridge for 50 years and that they now have 159 signatures on a petition to the State of Montana, Department of Highways. They asked for extra copies of the petition, which was prepared by the local Chamber.

The petition commends the Highway Department for work done thus far on plans for the bridge and urges prompt action.

The main purpose of the petition is to show local interest in the project.

It was reported at Wednesday's meeting that Havre residents have indicated that they are very much in favor of it and want to do what they can to help push it. Petitions are also being circulated in that community, but a count of signatures was not available.

Petitions have also been sent to Chinook where the proposal will be discussed at a meeting next Thursday.

Here in the Central Montana area, Mrs. Milton Butcher of Winifred has obtained over 500 signatures to the petition and picked up more petition material.

"It indicates that people on both sides of the river are completely in favor of this," Lee Belding, executive director of the Chamber, said this morning.

The Highway Department has scheduled hearings on the matter in Winifred and Big Sandy.

Billings Gazette 6/10

Build the bridge

Add our support to those in Central Montana urging a highway bridge be erected to span the Missouri River north of Lewistown.

It is a long, lonesome stretch of river between the Fred Robinson Bridge north of Grass Range and the next span in the Fort Benton-Loma area.



Eastern and Central Montana have been sadly lacking in north-south communication routes ever since the state started to develop. North-south railroads are nonexistent between Glendive and Lewistown. Highways are few and far between, primarily because of no bridges across the Missouri.

It is only in the last decade or so that the Fred Robinson Bridge opened the Malta-Glasgow-Harlem area to north-south commerce. Most of the bridges east of it were built within middle-age memory.

The efforts now to spur construction of a bridge across the Missouri are worthy of support of all residents on both sides of the river.

Missouri R. bridge proposal supported by Billings group

Central Montanans who are working to get a bridge built across the Missouri River have just received strong support from Billings.

The board of directors of the Billings Chamber of Commerce has endorsed the bridge by unanimous action.

Don Pfau and Donn Pennell of Lewistown met recently with the transportation committee of the Billings Chamber of Commerce to explain the need for the bridge, which in turn recommended the project to the directors, according to Charles T. Young, chairman of the Lewistown Area Chamber of Commerce's highway committee.

Pfau and Pennell pointed out to the Billings group the great amount of work that has already been done by the county commissioners of Fergus, Blaine and Chouteau counties to obtain action.

They also stressed the cooperation and advanced work to-

ward it that has already been done by the State Highway Commission.

"This project," Young said, "has received a great amount of encouragement from people who live on both sides of the river and wish to communicate back and forth for business and other reasons, and has also been endorsed by many state and federal agencies. Other cities

and communities that know the need and importance of having year-around means of travel across the river in the area have also endorsed it."

Petitions are being circulated, asking for construction of the bridge, with several of them in Lewistown, Winifred, Lenton, Big Sandy, Havre and Chinook. "These are not to put pressure on the Highway Commission,"

Young explained, "because it has already been most interested and cooperative. But they are to help them know the strong interest in the bridge and the need for it that is prevalent on both sides of the river."

Young urged that all who are interested sign one of the petitions. He promised complete support for the Highway Commission on the bridge.

HIGHLINE INTEREST IN MISSOURI BRIDGE

When on the Highline last week Don Pfau dropped in on Herb Watts of the Havre Daily News and Mrs. Thelma Johnson of the Chinook Opinion and found that they are both very interested in the proposed new bridge across the Missouri River above Winifred.

They seemed to reflect the opinion of many in the two towns, a feeling that also prevails in Big Sandy and other places along the Highline.

This is good . . . and important. The need for year-around, convenient and quick travel between Central Mon-

tana and the Highline area has long been great.

The Highway Commission hasn't set on its hands on this as preliminary work on the possibilities is going ahead rapidly.

Continued expression of interest by people and organizations on both sides of the river, and encouragement of the Highway Commission in the fine work that it is doing, is important if this much-needed bridge is to be completed in the immediate years ahead.

Bridge over Missouri River now coming closer to reality

The much-needed bridge across the Missouri River north of Lewistown has been nothing but a dream for so many years seems now to be getting closer to reality. "There is still a very great deal to be done, but the progress

in recent weeks has been much greater than any of us expected," said Charles T. Young, chairman of the Lewistown Area Chamber of Commerce's Highway committee. He gave full credit to the commissioners in the three coun-

ties involved — Fergus, Chouteau and Hill — and to the Montana Highway Commission. "The county commissioners got together first," he said, "and the highway department responded quickly to their requests."

"The highway officials have already met with the county commissioners to establish routes or corridors to be studied, and aerial pictures have been taken of the possible route," Young said.

"Other government agencies have also been informed of the possibilities and asked if any problems will be involved. Their help too has been solicited."

The State Highway Commission's tentative schedule ahead includes the starting of geological and cost studies this month, completing the geological studies and obtaining replies from other government agencies in June, the distribution of an environmental statement in early August and the completion of cost estimates in the middle of that month.

Hearings in Fort Benton and Lewistown are tentatively planned for August and September and plans are for a hearing and routing recommendations before the Montana Highway Commission in late October.

"All this is tentative," Young stressed, "but we have had every encouragement and cooperation from the Highway Commission and the commissioners from the three counties."

"In my opinion this bridge is one of the most important road projects this area can support. We have recognized the need for half a century, and it now looks like we are going to get the job done," Young said.

Ferries are operated during the summer months now when feasible at two sites, at the expense of the counties involved.

The bridge would make quick, year-around travel available and cut distances sharply between Lewistown and Winifred to Big Sandy, Havre and Chinook, and many other points north and south of the river.

"People on both sides of the river seem to be getting behind the project," Young said. "This is very important if we are to get the job done."

The Mountaineer
Big Sandy 7/20

Places Petitions

on New Bridge

The Lewistown Area Chamber of Commerce this week circulated several petitions in the Big Sandy area, in an effort to determine public interest and agreement on the proposed bridge over the Missouri River between Fergus and Chouteau Counties.

In a letter received recently, Chamber executive vice president Lee S. Belding, Lewistown, pointed out that the Montana Highway Department is currently conducting a survey to determine the most feasible site for such a crossing, so as to best serve individuals on both sides of the river.

Belding also urged Big Sandy area residents to instigate joint public meetings, to rally support for the proposed project.

Petitions have been placed in Big Sandy at A&P & P Cleaners, Northern Bank of Montana, Big Sandy Grain, Courtmage and Sons, Inc., and Big Sky Auto Parts.

Bridge plans meet with enthusiasm along Highline

There is plenty of enthusiasm up on the Highline for construction of a new bridge across the Missouri River above Winfred connecting the Highline and Central Montana.

Don Pfau discovered this when he was in Chinook and Havre this week.

Herb Watts, editor of the Havre Daily News, and Mrs. Thelma Johnson, publisher of the Chinook Opinion, both told him that their newspapers and people in the communities are very much interested and will do what they can to help.

Pfau was representing Charles T. Young, chairman of the Lewistown Area Chamber of Commerce's Highway Committee.

The Fergus County commis-

sioners have been leaders in instigating construction of the bridge, and have had the support of the commissioners in Hill and Chouteau counties. The Highway Commission is already making preliminary plans.

Pfau was also in Havre representing Sports Incorporated, which headquarters in Lewistown. Its 63rd store in 12 states was opened Thursday in Havre.

Plans made for Missouri R. bridge study

Tentative plans were made at a meeting in Fort Benton last Thursday for a feasibility study for a proposed new bridge across the Missouri River north or northwest of Winfred.

Primary purpose of the study is to determine a route, or alternate routes for the bridge and access roads.

Attending the meeting were Fergus County Commissioners Otto Jensen, Art Grinde and Bill Lodman; Chouteau County Commissioners Dale Skalure and P. E. Peres; Ed Sparks, Blaine County Commissioner; R. W.

Fireman, supervisor of the construction section of the Lewistown Division of the Montana Department of Highways; and Jim Gipe and Stephen Kolagi, Highway Dept. representatives from Helena.

Jensen, chairman of the Fergus County commissioners, said today the officials from the three counties are more or less agreed that the best site for the bridge is where the PN ferry is located, or near there.

All three counties are agreeable to building access roads to

the proposed bridge.

A tentative schedule for completion of the study was set up at the meeting.

Reconnaissance aerial photography was to be obtained by the highway department this week. Next week, other government agencies will be contacted for any comments concerning the effects of possible routes on any projects they might be considering, and requesting any geological studies or contour mapping they might have.

Geological studies are scheduled to begin May 8 by the high-

way department and should be completed about June 20.

Preparation of cost estimates is tentatively set to begin May 15 and is expected to be completed by Aug. 14.

Public hearings are tentatively set in August and September. The hearing and routing recommendations are to be presented to the Montana Highway Commission about Oct. 26.

Environmental statements will also be prepared, if required.

The commissioners stressed the fact that the schedule is only tentative, and not a commitment.

APPENDIX "B"

REFERENCES

1. U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Midwest Region Office

1962 - Lewis and Clark National Wilderness Waterway

2. U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Midwest Region Office

1963 - Historical Notes on the Missouri River
From the Mouth of the Marias to Fort Peck Reservoir

3. U. S. Department of the Interior
and
Corps of Engineers

1963 - Information Bulletin - Missouri River,
Fort Peck to Fort Benton

4. U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation

1968 - The Middle Missouri: A Rediscovery

5. U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Missouri Breaks Master Plan

6. U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Missouri River Division
and
U. S. Department of the Interior
Missouri Basin Region

1963 - Missouri River - Fort Peck to Fort Benton
Joint Study

7. U. S. Department of Commerce
Environmental Science Services Administration

1967 - Climatological Summary

8. U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Missouri River Division

1970 - Missouri River near Winifred, Montana
Potential Section 14 Project at the
Lohse-P.N. Ferry Crossing

