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Environmental Assessment

Proposed DNRC/MDT Land Exchange
Perma - Wisdom - Belgrade - Troy

Fishing along the bank of the Flathead River at Perma.

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Prepared For:
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Montana Department of Transportation

Prepared By:
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HELENA, MONTANA

CIVIL,

TRANSPORTATION,

ENVIRONMENTAL,

ENGINEERS

January 25, 2002

Pursuant to the Montana Environmental Policy Act, the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for a proposed land exchange between the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNRC).

The purpose of the EA is to inform all interested governmental agencies, public groups or individuals of the proposed action and to determine whether or not the action may have a significant effect on the physical or human environment.

If you wish to comment on this EA for the proposed land exchange, please do so by Monday, February 25, 2002. Comments may be submitted to me at the address at the bottom of this letter.

Additional copies of the EA are available for review at the county and city offices of the communities involved in the exchange, their local libraries, the Montana State Library, MDT (2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT 59620) and the following DNRC offices:

- Plains Unit Office, 124 Airport Road, Plains;
- Northwestern Land Office, 2250 Hwy 93 North, Kalispell;
- Bozeman Unit Office, 151 Evergreen Suite C, Bozeman;
- Dillon Unit Office, 730 North Montana Street, Dillon;
- Central Land Office, 8001 N. Montana Avenue, Helena; and the
- main office at 1625 11th Avenue, Helena.

An electronic copy of this document may be viewed at www.rpa-hln.com or by following a link to RPA from the DNRC website: www.dnrc.state.mt.us/trust/tlmdhome.htm.

Public meetings to discuss the proposed land exchange will be held February 13, 19 and 20 at the following locations.

- Troy, February 13, First National Bank—11:00 a.m.
- Plains, February 13, DNRC Plains Unit Office, 124 Airport Road—6:00 p.m.
- Wisdom, February 19, Town Hall, Highway 43—6:00 p.m.
- Belgrade, February 20, Belgrade City Hall, 91 E. Central Avenue—6:00 p.m.

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MEPA ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

PERMA/WISDOM/TROY/BELGRADE LAND EXCHANGE

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

and the

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

This document is prepared in conformance with MEPA requirements and contains the information required for an Environmental Assessment (EA) under the provisions of **ARM 18.2.237(2)** and **18.2.239**.

Submitted pursuant to **Section 75-1-101, *et seq.* M.C.A.**
by
The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
and the Montana Department of Transportation

Approved:

Marylee K. Norris — Date 1/25/02
Montana Department of Natural
Resources and Conservation

M. P. — Date 1/25/02
Montana Department of Transportation

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PART I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

1. Type of Proposed State Action

The Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNRC) and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) are seeking approval for a proposed exchange of property from the Montana Board of Land Commissioners (Land Board). The proposed exchange of lands would increase contributions to the School Trust Lands Program, construct a much-needed highway maintenance facility and facilitate right-of-way acquisition for future roadway projects on U.S. Highway 93 between Evaro and Polson. The Land Board gave preliminary approval to these agencies on July 16, 2001 to pursue their request and directed them to complete an environmental assessment (EA) of the exchange. MDT selected Robert Peccia & Associates, an engineering and consulting firm in Helena, to complete the EA to ensure all possible environmental, cultural, historical, economic and social impacts are considered before the exchange is approved.

The general locations of the lands in Montana and in Lincoln, Sanders, Beaverhead and Gallatin Counties are shown in **Figure 1**. The maps and photographs in **A-1 through A-17** show their typical topography and landscapes.

2. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action

Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 11(4), M.C.A.

MDT – Title 60, Chapter 4, Section 201, M.C.A.
DNRC – Title 77, Chapter 2, Section 207, M.C.A.
DNRC – Land Exchange Policy, Montana Board of Land Commissioners, 3/21/94

3. Name of Project

MDT/DNRC Perma/Wisdom/Troy/Belgrade Land Exchange

4. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsors

Montana Department of
Transportation
2701 Prospect
P.O. Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001
(406) 444-6003

Montana Department of Natural
Resources & Conservation
1625 11th Avenue
P.O. Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-1601
(406) 444-2074

5. Estimated Completion Date of Land Exchange May 2002

6. Locations Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township) See Figure 1 for Map of Locations

MDT property

T1S, R4E	Section 12	Gallatin County	3.49 acres
T31N, R33W	Section 20	Lincoln County	45.29 acres

DNRC property

T19N, R24W	Section 36	Sanders County	383.03 acres
T3S, R15W	Section 16	Beaverhead County	10.00 acres, or 20.00 acres*

* Part II. Environmental Review, Alternative No. 3, p. 36 describes the possibility of DNRC transferring 20 rather than only 10 acres of Wisdom property to MDT to solve a survey issue.

7. Project Size: Estimate of the number of acres involved in the proposed land exchange:

Land Use or Type	Perma	Wisdom	Troy	Belgrade	Total Acreage
Developed: Residential	0	0	0	0	0
Developed: Commercial	0	0	0	0	0
Developed: Industrial	0	0	0	0	0
Undeveloped: Residential	4.75	0	0	0	4.75
Undeveloped: Commercial	0	0	0	3.49	3.49
Undeveloped: Industrial	0	0	0	0	0
Timberland	0	0	37.3	0	37.3
Rangeland	213.35	20	0	0	233.35
Irrigated Cropland	0	0	0	0	0
Dry Cropland	0	0	0	0	0
Rock Quarry	40	0	0	0	40
Wetlands	0	0	0	0	0
Riparian Areas	0	0	0	0	0
Floodplain	0	0	0	0	0
*Other	124.93	0	7.99	0	132.92
Subtotal Acreage	383.03	20	45.29	3.49	451.81

* Other includes 124.93 acres of timberland, riparian areas, floodplain and wetlands for Perma property that have not been delineated. This category also applies to 7.99 acres of steep sloped terrain on the Troy property that is characterized by grass, shrubs and some timber.

8. Map/site plan: USGS 7.5' series topographic maps of the subject areas are included as appendices in this document. Section maps and photographs of the subject areas are also included as appendices.

Attached

9. Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action.

Introduction

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) proposed a land exchange that includes excess highway lands and school trust lands. The MDT lands involved in the exchange are 3.49 acres south and east of the I-90 interchange in Belgrade, Gallatin County and 45.92 acres near Troy, Lincoln County. The DNRC school trust lands being considered for exchange include 383.03 acres near Perma, Sanders County (including various small lots within the platted town site of Perma) and between 10 and 20 acres near Wisdom, Beaverhead County.

It is important to note that this agreement is a proposal to exchange ownership of public lands between two state agencies. It does not directly alter land uses on any of the properties included in the agreement. Environmental analyses would be required for each action if either agency pursued subsequent actions on these lands such as commercial development, grazing or logging,

MDT would receive the parcels in Sanders and Beaverhead Counties in exchange for its parcels in Gallatin and Lincoln Counties. This land exchange would provide MDT land near Perma that it could potentially trade with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CS&KT) for much needed right-of-way for future reconstruction of U.S. Highway 93 through the Flathead Indian Reservation. CS&KT wishes to acquire the Perma lands for their cultural significance to the tribe (the lands contain pictographs and other significant features) and because they adjoin other tribal lands.

The Perma lands were appraised on September 7, 2000 at a value of $474,450. The appraisal included a value of $435,000 for the raw land and $39,450 for 4.752 acres of lots within the township of Perma.

The Perma property's value is further enhanced when its 40-acre rock quarry, which was valued at $235,000, is considered. The Perma property's total $709,450 appraised value will help offset the $311,619 DNRC owes MDT as part of a prior land exchange.

MDT would construct a highway maintenance facility on the tract of school trust land south of Wisdom. MDT's existing maintenance facility in Wisdom is limited in size and access in and out of the site is sometimes difficult for large equipment. Constructing a new facility would resolve these issues.

The entire 20-acre Wisdom parcel was appraised on October 2, 2001 and its estimated market value was $24,640. The property is primarily open rangeland but is in close proximity to more valuable irrigated farmland.
This arrangement will provide DNRC ownership of commercially valuable land near the Belgrade interchange. This property was appraised on August 29, 2001 and its

market value was $460,000. DNRC is required to maximize profits on school trust lands and could earn an estimated $17,000 to $35,000 per year from this land—compared to the $400 it earns annually from the Perma lands.

The land near Troy that DNRC would acquire holds valuable timber assets that could help make significant contributions to the school trust. This property, which was appraised on October 19, 2001, was valued at $165,300. In addition, the property has 37.3 acres of commercial timber valued at $73,455.

Narrative Descriptions of Properties

Perma Property. This 383 acre tract features a variety of landscapes including steep forested hillsides, rock, cliffs, rangeland and riverfront riparian zones. The forested hillsides are comprised primarily of Ponderosa Pine that were exposed to fire in 2000. The rangelands are in fair condition and offer native grasses, sedges and forbs as well as some noxious weeds. The riparian zone fronts the Flathead River and features coniferous vegetation and rock to the north and deciduous vegetation with willows and cottonwood to the south.

Wisdom Property. This 10 acre parcel is flat rangeland that is comprised primarily of Big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) and Rough fescue (*Festuca scabrella*). Some other species are present as well, including Green needlegrass (*Stipa viridula*), Western wheatgrass (*Agropyron smithii*), Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), Idaho fescue (*Festuca Idahoensis*) and Timothy (*Phleum pratense*).

Troy Property. This 45.29 acre parcel is steep and densely forested with old and second growth conifers—primarily Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), larch (*Larix occidentantalis*) and Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*). Some stands of Western Red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) were found on the lower elevations of the property. The parcel levels at its peak where several unmaintained roads and trails cross the property, originating from adjacent United States Forest Service lands.

Belgrade Property. This 3.49 acre parcel is relatively level in grade and is surrounded by retail and light industry development. It appears to be devoid of native vegetation as it has experienced significant impacts from its past use as a stock car race track and more recently as a base site for road construction equipment and materials for the adjacent Belgrade interchange. The dominant vegetation on the property is Spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*).

Background

During the summer of 2000, MDT, DNRC and a private landowner completed a three-way land exchange (the Mead Land Exchange). This land exchange allowed MDT to acquire part of the old Milwaukee Road Railroad grade near Alberton from DNRC and the private landowner in return for excess commercial land on Reserve Street in Missoula. The Mead Land Exchange enabled MDT to fulfill its legal requirements under the *National Historic Preservation Act* by providing for a cultural resource mitigation land bank for highway impacts to historically significant railroad grades. Due to the difference in the appraised values of the properties involved in the Mead Land Exchange, MDT has a credit balance owed to it from DNRC of approximately $311,619.

While visiting the Mead Land Exchange sites in 1999, former MDT Director Marv Dye and DNRC Director Bud Clinch also toured DNRC-administered lands at Perma. Knowing that acquiring the land at Perma offered an opportunity for MDT to advance the reconstruction of U.S. Highway 93 through the Flathead Indian Reservation and for the DNRC to alleviate the credit balance owed MDT, both Directors agreed their respective departments should pursue a future exchange.

Over the past year, MDT and DNRC established the value of the lands at Perma and identified the MDT properties in Troy and Belgrade that could be exchanged to benefit the DNRC. DNRC's Wisdom property was included to help balance the value of the properties being exchanged and to provide MDT with an improved location for its maintenance facility.

10. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction

(a) Permits **N/A**

Agency Name	Permit	Date Filed/#

(b) Funding: **N/A**

Agency Name	Permit	Date Filed/#

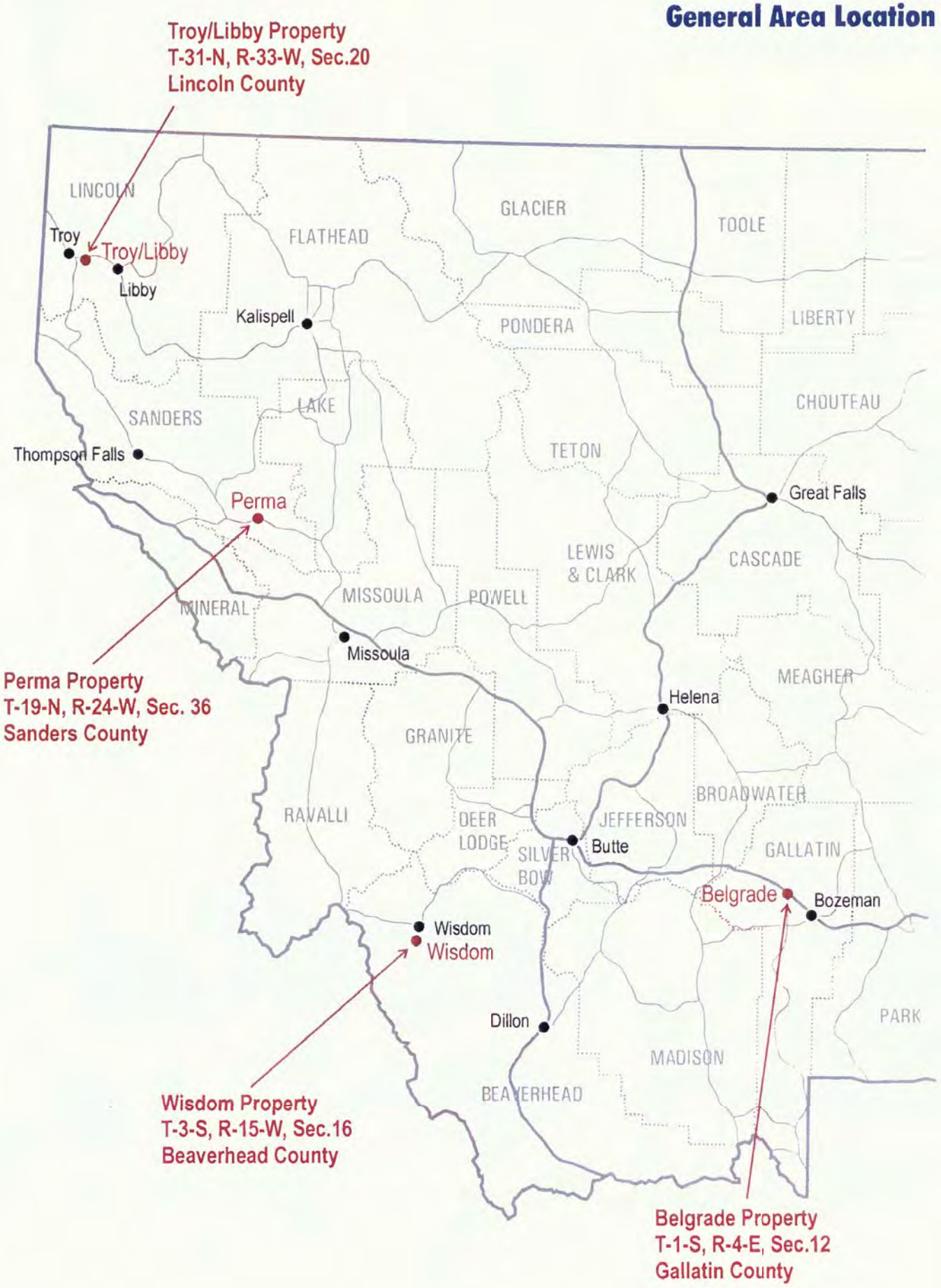
(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction **N/A**

Agency Name	Type of Responsibility

11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of EA.

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Montana Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office
Montana Department of Transportation
Montana Department of Commerce
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Montana Natural Heritage Program
Sanders County
City of Belgrade

Figure 1
General Area Location Map



PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND CHECKLIST

The purpose of this EA is to examine the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of the proposed land exchange on the physical and human environments. Environmental effects considered in this review include:

Direct effects are caused by the proposed action and occur at the same time and place.

Indirect (or secondary) effects are caused by the proposed action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but still reasonably foreseeable. Generally, these impacts are triggered by the initial action. Environmental resources that can be sensitive to change are things like the social and economic structure of a community, floodplains and area-wide water quality.

Cumulative effects are impacts that result from the incremental consequences of an action when added to other past and reasonably foreseeable future actions. These impacts are less defined than indirect effects and may even be undetectable. Nonetheless, such effects can add to other disturbances and eventually lead to measurable environmental change.

Effects and impacts are synonymous in this evaluation. Where applicable, effects on natural resources and on the components, structures and functioning of affected ecosystems, on aesthetics, historical, cultural, economic, social and health are identified and discussed in this Part.

The following Environmental Checklist summarizes both beneficial and detrimental effects of the proposed land exchange on the Physical and Human Environments. The Checklist provides a convenient way to summarize the type and extent of environmental effects expected to result from the land exchange. The items addressed in the Checklist are consistent with factors that must be addressed according to the *Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)*. In some instances, comments are provided to clarify the direct effects of the proposed land exchange or to add supplementary information necessary for the narrative discussing reasonably foreseeable secondary and cumulative effects of such an exchange.

To compare and contrast the effects of the proposed land exchange, the impacts associated with undertaking or not undertaking the land exchange (no action) are summarized at the conclusion of each section in the Checklist.

1. Evaluation of the Impacts of the Proposed Action Including Secondary and Cumulative Impacts on the Physical and Human Environment:

IMPACTS

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
1. LAND RESOURCES						
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X			**1b.**
c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other: N/A						

Comments from above: none

1b. The tracts of land DNRC proposes to exchange with MDT have historically been used as rangeland. Transferring the Perma property to MDT would result in the termination of a grazing lease on this land.

A quarry of decorative rock also exists on the Perma property. DNRC has historically granted permits for rock removal but does not have any active permit holders. The proposed land exchange would likely prevent the issuance of any future permits for this activity.

Although the existing grazing lease on the Wisdom property would be honored to 2009, the relocation of MDT's maintenance facilities to this site may eventually remove 10 to 20 acres of grazing land and require that minor amounts of the property be compacted and covered with impermeable surfaces (such as buildings or pavement). The new MDT maintenance facility would be built on two to three acres.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Land Resources:

Indirect impacts may occur if DNRC enters into a lease agreement to manage the Troy parcel for its timber resources once it has ownership. MEPA would require separate analysis of the potential environmental impacts of logging the Troy parcel.

Effects of Taking No Action:

Taking no action would retain 213.35 acres of rangeland near Perma in Sanders County since DNRC would be able to extend its current grazing leases.

The rock quarry site on the Perma property would remain available for lease.

Taking no action would retain 10 to 20 acres of rangeland near Wisdom in Beaverhead County, since MDT's maintenance facility in Wisdom would remain in use.

Taking no action may result in MDT selling their Belgrade and Troy parcels other parties, rather than transferring them to DNRC, resulting in potential loss of income to the school trust.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (Continued)	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
2. AIR						
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality?		X				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. Other: N/A		X				

Comments from above: none

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Air Quality:

The proposed land exchange and the associated relocation of MDT's maintenance facilities and operations to a nearby site are actions whose individual and cumulative effects would be minor and would not affect regional air quality. Construction of MDT's proposed maintenance facilities at Wisdom would create minor-short-term adverse effects on air quality from the operation of heavy construction equipment and vehicles on disturbed soils. No separate MEPA analysis would be required for this activity, other than what is required for completion of an Air Quality Preconstruction Permit from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality.

Effects of Taking No Action:

The properties involved in this matter would experience no air quality impacts if the proposed land exchange were not approved.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (Continued)	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
3. WATER						
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				**3b.**
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in the risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Violation of the Montana Non-Degradation Laws?		X				
j. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?			X			**3j.**
k. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
l. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
m. Other: N/A		X				

Comments from Above: none

3b. Development of buildings, circulation roads and parking areas associated with MDT's proposed maintenance facility would cause a minor alteration of surface drainage and runoff at the Wisdom site. Future development of commercial uses on the Belgrade parcel would similarly cause minor changes in surface runoff quantities and runoff patterns. Site development would ensure that runoff from impermeable areas does not adversely affect adjacent land uses and property owners. This development would be subject to separate MEPA analysis under the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's water quality permitting regulations.

3j. DNRC would need to transfer the following water rights to MDT under this proposed land exchange.

- The Perma tract has two state water rights that would need to be transferred (76L-C-037494-00 and 76L-W-029650-00).
- The Wisdom tract has no DNRC rights that would need to be transferred to MDT, although there are two private rights claiming 320-acre feet of irrigation in the W2 of section 16 that may need to be addressed in 2002.
- Water rights were also analyzed for transfer from MDT to DNRC and it was determined that the Valley Ditch Company has water right filings on the N2 of Section 12 of the Belgrade parcel. This right would not transfer to DNRC. The Wiedenaar Ranches near Belgrade also have a filing for irrigation of 157 acres in the NW of Section 12, yet since this tract is likely not irrigable, no water rights would transfer to DNRC.
- The only water right relevant to the Troy parcel is 76D-C-075964-00 for the rest area, which is outside the scope of the property proposed for transfer and therefore is not impacted.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Water Resources:

None

Effects of Taking No Action:

If the ownership of the lands involved in the proposed exchange remained the same, there would be no effects to water quality on or adjacent to any of the parcels.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (Continued)	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
4. VEGETATION						
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?						
b. Alteration of a plant community?						
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered plant species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?			X		X	**4d.**
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X		X	**4e.**
l. Other: N/A						

Comments from Above:

4d. The tract of land DNRC proposes to exchange with MDT has historically been used as grazing land. Relocating MDT's maintenance facilities to the site would result in the loss of between 10 and 20 acres of rangeland.

4e. New land disturbances offer the potential for the migration and establishment or spread of noxious weeds unless efforts are made to re-establish permanent desirable vegetation communities on areas disturbed by the construction. Development of MDT's maintenance facilities on the Wisdom parcel would be subject to the provisions of the County Noxious Weed Management Act and other county noxious weed control provisions.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Vegetation Resources:

The Montana Natural Heritage Program's databases were searched for plant species of special concern for the properties included in this proposed land exchange. Two species, small dropseed (*Sporobolus neglectus*) and dwarf purple monkeyflower (*Mimulus nanus*) were listed as historically occurring in the general area of the Belgrade parcel. Given that this property is the former site of the Gallatin County Speedway and served as a temporary

equipment and material storage site for the construction of the Belgrade interchange, it is unlikely that either of these species exist in this location.

Construction of the MDT maintenance facility at Wisdom would remove about 2-3 acres of vegetation to make room for sand/gravel piles, equipment storage, parking and erection of a building.

Effects of Taking No Action:

Taking no action would not change the vegetation communities that exist on the four parcels considered in this proposal.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (Continued)	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
5. FISH/WILDLIFE						
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			X		X	**5g.**
h. Other: N/A						

COMMENTS FROM ABOVE:

5g. New land disturbances and construction activities at the Wisdom property may cause temporary displacement of or a loss of habitat for small non-game animals or birds that inhabit the properties.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Fish/Wildlife:

The Montana Natural Heritage Program's databases were searched in August 2001 for fish and wildlife species of special concern for the properties included in this proposed land exchange.

Bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*), which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service list as a threatened species, are native to the tributaries of the Columbia River drainage. One tributary—the Flathead River—flows through the Perma property and another—the Kootenai River—flows near the Troy property. Since this proposed land exchange would not require plans for development in either the Flathead or Kootenai Rivers, there would be no direct, secondary or cumulative impacts on bull trout.

Another threatened species, the grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*) has been identified near both the Perma and Troy properties—part of the Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem. Between 1986 and 1995, only 13 individual grizzlies were documented in this ecosystem. Transferring ownership of these properties from one state agency to another would have no impact on grizzlies.

Both the Perma and Troy properties are part of the general habitat of lynx (*Felis lynx*). Spruce-fir forests above 3,500 feet elevation are the preferred habitat for lynx, so both the Perma and Troy properties could be considered lynx habitat. However, aside from any potential future logging activity on the Troy lands by a DNRC lessee, impact on lynx habitat would be nonexistent. Any future land use on this property, such as logging, would require a separate environmental review.

The white sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*) is a threatened species found in the Kootenai River drainage. Approximately 880 sturgeon exist in this habitat, most of which are over 20 years old. Construction of the Libby Dam (which commenced in 1968) is said to have stopped white sturgeon from spawning. Since this project does not have any direct or indirect impacts on the Kootenai River, it would not impact white sturgeon.

The Coeur d' Alene salamander (*Plethodon idahoensis*) is found southwest of Troy in the Callahan Creek drainage. This special status species is not known to inhabit the Troy property but it was included in this document because of its proximity to the site. Rock seeps and outcrops—a preferred habitat for the salamander—do not occur on the Troy property.

The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is known to exist along the Flathead River in the Perma area—specifically 2 ½ miles downstream from town. The exchange of the Perma lands would not cause any secondary or cumulative effects on the bald eagle.

The Montana arctic grayling (*Thymallus arcticus montanus*) population that resides in the Big Hole River drainage is the only entirely fluvial population in the lower 48 United States. The Wisdom parcel is in the Big Hole River drainage but the site is not near a waterway.

Effects of Taking No Action:

Both MDT and DNRC would continue to manage their respective parcels as they have done in the past. All other properties included in the exchange would have no impacts on fish and wildlife resources if they remained under present agency management.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
6. NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS Will the proposed action result in: a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			**6a.**
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other: N/A						

COMMENTS FROM ABOVE:

6a. Temporary increases in noise would be expected during the construction activities required to ready the Wisdom property for MDT's maintenance operations. Noise would also be generated during the movement of equipment and materials to the site. Such impacts would be localized to the area and be short-term in nature.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Noise/Electrical Effects:

Noise would be generated during construction of buildings, access roads and parking areas on the Belgrade property if it is leased by DNRC and developed for commercial uses. The noise impacts would be temporary and generally confined to the area of construction. Separate MEPA analyses of the noise impacts associated with construction on the Wisdom and Belgrade parcels are not likely to be required since they would be temporary. Furthermore, the Wisdom site is in a rural location with no residences or commercial businesses in the immediate vicinity. The Belgrade site is near several commercial developments that were recently constructed and/or remodeled. These businesses would not likely be affected by construction noises as they are subject to a fair amount of noise from commercial activity and traffic. The only residences in the vicinity are located across Interstate 90 to the northeast of the property.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT (Continued)	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
7. LAND USE						
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?			X			**7a.**
b. Conflict with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: N/A						

Comments from Above:

7a. Removing 10 to 20 acres of grazing land from lessee may have a slight impact on its profitability—grazing leases and their associated fees—will be reduced relative to the removal of acreage. Terminating the grazing lease on the Perma property will eliminate $400 in annual grazing lease payments from an adjoining landowner

Changing ownership of the Perma site may have a small impact on the potential for individuals to collect and sell decorative rock from the area. There are currently several rock-picking operations on the adjoining properties and DNRC recently permitted this activity on this site—collecting $20 per ton in permit fees (the permit expired December 15, 2001) down from the $41 per ton it collected from a similar permit in 1997. Decorative rock currently sells for about $200 per ton. Rock picking would not be allowed on the property under MDT ownership.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Land Use:

Gaining acreage near Belgrade could potentially contribute the land's profitability for DNRC. MDT is prevented by Montana law from developing its properties yet DNRC has a mandate to earn revenue from its properties for the school trust. DNRC could earn between $17,000 to $35,000 annually if it leased the Belgrade property for commercial purposes.

The west portion of the Belgrade property is currently zoned B-2 (business district) while the east portion is zoned M-1 (light manufacturing). B-2 zoning allows retail and service businesses such as restaurants, gas stations and motels. M-1 zoning allows for light manufacturing with restrictions on nuisances such as odor, vibration, noise, fire and explosive hazards.

According to the Belgrade City Planner, B-2 zoning is the "highest and best" use of the Belgrade property and the city council may approve a petition to withdraw the portion of the lot zoned M-1. City sewer and water are scheduled to be available to the property in mid-2002 to accommodate future commercial development. Provisions to extend water and sewer under Interstate 90 to the Belgrade parcel already exist. The Belgrade City Planner also mentioned that adjacent landowners are interested in forming a special improvement district to pay for extending city water and sewer into the commercial area south of the Belgrade interchange.

Effects of Taking No Action:

If this exchange were not implemented, DNRC and MDT would continue their operations on their respective properties. Existing land uses would not change.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT (Continued)	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS						
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?			X			**8a.**
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				**8b.**
d. Other: N/A						

Comments from Above:

8a. MDT's maintenance facility would store and use a variety of materials and wastes in small quantities. The facility would store a stockpile of road mix (a sand/salt combination), less than two tons of road oil/asphalt mix, less than 500 gallons of used motor oil and a variety of biodegradable solvents. MDT uses local gas stations to fuel its maintenance vehicles so no fuel is stored at the maintenance site.

8b. Immediately to the southwest of the Belgrade property is the Flying J Truck Stop, which had petroleum releases in 1990 and 1998. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality and MDT investigated both releases and monitoring wells were installed. The investigation demonstrated that groundwater is 45 to 63 feet deep and has a gradient of approximately 87 feet per mile toward the Belgrade parcel. Analyses indicated that detectable levels of petroleum hydrocarbons were not present in the groundwater beneath the Flying J site. A deep level of soil contamination (approximately 50 feet deep) was present at the Flying J site but appeared to be limited to that particular area. The wells at the Flying J site are being sampled annually. MDT concluded in its investigation that the potential for finding significant quantities or levels of hazardous waste or materials on the Belgrade parcel is low.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Risk/Health Hazards:

None

Effects of Taking No Action:

If this land exchange were not implemented, DNRC and MDT would continue their operations on their respective properties. MDT and DNRC properties do not contain any hazardous materials.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT (Continued)	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
9. COMMUNITY IMPACTS						
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?			X			**9d.**
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
f. Other: N/A		X				**9f.**

COMMENTS FROM ABOVE:

9d. The proposed land exchange would move MDT's maintenance and storage facilities to a new site, converting vacant grazing land to an industrial use.

9f. The city of Belgrade plans to extend sewer and water services to the property by mid-2002 to retail and service development in the area of this property, which currently allows light manufacturing businesses. Changing the area entirely to B-2 zoning classification would encourage the development of new retail establishments to the area while requiring at least two businesses to relocate to another M-1 location—a home manufacturer and a farm implement company.

The costs associated with extending sewer and water services to the Belgrade parcel would be the responsibility of the property developer. However, other businesses in the area have expressed interest in paying special improvement district (SID) fees to extend these services to their lots as well.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Community Impacts:

Population and Growth Rates

Gallatin County, including the city of Belgrade, is currently among the fastest growing areas in Montana. Gallatin County's estimated population increased by 34 percent over the 1990-1999 period—the second fastest growing county Montana—and Belgrade's population grew by more than 67 percent—among the five fastest growing cities in Montana (Montana Department of Commerce, Census and Economic Information Center, June 2000).

The proposed land exchange and subsequent development of the Belgrade property for commercial uses would have only minor indirect effects on the total population and growth rate of the Belgrade area. Retail sales businesses locating to the property would employ managers and full-time workers. With the exception of management for new establishments, it is likely that most new employees would already be Gallatin County residents. This new commercial employment would not create a substantial demand for new housing.

The exchange of the other properties would not result in changes in population or affect growth rates in Beaverhead, Sanders or Lincoln Counties.

Employment and Income

The proposed development on the Belgrade property would increase opportunities for new commercial establishments to locate in Belgrade. New businesses would create opportunities for employment and in turn, increase personal income and expenditures within the community.

DNRC permitted commercial decorative rock picking from the quarry area on the Perma property in the past, though it has no current permit holders for this activity. The proposed land exchange would end this activity. Individuals involved in commercial rock picking face a potential reduction in income and would have to seek materials from other areas. Neighboring landowners currently have commercial rock picking activity on their property.

Changes in Industrial and Commercial Activity

Development of the Belgrade property would likely require rezoning from B-2/M-1 to entirely B-2. This may require some of the existing businesses in the area, including a home manufacturer and a farm implement dealer to relocate. However, several others, including a truck stop and at least two motels comply with B-2 zoning. The Belgrade City Planner indicated that B-2 zoning is the "highest and best use" for property in this area

Traffic Impacts

Development of a new commercial area at the Belgrade site would generate additional traffic on Alaska Road, the street lying south of the site and running east and west, and the adjoining road system. Approaches to the Belgrade property would also need to be constructed.

Approaches to the Wisdom property from Secondary Highway 278 would need to be constructed.

Approaches to the Troy property from either U.S. Highway 2 or from Montana Highway 37 would need to be constructed. Access would need to be secured either from the neighboring United States Forest Service or from Plum Creek Timber Company to construct an approach.

DNRC currently provides access across the Perma parcel to private property held by Denny and Sandra Burgess Miller and Robert S. Vulles. The Sanders County Commission requested that DNRC and MDT perpetuate an easement for access to these private landholdings with this land exchange. At least one other individual, Katherine Bochik, owns property that would best be accessed across the Perma parcel. However, Ms. Bochik has not yet requested an easement for access to her property. Private landowners who wish to access their properties across these lands are required to request permission to do so from DNRC.

Effects of Taking No Action:

If this land exchange were not implemented, DNRC and MDT would continue their operations on their respective properties. The Belgrade site would remain vacant and there would be no immediate need to extend city services to the area or to modify traffic operations.

Grazing would continue on DNRC lands at Wisdom and Perma.

Commercial rock picking operations would remain available from DNRC on the Perma property.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT (Continued)	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
10. PUBLIC SERVICES/ TAXES/UTILITIES Will the proposed action result in: a. Have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreation facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health or other governmental services?			X			**10a.**
b. Have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations to any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?			X			**10c.**
d. Result in increased use of any energy source?			X			**10d.**
e. Other: N/A						

COMMENTS FROM ABOVE:

10a. The property to which MDT's maintenance facilities would be relocated is presently undeveloped. MDT's operations on the site would require the installation of a new well and septic system. The proposed land exchange would not create a need for new or altered community services or infrastructure. Likewise, minor amounts of energy would be consumed through the construction of the proposed maintenance facility. There would be no change in services or demand for infrastructure for the Perma and Troy parcels.

10c. A well and septic system would need to be installed at the Belgrade parcel to accommodate commercial development, if DNRC were to lease the property in the short-term. Sewer and water services as well as utilities from the City of Belgrade would have to be extended to the property near the Belgrade interchange if DNRC were to lease the property for commercial development in the long-term.

Utilities (electrical power, natural gas or other fuel supply) and communications links would have to be extended into the Wisdom property to accommodate MDT's maintenance facilities and operations.

10d. Minor amounts of energy would be consumed during the construction of the proposed maintenance facility at the Wisdom property and the subsequent transfer of equipment and materials to the site.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Public Services/Taxes/Utilities:

New or Altered Government Services

The provision of new government services would be necessary with the development proposed for the Wisdom property. Consideration would have to be given for a private well and septic system at the Wisdom site. Community fire and police protection, solid waste collection, utilities and communications links would have to be extended into the site. All of these provisions would be considered in a separate environmental analysis after transfer of the property from DNRC to MDT.

Local/State Tax Base and Revenues

Cessation of commercial rock picking activity at the Perma property would result in a minor loss in income tax revenue if there is future demand for these materials and they are not available for extraction.

New or Altered Utilities

Privately provided utilities (e.g. natural gas, electrical service, communications, etc.) would have to be extended to the Wisdom site. These amenities have already been installed at the Belgrade property.

There would be no immediate need for modifying or extending utilities at either the Perma or Troy sites.

Energy

Construction of a maintenance facility at Wisdom, new businesses at Belgrade and either logging or development at Troy would increase energy consumption in those areas. Subsequent environmental analyses of these properties would consider these energy impacts prior to development.

Effects of Taking No Action:

Taking no action would not require the alteration or provision of government services or utilities, would not affect the local or state tax base and would not change energy use.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT (Continued)	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
11. AESTHETICS/ RECREATION						
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational opportunities and settings?		X				
d. Other: N/A						

COMMENTS FROM ABOVE: None

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Aesthetics/Recreation:

There may be an indirect effect on recreational access to the Flathead River at Perma. Currently, residents with state lands permits may recreate at the Perma site. This is riverfront property that is used for fishing, hiking, camping and off-road vehicles. MDT would not be bound to provide public recreational access to these lands.

Access to the Troy site, however, would be improved under transfer of ownership to DNRC from MDT. DNRC allows people holding state lands recreation permits to use state lands for big game hunting, hiking, bird watching and other activities, provided the lands have public access. The proximity of US Highway 2 to the Troy property provides public access to the parcel.

The aesthetics of the Wisdom site would be changed since a minor amount of open rangeland would be converted to human development with buildings and other improvements. This would not be out of character with current development in the area.

Effects of Taking No Action:

The public would still enjoy access to the Perma property for its Flathead River access and other amenities.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT (Continued)	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
12. CULTURAL/ HISTORICAL RESOURCES						
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric, historic, or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. Other: N/A						

COMMENTS FROM ABOVE:

12a. Because the transfer of the tract from one state agency to another will not, in-and-of itself, constitute an impact to heritage properties as defined under M.C.A. 22-3-421, MDT and DNRC are not conducting an inventory of cultural and paleontologic resources on the parcels prior to their transfer. MDT and DNRC will be responsible for complying with the mandates of the *Montana State Antiquities Act* if they permit action on the subject parcels once they acquire administrative authority.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects on Cultural/Historical Resources:

RPA contacted the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to determine if any of the properties contained cultural resources. It was learned that at least 12 different historic sites—in addition to the pictographs on the Perma property—were identified in the general vicinity of the properties in question. These sites were located by 15 previous cultural resource reports for these areas.

The historic sites include railroad stage routes, lithic scatter, residences and a trash dump. However, none of these sites were found directly on the properties in question so this exchange would not impact previously recorded cultural resources.

Effects of Taking No Action:

Taking no action would not affect any known cultural sites or other historical resources.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA	UNKNOWN	NO IMPACTS	MINOR IMPACTS:	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:	CAN IMPACTS BE MITIGATED	COMMENT INDEX
13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE						
Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:						
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources, which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				**13d.**
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?						
f. Other: N/A		X				**13e.**

Comments from Above:

13d. This exchange of lands would facilitate a future exchange of property between MDT and CS&KT to aid in the reconstruction of U.S. Highway 93 through the Flathead Indian Reservation. MDT, in cooperation with the CS&KT and other federal and state agencies, have examined the potential effects of the proposed reconstruction of this important transportation route. MDT prepared an EIS (*Final EIS and Section 4(f) Evaluation Evaro to Polson, June 1996 and Record of Decision, August, 1996*) for this reconstruction proposal and efforts are now underway to implement individual projects on the route.

13e. Concerns expressed through scoping for this exchange included:

- perpetuation of access through the Perma lands to adjoining private property
- equity in dollar values of exchanged lands.

MDT officials stated their intention to guarantee private access to private property adjoining the Perma lands into perpetuity, even if they later transfer the parcel to another party. The Sanders County Commission also stated its preference for such a guarantee for private access through the property.

Concerns about equity in dollar values of the lands proposed for exchange were addressed by analyzing their potential uses. While DNRC may lose the income it generates from grazing and decorative rock leases on its relatively large Perma site, it stands to earn much more from a possible future commercial lease or outright sale of the Belgrade parcel. Moreover, DNRC's acquisition of the Troy property and its valuable timber assets help provide dollar value equity in this proposed land exchange.

Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation

Environmental Impacts	Mitigation
Land Resources. MDT's maintenance/field engineering facilities would be relocated to a site that is currently grazing land. The development of maintenance buildings, internal roads, and other features would require grading and compacting of 2-3 acres. Extraction of decorative rock from the quarry on the Perma property would cease. There would be no effect on land resources at the Belgrade site.	
Air Quality. The proposed land exchange and the associated future actions would have negligible effects on local and regional air quality. Minor, localized short-term adverse impacts on air quality would occur due to the operation of heavy equipment and vehicles during construction activities at the site proposed for relocation of MDT's maintenance/field engineering operations.	
Water Quality. The development of buildings, internal roads and other features would increase the amount of impermeable area and cause minor changes to the surface drainage patterns on the Wisdom property	The design and layout of the new facilities would include provisions to adequately handle these minor changes in runoff and drainage patterns.

Vegetation. Relocating MDT's maintenance facilities to the Wisdom site would remove 2-3 acres of rangeland from the Big Hole Valley. Transferring ownership of the Perma property to MDT will remove 213.35 acres of rangeland from the area. The Montana Natural Heritage Program's database demonstrated the historical occurrence of two plant species of special concern in the general area of the Belgrade parcel: small dropseed and dwarf purple monkeyflower.	The existing grazing lease for the remainder of the property would be honored to 2009. None proposed. These species are not likely to be present given the previous development on the land and recent disturbances during construction of the I-90 interchange.
Fish and Wildlife. Bull trout, grizzly bear, lynx, white sturgeon, Coeur d'Alene salamander, bald eagle and arctic grayling are known to occur in the general areas included in the proposed land exchange. However this proposed action would not directly affect these species or their habitat. New land disturbances and construction activities may cause temporary displacement of or a loss of habitat for small non-game animals or birds that inhabit the Wisdom property.	
Noise Impacts. Temporary and localized increases in noise would be expected during the construction activities required to ready the Wisdom property for MDT's maintenance operations.	None proposed.

Land Use Impacts. The proposed relocation of MDT's maintenance/field engineering facilities would convert rangeland to industrial property. The rock quarry on the Perma land has historically been used for commercial decorative rock extraction. DNRC does not have any active permits for this activity on the property and the proposed land exchange would prevent any such future activity because of the change of ownership.	None planned.
Hazardous Waste. MDT's maintenance facility in Wisdom would store and use a variety of materials and wastes in small quantities.	The quantities of wastes and materials at the site would be limited to ensure the site was qualified as a "conditionally exempt small quantity generator" of solid and hazardous wastes by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality.
Community Impacts. Construction of the new MDT maintenance facility would convert vacant grazing land to an industrial use. DNRC would have the option to either sell or lease the Belgrade property for commercial development. This action would require separate environmental impact analysis. Commercial development of the property would have only minor indirect effects on the total population and growth rate of the Belgrade area.	
Traffic Impacts. DNRC would have the option to sell or lease the Belgrade property for commercial development. This action would require separate environmental impact analysis. Commercial development of the property would generate minor increases in traffic on Alaska Road and at its intersection with Jackrabbit Lane.	

Public Services/Taxes/Utilities. A new well, septic system, power and communication lines would have to be installed on the property to which MDT's maintenance/field engineering facilities would be relocated. The exchange of property between MDT and DNRC on the Belgrade parcel would have minimal direct effects on the local and state tax base and revenues. Further development of the site would increase local and state tax base and revenues as businesses locate within the area.	None planned.
Aesthetics. The aesthetics of the Wisdom site would be changed since a minor amount of open range adjacent to the highway would be converted to industrial use with buildings and other improvements.	
Recreation. There may be an indirect effect on recreational access to the Flathead River at Perma. Currently, residents with state land permits may recreate at the Perma site. MDT is not bound to provide public access to its lands. Recreational access to the Troy site would be improved under DNRC ownership. The Troy lands offer recreational opportunities for big game hunting, hiking and bird watching.	MDT may consider granting public access to the Perma site for recreational purposes.
Cultural/Historical Resources. According to the State Historic Preservation Office and the DNRC Archaeologist, a dozen cultural or historic resources have been recorded near the properties involved in the proposed exchange, in addition to the pictographs on the Perma site.	With the exception of the pictographs, none of the cultural or historical resources identified exist on the properties in question so no impact would occur as a result of this exchange.

PART II. Environmental Review (Continued)

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Alternatives are different means and/or approaches to accomplish the same objective as the proposed action (the proposed exchange of properties between MDT and DNRC). A reasonable alternative is one that is practical, technically possible and economically feasible. A reasonable alternative fulfills the purpose and need of the proposed action and addresses significant and relevant issues.

Alternative No. 1: No Action

MEPA requires an analysis of the no action alternative. The no action alternative provides a comparison of environmental conditions without the proposal and establishes a baseline for evaluating the proposed action and the other alternatives. The no action alternative must be considered, even if it fails to meet the purpose and need or is illegal. In this instance, no action means that the proposed action does not take place. No action under this interpretation would mean that MDT and DNRC would decide not to implement the proposed land exchange.

Under this alternative, DNRC and MDT would retain ownership of their respective properties and the land uses and management of each parcel would be unchanged from present conditions. MDT could not generate any revenue from its Belgrade or Troy properties unless these lands were advertised and sold by the agency. DNRC would not have the opportunity to generate additional revenue for the school trust from the lands it would have acquired through the proposed exchange. DNRC would also continue to owe MDT a balance of nearly $312,000 from the difference in property values involved in the Mead Land Exchange completed by these agencies in 2000.

Not acquiring the land at Perma would mean MDT could not pursue a future land exchange with CS&KT for the reconstruction of U.S. Highway 93 right-of-way through the Flathead Indian Reservation. The CS&KT would be denied the opportunity to acquire lands near Perma that include a site it holds sacred.

MDT would continue to use the agency's existing highway maintenance facility in Wisdom. The current site is limited in size and access to and from the property is difficult with large equipment.

Alternative No. 2: Land Exchange as Initially Proposed.

This alternative involves the transfer of excess lands owned by MDT to DNRC in exchange for DNRC lands needed for highway purposes. The MDT lands involved in the exchange include 3.49 acres south and east of the I-90 interchange at Belgrade and 45.92 acres south of U.S. Highway 2 east of Troy. The DNRC school trust lands being considered for exchange include 383.03 acres near Perma (including various small lots within the platted town site of Perma) and 10 acres immediately west of Secondary Highway 278 south of Wisdom.

MDT would receive the parcels at Perma and near Wisdom in exchange for excess highway properties at Belgrade and Troy. This land exchange would provide MDT with lands that could eventually be traded with the CS&KT in for much needed right-of-way for U.S. Highway 93 reconstruction projects through the Flathead Indian Reservation. The CS&KT wishes to acquire the Perma lands for their cultural significance to the tribe (the lands contain pictographs and other significant features). The 10-acre tract of school trust land south of Wisdom would be used by MDT to build a highway maintenance facility. Alternative No. 3 describes a survey discrepancy that may reveal location of most of this tract on the east side of Secondary Highway 278—leaving a remainder on the west side that would be too small for construction of a highway maintenance facility.

The Montana Board of Land Commissioners has mandated that DNRC promote exchanges which produce an advantage to the state and its trust funds and to discourage exchanges which are disadvantageous to Montana. This arrangement would provide DNRC with ownership of valuable commercial land near the I-90 interchange at Belgrade interchange. DNRC could earn an estimated $17,000 to $35,000 per year from this land if it were to lease the property for commercial development. Development of this property, however, would require separate environmental impact analysis.

The Troy property would also provide earning potential for DNRC. Its timber assets were recently appraised at $73,455. Harvesting timber from the property, however, would require separate environmental impact analysis.

DNRC currently earns about $232 per year from grazing leases on the Perma lands (based on a fee of $4.94 per animal unit month—the amount of forage needed to sustain one cow-calf pair). The agency also earned $16,890 from permits it issued to commercial operations to extract decorative rock in 1997 to 2001. DNRC's Wisdom property earns only $15 annually in grazing permit fees.

Alternative No. 3: Preferred Alternative, Exchange with 20 acres at Wisdom.

This alternative is similar to Alternative No. 2 except the DNRC would provide MDT with an interest in 20 acres of property at Wisdom instead of 10 acres. The original land exchange proposal was for 10 acres in the extreme SE corner of the SE¼SW¼ of Section 16 in Township-3-South, Range-15-West, M.P.M. MDT and the DNRC had initially assumed that Secondary Highway 278 was centered on the east section line and the county road

(Rock Creek Road) adjoined the south section line.

During a preliminary survey of the Wisdom property, surveying difficulties were encountered and the contractor selected to survey the property was unable to locate nearby established monuments for use in exactly defining adjoining section lines. Based on the only found survey monument in the area, the surveyor indicated that the highway and county road do not lie as initially believed. In fact, the highway apparently sits approximately 200 feet west of the mid-section line and the county road may or may not be in the acknowledged location.

Due to this apparently long-standing surveying discrepancy, if DNRC transferred 10 acres of property to MDT, a sizable portion of the land may actually include the existing highway, its right-of-way corridor and existing utility easements. The "10 acres" transferred by DNRC to MDT may not be large enough to allow MDT sufficient area to properly build the proposed maintenance facility. Such a transfer may also create an irregular parcel of land surrounded by small uneconomic remnants of DNRC land.

To accurately verify the location of the section lines adjoining the property, section corners must be reestablished and new monuments set based on the locations of found monuments several miles from the Wisdom site. The cost for this survey work and time required to complete the work is prohibitive. Resurveying the area also implies that other land ownership records and easements must also be adjusted at a cost to the state and other private landowners. To avoid additional survey costs and complications, MDT and DNRC propose to exchange 20 acres comprising the entire E½SE¼SW¼ of Section 16 instead of 10 acres. A state law provision (76-3-401 M.C.A.) allows aliquot properties of at least 20 acres to be transferred without a formal survey.

Exchanging 20 acres would ensure sufficient area exists for MDT's development of a new maintenance facility. MDT has also agreed to allow DNRC's current lessee to continue to lease unused portions of the 20 acre parcel for livestock grazing through the term of his lease, which is not scheduled to expire until the year 2009.

Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:

A source of water and septic system must be installed on the Wisdom property to accommodate MDT's maintenance facilities. Because there is no well on the Wisdom property, it would be necessary to drill a new well and for any DNRC water rights associated with the property to be transferred to MDT. Several permits must be obtained from Beaverhead County, including well and septic system installation and construction.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

Benefits and Values

The proposed land exchange would mutually benefit all parties involved. The MDT would benefit from this exchange by acquiring land near Perma that it could eventually transfer to the CS&KT in exchange for right-of-way needed for the reconstruction of U.S. Highway 93. The highway is slated for reconstruction in the next few years and MDT needs to acquire right-of-way to accommodate the construction of an expanded and safer roadway. The Perma land is within the boundary of the Flathead Indian Reservation and is deemed culturally significant by the CS&KT because it contains rare pictographs.

The MDT would also benefit by acquiring the land near Wisdom for use as a highway maintenance facility. The MDT presently serves this portion of Beaverhead County from its maintenance facility within the town of Wisdom. This land exchange would allow MDT to relocate the facility out of town and provide improved service to residents and travelers in the area. The proposal also allows MDT and opportunity to sell its property within Wisdom for commercial development.

The DNRC would benefit from this land exchange by acquiring MDT lands that would substantially increase its ability to make contributions to the school trust. Last year, DNRC earned less than $300 for two grazing leases and a United States Geological Survey lease for water level evaluation on the Perma lands and about $15 in fees from its Wisdom lands.

Preliminary fair-market property appraisals have been conducted for all of the lands being considered for exchange. MDT's Belgrade property has an appraised value of $460,000 and could generate between $17,500 to $35,000 annually for the school trust—assuming a commercial lease rental rate of 5 to 10 percent of the appraised value.

An appraisal of MDT's parcel between Troy and Libby indicated a value of $165,300. This land also has potential for commercial development with interim timber management. The appraised value of the property's timber was $73,455.

An appraisal estimated the fair market value for the DNRC lands at Perma to be $474,450. The Perma lands generate $232 per year from grazing leases and collected $16,890 from commercial decorative rock extraction permits it issued between 1997 and 2001. The site is not currently being leased for rock extraction, yet both MDT and DNRC agree that a value of $235,000 is reasonable for the quarry.

The entire 20-acre Wisdom property was appraised at $24,640. The lands are currently under a lease contract for grazing by two Dillon residents for a total of $15 per year.

The total estimated value of DNRC lands is $734,090 as compared to $625,300 for the MDT properties. The total acreage of DNRC lands is 403.3 compared to 48.78 acres for the MDT properties. This may appear to inequitable given the disparity in estimated land

values and acreage, yet this exchange is in keeping with the Montana Board of Land Commissioners "Land Exchange Policy" Section IA(3) that requires exchanges to "result in the state receiving equal or greater income for the trusts." DNRC's lands may have more acreage than MDT's, yet the latter have the potential to generate significantly more revenues for the school trust. Additionally, the DNRC owes MDT $311,619 in value carried over from the "Mead Land Exchange" from December 1999. The Mead Land Exchange helped MDT acquire land from DNRC and a private party in exchange for its more valuable property. The Perma/Libby/Belgrade/Wisdom land exchange would help reduce the balance owed to MDT by DNRC and help MDT acquire high priority right-of-way for the reconstruction of Highway 93.

DNRC will still owe MDT a total of $202,829.36 at the conclusion of this land exchange. DNRC expects that a future land exchange between the two agencies will even this balance.

Appraised Values

DNRC LANDS	APPAISED VALUE	MDT LANDS	APPRAISED VALUE
Balance owing from Mead	$311,619.36		
Perma Lands (343.03 acres)	$474,450	Belgrade (3 acres)	$460,000
Perma Quarry (40 acres)	$235,000	Libby/Troy (45.29 acres)	$165,300
Wisdom (20 acres)	$24,640		
Subtotal	**$734,090.00**		**$625,300.00**
Subtotal Difference			$108,790
Subtotal difference subtracted from balance owed MDT			***$202,829.36 (remainder owed to MDT by DNRC)***

PART IV. CONCLUSION

1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:

This environmental assessment examines the direct, indirect and cumulative effects of the proposed exchange of property between MDT and DNRC. Based on the information provided and the evaluation completed for this proposed action, it is the preliminary determination of the MDT and the DNRC that an environmental assessment provides an adequate review for this proposal. This determination was made due to the minor direct effects associated with the proposed land exchange. The more notable secondary and cumulative effects of this proposed land exchange (the conversion of MDT's vacant land to commercial uses, logging activity on MDT's Troy land and the construction of an MDT maintenance facility on DNRC's Wisdom property) have also been adequately considered.

2. Describe the level of public involvement for this project, if any, and given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

Initial Scoping. Initial scoping activities for the proposed land exchange occurred during May and June 2001. Public comments were solicited through the mailing of a Scoping Letter to interested parties and by the publication of a Scoping Notice in area newspapers. Both the Scoping Letter and the published Scoping Notices requested that all comments be submitted to Daniel M. Norderud of Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc. (RPA) during a 21-day period ending on June 13, 2001. A 21-day period was determined adequate for receiving comments since due to a lack of previous controversy regarding the proposed exchange and because other opportunities will be provided for the public to review and comment on the land exchange proposal.

The Scoping Letter was prepared by RPA and reviewed by both MDT and DNRC prior to being mailed to interested parties on May 22, 2001. Both agencies worked to compile a project mailing list including: various federal and state agencies, state legislators, county and local officials, state lessees at Perma and Wisdom, newspapers editors, special interest groups, adjacent land owners and other potentially interested parties. The Scoping Letter and a map providing the general locations of the involved lands were mailed to more than 100 persons or groups on the project mailing list.

The Scoping Notice for the proposed land exchange was published in seven different newspapers in western Montana on May 23 and May 24, 2001. As required, notices were published in the major newspaper within each county containing land involved in the proposed exchange including:

Dillon Tribune - Dillon/Beaverhead County
Bozeman Daily Chronicle - Bozeman/Gallatin County
High Country Independent Press - Belgrade Gallatin County
The Montanian - Libby/Lincoln County
The Western News - Libby/Lincoln County
Sanders County Ledger - Thompson Falls/Sanders County
Clark Fork Valley Press - Plains/Sanders County

The Scoping Notices appeared in the "Classifieds" section of each newspaper and were typically published as two-column or bordered notices.

Complete copies of the scoping document prepared for this proposed land exchange may be obtained from the authors of this EA, from MDT at P.O. Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620 or DNRC at P.O. Box 201601, Helena, MT 59620.

Results of Initial Scoping. As a result of the Scoping Letter and publication of the Scoping Notice, RPA received five (5) written comments about on the proposed land exchange. RPA was also contacted by an individual for additional information on the land at Belgrade involved in the proposed exchange. Most of the comments received were from individuals. However, the Wisdom District Ranger of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and the Sanders County Board of County Commissioners also submitted comments. Key comments from respondents are summarized below.

Two respondents stated that if the land exchange proceeds, public right-of-way must be preserved over, across and through the lands at Perma that would ultimately be acquired by CS&KT. Public right-of-way has been established in this area for many years and it must be perpetuated so adjacent landowners can effectively and efficiently manage their properties.

The lands at Perma are presently accessible to anyone and transferring the ownership to the CS&KT as a result of the land exchange should not give the Tribes exclusive rights to the land.

Exchanging 393 acres for 44 acres is not a fair trade and would result in a loss of revenue for the state school system.

Only the land containing the pictograph site should be exchanged with the CS&KT, not the entire 383 acres at Perma.

One respondent suggested that the land exchange should be brought before the taxpaying voters for approval or disapproval.

The Wisdom District Ranger expressed no concerns regarding the proposed land exchange and indicated Clemow Lane is known as Rock Creek Road.

Copies of the comments received from the initial scoping effort for this land exchange can be found in Appendix B.

According to the Land Board's "Land Exchange Policy" and **77-2-204(2) M.C.A.**, the DNRC must conduct hearings on the proposed land exchange in the counties containing the state land to be exchanged. In this instance, it will be necessary to conduct hearings in Beaverhead, Gallatin, Lincoln, and Sanders Counties. The DNRC will serve as the lead agency and arrange for and conduct the required series of public hearings. MDT staff and its consultants will be present and participate in the public hearings. The public hearings will be held during the public comment period. The availability of the EA and the times, dates, and locations of the public hearings on this proposed land exchange will be duly announced in local newspapers. Notices will also be made to those on the EA mailing list.

This EA will be available for public review and comment and if any significant impacts are identified or raised during the review period, they will be evaluated to determine if an environmental impact statement is warranted.

3. Duration of comment period, if any:

This Environmental Assessment will be available for a 30-day comment period beginning on February 4, 2002. **Comments on the EA will be received through March 5, 2002.** All written comments received on the proposed action will be considered and a Decision Notice will be issued. Written comments may be delivered to the individuals in the following section by mail, fax, e-mail or by comment form on the RPA website: www.rpa-hln.com. Comment forms may also be obtained through a link on the DNRC website: www.dnrc.state.mt.us/trust/tlmdhome.htm.

4. Name, title, address and phone number of the persons responsible for preparing the EA:

Daniel M. Norderud, AICP
Environmental Studies Division Manager
Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 5653
Helena, MT 59604
Phone(406) 447-5000
E-mail dan@rpa-hln.com

Mark Lambrecht
Environmental Planner
Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 5653
Helena, MT 59604
Phone(406) 447-5000
E-Mail markl@rpa-hln.com

APPENDIX A: Section Maps, USGS Topographic Maps and Photographs of Areas Included in Proposed Exchange

Scale in Miles

0 .5 .75 1

N

Perma Property
(USGS Topographic Map)

View from south side of Flathead River looking northwest.

View from east border of property looking west.

View of south parcel behind Perma Township.

View of parcels along south bank of Flathead River.

Wisdom Property Section Map

Wisdom Property
(USGS Topographic Map)

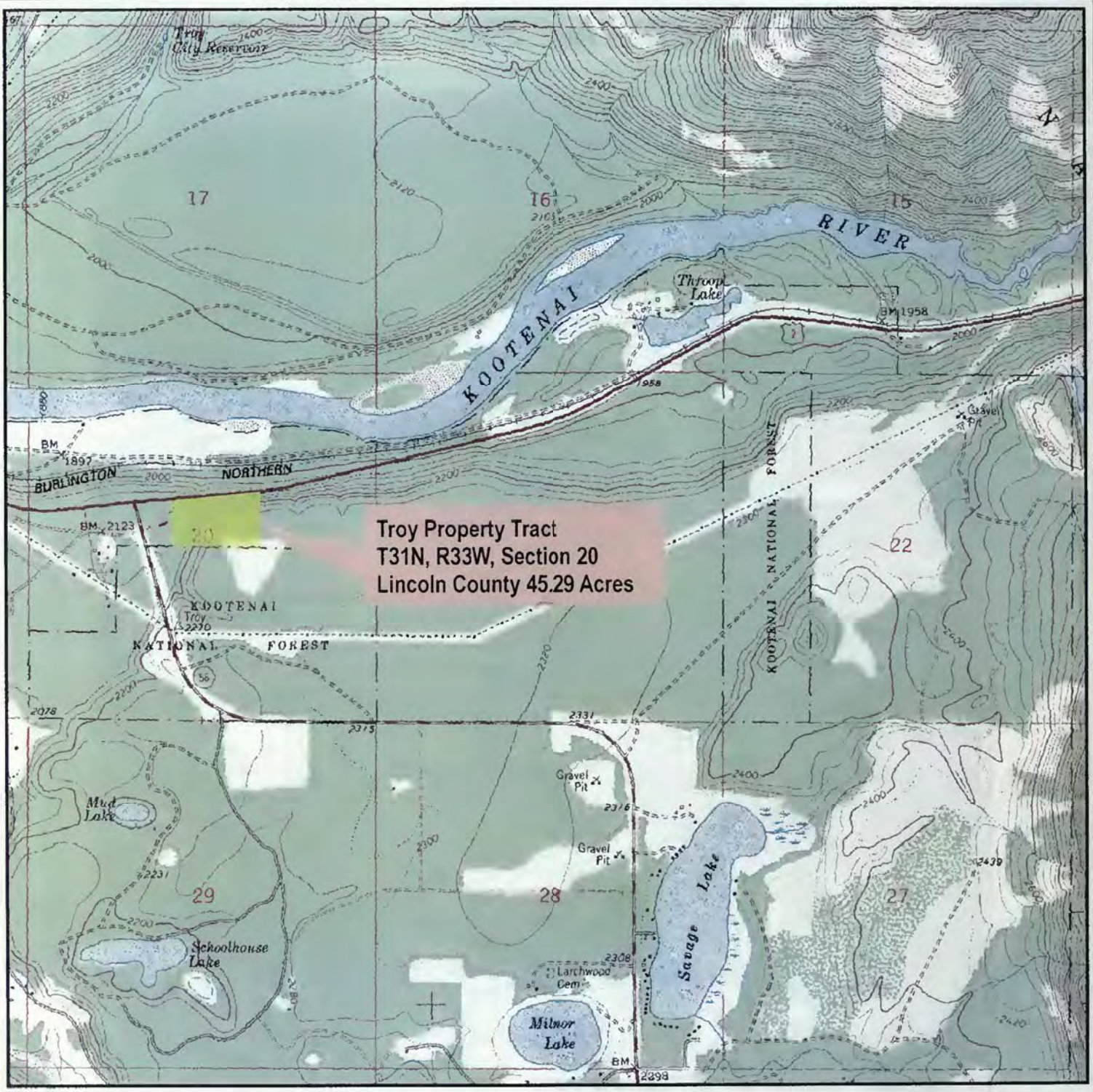
Northwest view at intersection of Secondary Highway 278 and Rock Creek Road.

West view along Rock Creek Road.

North view of property along Secondary Highway 278.

Southwest view from interior of property.

Troy Property Section Map

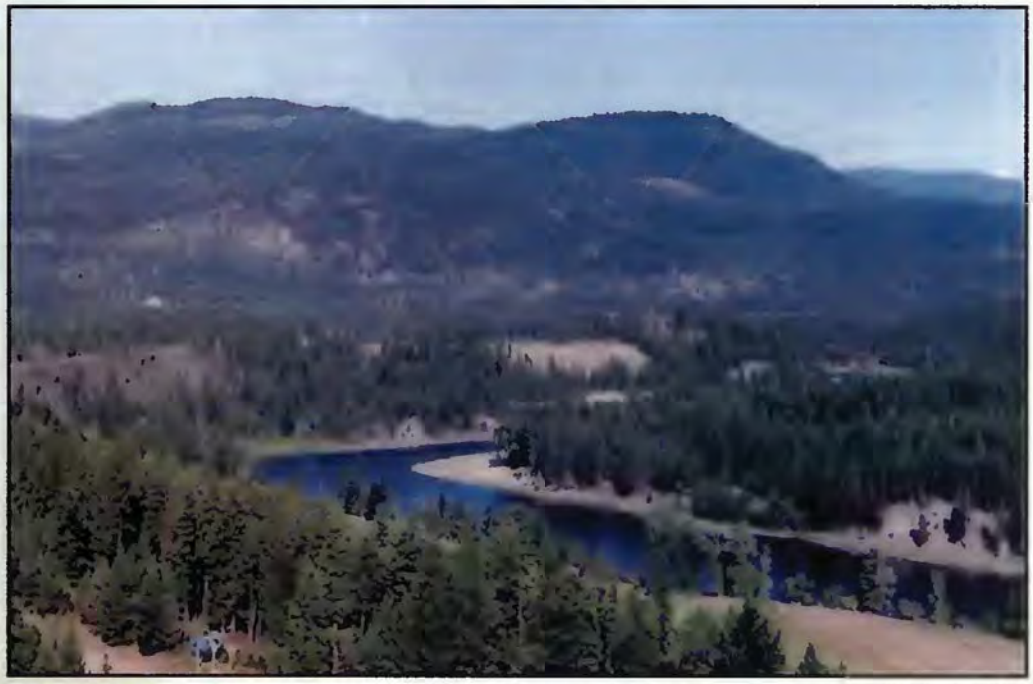


Scale in Miles

0 .5 .75 1

N

Troy Property
(USGS Topographic Map)

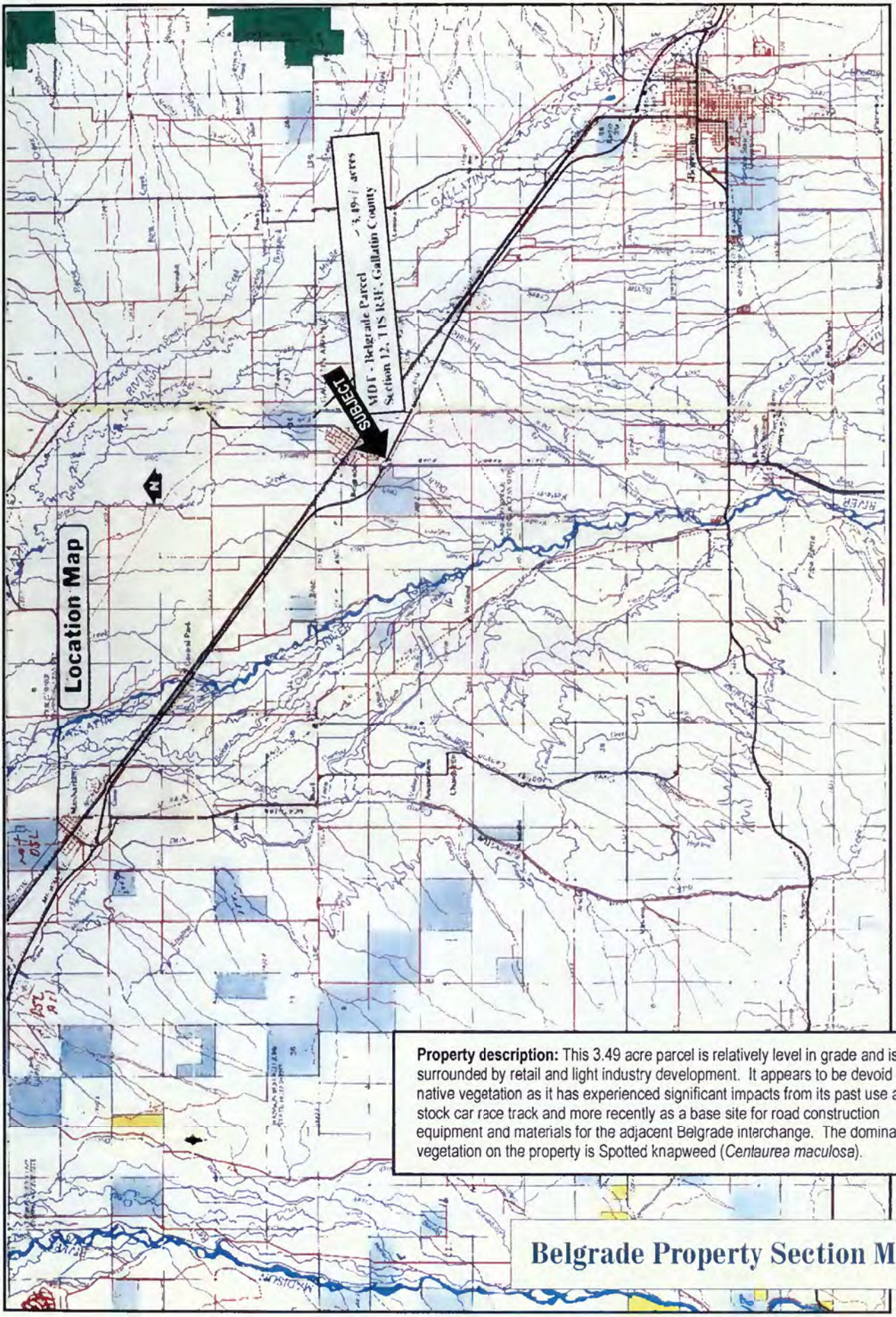


Northwest view from property - US Highway 2 and Kootenai River.

Second generation Douglas fir and larch stands - property interior.

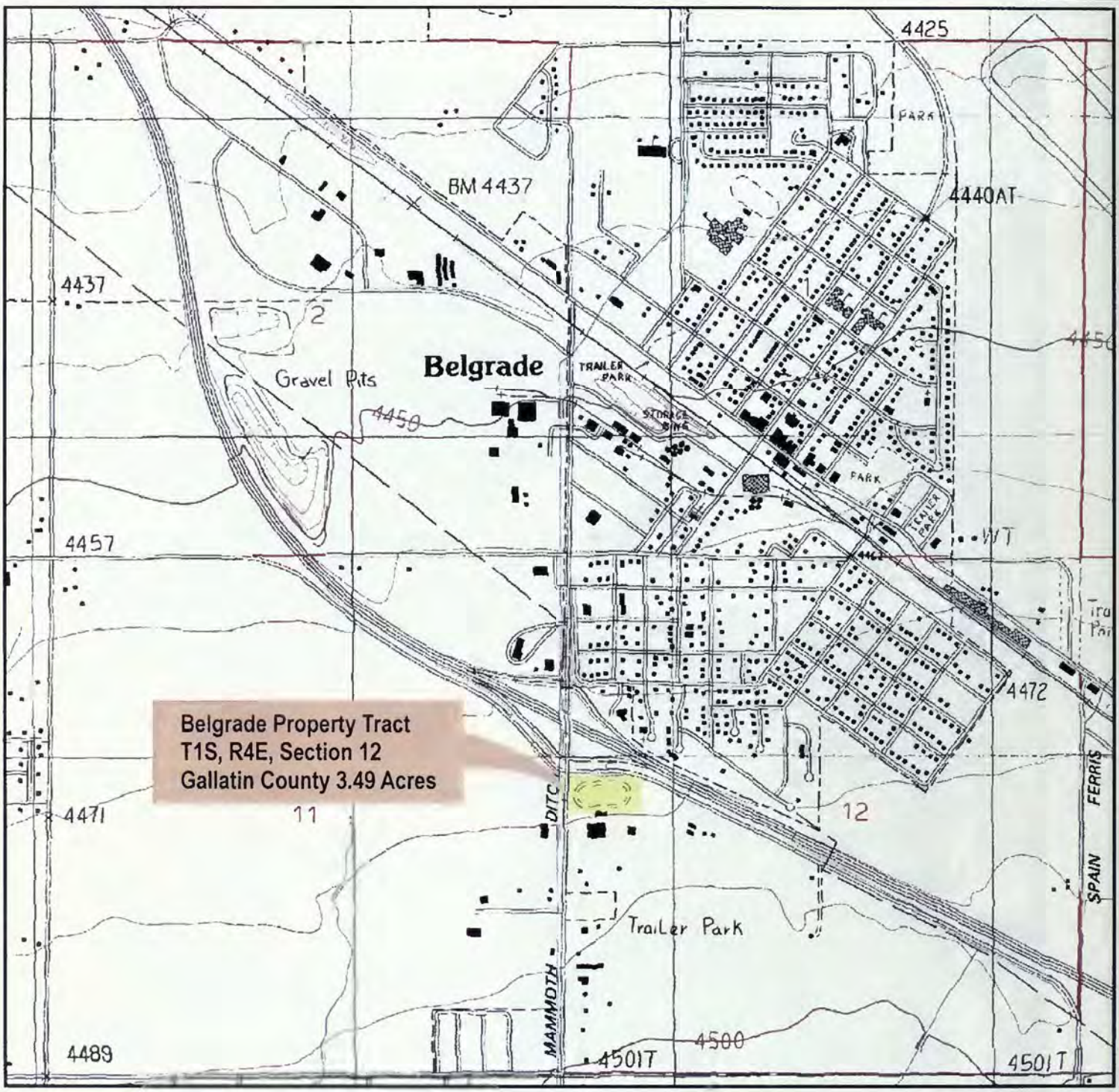
Interior road.

South border of parcel neighboring Plum Creek Timber Company property.



Property description: This 3.49 acre parcel is relatively level in grade and is surrounded by retail and light industry development. It appears to be devoid of native vegetation as it has experienced significant impacts from its past use as a stock car race track and more recently as a base site for road construction equipment and materials for the adjacent Belgrade interchange. The dominant vegetation on the property is Spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*).

Belgrade Property Section Map



Scale in Miles

0 .5 .75 1

N

Belgrade Property
(USGS Topographic Map)

Belgrade

T1S, R4E, Section 12
Gallatin County 3.49 Acres

Alaska Road/Jackrabbit Lane intersection southwest of property.

East view of property from Jackrabbit Lane.

Northeast view of property from Alaska Road.

South view from property, Alaska Road.

APPENDIX B: Comments Received on the Proposed Land Exchange

Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.

Record of Phone Conversation

To: Project File

From: Daniel M. Norderud, AICP

CC:

Date: May 30, 2001

Re: MDT/DNRC PERMA LAND EXCHANGE INITIAL SCOPING

Summary of Conversation:

I received a phone call at about 10:30 this morning from John Taggart of Bozeman. Mr. Taggart indicated that he had received a copy of the initial scoping notice RPA mailed out and understood that the notice solicited comments from him on the proposed land exchange. He said that in order to offer any meaningful comments he would need to have a map showing the location of the parcel proposed for exchange near the Belgrade Interchange. I told Mr. Taggart that I would contact Barbara Smith of MDT Right-of-Way Bureau and request a map of the area and then forward it on to him as soon as I could.

I also explained that this is an initial announcement of DNRC's intention to exchange properties with MDT and that an environmental document with more detailed information on the parcels involved would be prepared if the State Land Board gives the OK to proceed after reviewing initial scoping comments.

He also told me he had heard a rumor that DNRC already has a lessee lined up for the property and asked if I knew anything about this. I responded by telling him I did not.

Mr. Taggart indicated his name was incorrectly spelled on the mailing and provided me with his mailing address:

John Taggart
P.O. Box 3898
Bozeman, MT 59772

Follow-up Actions Required/Taken:

Contacted Barbara Smith of MDT on 5/30/01 and requested a map of Belgrade parcel for transmittal to Mr. Taggart. Smith provided maps to me on 5/31/01 and I transmitted a copy of the map to Mr. Taggart on 5/31.

United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest Wisdom Ranger District | P.O. Box 238 Wisdom, MT 59761 (406) 689-3243

File Code: 5430

Date: May 30, 2001

Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.
Attn: Daniel M. Norderud, AICP
P.O. Box 5653
Helena, MT 59604

Dear Mr. Norderud:

The Forest Service has no concerns or objections to the proposed exchange. I am not aware of any specific wildlife, watershed or other resource issues that would complicate your proposal.

I noted the legal address in the written document appears to be incorrect, however the address on the map appears to be correct. The county has designated Clemow Lane to be Rock Creek Road. I was unclear if the facility will be on the north or south end of the ½ section.

If the expansion is on the north end, it might preclude any runway expansion at the county airport. This is a county matter not a Forest Service issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Dennis Havig
DISTRICT RANGER

RECEIVED
JUN 01 2001
ROBERT PECCIA
& ASSOCIATES

5-29-01

Robert Peccia + Associates, Inc.
Attn: Daniel M. Norderud, AICP
P.O. Box 5653
Helena, MT 59604-5633

Gentlemen;

In reference to the "Perma Land exchange". It is my opinion that 393 acres Vs 41.25 acres, doesn't appear to be a fair land exchange. It's my understanding "School Trust Lands" were set aside to generate revenue for our school systems. The loss of this land would be a loss of generated revenue for our shool systems.

It's my opinion 383 acres for a "Pictograph Site", which has been partially distroyed, to my understanding by tribal members, would not be necessary. A half acre would cover this site without a problem.

This purposed land exchange, is my opinion should be brought before the tappaying Voters for approval or disapproval.

Sincerely,
George D. Stone

Mr. George D. Stone
70 Knerr Ln.
Plains, MT 59859-9418

RECEIVED
JUN 01 2001
ROBERT PECCIA
& ASSOCIATES

SANDERS COUNTY

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

June 5, 2001

Robert Peccia & Associates. Inc.
P.O. Box 5653
Helena, MT 59604

Attn: Daniel M. Norderud, AICP

Re: Perma Land Exchange

Dear Mr. Norderud:

Sanders County is in receipt of a scoping notice sent to us on behalf of the DNRC and MDT regarding the proposal to exchange lands with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. As we understand it, the State is proposing to exchange a school section for highway lands. Such highway lands to be designated after the site has unequivocally been transferred to the Tribes.

Without commenting on the merits of such an exchange at this time, it is my duty to advise you that Sanders County, on behalf of the public and individual owners of adjoining properties, requests full assurance that the public right-of-way is preserved over, across and through this area. It is my understanding that you have been made aware of the public right-of-way that has been established for more than 50 years. Although the County does not maintain this roadway, it must remain passable and useable by the taxpayers served further down river.

This comment is made to also serve notice upon the State that Sanders County wishes to be advised of all hearings and comment periods conducted during the pendency of this matter.

Sincerely,

Harold L. Laws

HAROLD L. LAWS, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

RECEIVED
JUN 07 2001
ROBERT PECCIA
& ASSOCIATES

P.O. BOX 519, 1111 MAIN ST., THOMPSON FALLS, MT. 59873 • (406) 827-6942, FAX: (406) 827-4388

June 8, 2001

Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 5653
Helena, MT 59604

Attn: Daniel M. Norderud, AICP

Dear Mr. Norderud:

As ranch manager for Denny Miller and Sandra Burgess Miller, I wish to make you aware of the Miller's intense interest in the proposal stated in your scoping notice regarding the trade of school lands to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Regardless of the outcome or the environmental analysis, we want to be assured that access will be guaranteed through the property so that we may effectively and efficiently manage our ranch properties on that side of the Flathead River.

We assume that you have been made aware of our holdings and the number of years that access, both public and private, has been utilized by us and our predecessors in interest. In addition, we wish to be notified of all hearings and public comment periods so that we have the opportunity to participate meaningfully in these proceedings.

Sincerely,

Cliff Gentry
Ranch Manager

RECEIVED
JUN 11 2001
ROBERT PECCIA
& ASSOCIATES

Burgess Miller Ranch – 1355 Highway 200 East, Plains, MT 59859 (406) 826-3379

June 9, 2001

PROPOSED DNRC/MDT PERMA LAND EXCHANGE
Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.
Attn.: Daniel M. Norderud, AICP
PO Box 5653
Helena, MT 59604

Gentlemen:

I'm sure you will offer the Indian Tribes the State School Section at Perma no matter how many or few objections you will receive. I am a landowner at Perma and one of the main reasons I bought my property was because it was in the state section. I do object to the transfer of the land for many reasons.

Anyone can drive and hike up to these sites - you aren't required to own the property to enjoy it. Any tribe member can use it now, the state has no restrictions on this land. Transferring this ownership should not guarantee the tribes their exclusive use.

Also, I think it is basically wrong to "bribe" the tribes with the "pictograph site". Why should anyone be that stubborn as not to want to save lives in car accidents -it is not just "the whites" that have the car accidents.

Widening a highly trafficked road that is known for quite a few accidents is an American responsibility. If I had property in the way of a highway, you would take it from me by right of emanate domain. But when it comes to the Tribes it is a different story with another set of rules - sounds like reverse discrimination?

The Tribes are the first Americans and should act responsible and grant the widening from Evaro to Polson just in order to save accidents. Isn't that why they want animal crossing culverts - to save animal lives. I don't understand why they aren't interested in saving human lives and require a "bribe" to do so.

I do think the highway should be 4 lanes with big shoulders and frontage roads for farm machinery etc. yet be conservative on land space used. Let's do it correctly now so it won't have to be redone again and again like the Highway 93 from Missoula to Florence.

Sincerely,

Anna D. Sain & Dennis L. Sain

Anna D. Sain
Dennis L. Sain
3610 Rattlesnake
Missoula, MT 59802