

Janice W. Brown
 Division Administrator
 Federal Highway Administration
 5854 Shepard Way
 Helena, MT 59601

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 FHWA
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**Subject: Programmatic Categorical Exclusion (PCE) Concurrence Request
 4KM NORTH OF RYEGATE - NORTH
 STPS 238-2(2)61
 4850**

FEB 16 2006

**LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
 POLICY OFFICE**

Dear Janice W. Brown:

This submittal requests approval of the above-mentioned proposed project as a Categorical Exclusion under the provisions of 23 CFR 771.117(d) and the Programmatic Agreement as signed by MDT and FHWA on April 12, 2001. This proposed action also qualifies as a Categorical Exclusion under ARM 18.2.261 (MCA 75-1-103 and MCA 75-1-201).

The following form provides documentation required to demonstrate that all of the conditions are satisfied to qualify for a Programmatic Categorical Exclusion. Copies of the Preliminary Field Review Report and Project Location Map are attached. In the following form, "N/A" indicates not applicable; "UNK" indicates unknown.

NOTE: A response in a large box will require additional documentation for a Categorical Exclusion request in accordance with 23 CFR 771.117(d).

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>UNK</u>
1. This proposed project would have (a) significant environmental impact(s) as defined under 23 CFR 771.117(a).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. This proposed project involves (an) unusual circumstance(s) as described under 23 CFR 771.117(b).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. This proposed project involves one (or more) of the following situations where				
A. Right-of-way, easements and/or construction permits would be required.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1. The context or degree of the right-of-way action would have (a) substantial social, economic, or environmental effect(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A high rate of residential growth exists in the area of the proposed project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. A high rate of commercial growth exists in the area of the proposed project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Work would be on and/or within approximately 1.6 kilometers (1± mile) of an Indian Reservation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>UNK</u>
5. Parks, recreational, or other properties acquired/improved under Section 6(f) of the 1965 National Land & Water Conservation Fund Act (16 USC 460L, <i>et seq.</i>) are on or adjacent to proposed the project area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The use of such Section 6(f) sites would be documented and compensated with the appropriate agencies (MDFWP, local entities, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Sites either on, or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places with concurrence in determination of eligibility or effect under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC 470, <i>et seq.</i>) by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) would be affected by this proposed project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Parks, recreation sites, school grounds, wildlife refuges, historic sites, historic bridges, or irrigation that might be considered under Section 4(f) of the 1966 US Department Of Transportation Act (49 USC 303) are on or adjacent to the project area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a. Nationwide Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation forms for those sites are attached.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. This proposed project requires a full Section 4(f) Evaluation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. The activity would involve work in a streambed, wetland, and/or other water body (ies) considered as "waters of the United States" or similar (e.g., "state waters").	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1. Conditions set forth in Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 USC 403) and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1251-1376) codified at 33 CFR 320-330 would be met.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Impacts in wetlands, including but not limited to those referenced under Executive Order (EO) #11990, and proposed mitigation would be coordinated with the Montana Inter-Agency Wetland Group.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. A 124SPA Stream Protection permit would be obtained from the MDFWP.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. A delineated floodplain exists in the proposed project area under FEMA's Floodplain Management criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The water surface at the 100-year flood limit elevation would exceed floodplain management criteria due to an encroachment by the proposed project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. A Tribal Water Permit would be required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Work would be required in, across, and/or adjacent to a river that is a component of, or proposed for inclusion in Montana's Wild and/or Scenic Rivers system as published by the US Department of Agriculture, or the US Department of the Interior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>UNK</u>
The designated National Wild and/or Scenic River systems in Montana are:				
a. Middle Fork of the Flathead River (headwaters to South Fork confluence).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. North Fork of the Flathead River (Canadian Border to Middle Fork confluence).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. South Fork of the Flathead River (headwaters to Hungry Horse Reservoir).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Missouri River (Fort Benton to Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In accordance with Section 7 of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 USC 1271 – 1287), this work would be coordinated and documented with either the Flathead National Forest (Flathead River), or US Bureau of Land Management (Missouri River).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. This is a "Type I" action as defined under 23 CFR 772.5(h), which typically consists of highway construction on a new location or the physical alteration of an existing route which substantially changes its horizontal or vertical alignments or increases the number of through-traffic lanes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1. If yes, are there potential noise impacts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A Noise Analysis would be completed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. There would be compliance with the provisions of both 23 CFR 772 for FHWA's Noise Impact analyses and MDT's Noise Policy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Substantial changes in access control would be associated with the proposed project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, would they result in extensive economic and/or social impacts on the affected locations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. The use of a temporary road, detour, or ramp closure having the following conditions when the action(s) associated with such facilities:				
1. Provisions would be made for access by local traffic, and be posted for same.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Adverse effects to through-traffic dependant businesses would be avoided or minimized.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Interference to local events would be minimized to all possible extent.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Substantial controversy associated with this pending action would be avoided.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Hazardous wastes /substances, as defined by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and/or the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), and/or (a) listed "Superfund" (under CERCLA or CECRA) site(s) are currently on and/or adjacent to this proposed project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>UNK</u>
All reasonable measures would be taken to avoid and/or minimize substantial impacts from same.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. The Stormwater Discharge conditions (ARM 17.30.1101-1117), including temporary erosion control features for construction would be met.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. Permanent desirable vegetation with an approved seeding mixture would be established on exposed areas.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. Documentation of an invasive species review to comply with both EO #13112 and the County Noxious Weed Control Act (7-22-2152, MCA), including directions as specified by the county(ies) wherein its intended work would be done would be conducted.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
J. There are "Prime" or "Prime if Irrigated" Farmlands designated by the Natural Resources Conservation Service on or adjacent to the proposed project area. If the proposed work would affect Important Farmlands, then an AD 1006 Farmland Conversion Impact Rating form would be completed in accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act (7 USC 4201, et seq.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
K. Features for the Americans with Disabilities Act (PL 101 336) compliance would be included.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
L. A written Public Involvement Plan would be completed in accordance with MDT's Public Involvement Handbook.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. This proposed project complies with the Clean Air Act's Section 176(c) (42 USC 7521(a), as amended) under the provisions of 40 CFR 81.327 as it is either in a Montana air quality:				
A. "Unclassifiable"/attainment area. This proposed project is not covered under the EPA's September 15, 1997 Final Rule on air quality conformity. and/or	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. "Nonattainment" area. However, this type of proposed project is either exempted from the conformity determination requirements (under EPA's September 15, 1997 Final Rule), or a conformity determination would be documented in coordination with the responsible agencies (Metropolitan Planning Organizations, MDEQ Air Quality Division, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Is this proposed project in a "Class I Air Shed" under 40 CFR 52.1382(c)(3)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Federally listed Threatened or Endangered (T/E) Species:				
A. Recorded occurrences, and/or critical habitat are in the vicinity of the proposed project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Would this proposed project result in a "jeopardy" opinion (under 50 CFR 402) from the Fish and Wildlife Service on any Federally listed T/E Species?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The proposed project would not induce significant land use changes, nor promote unplanned growth. No significant effects on access to adjacent property or to present traffic patterns would occur.

This proposed project would not create disproportionately high and/or adverse impacts on the health or environment of minority and/or low-income populations (EO #12898). The project also complies with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000d) under FHWA regulations (23 CFR 200).

In accordance with the provisions of 23 CFR 771.117(a), this pending action would not cause significant individual, secondary, or cumulative environmental impacts. FHWA concurrence that this proposed project is properly classified as a Categorical Exclusion is requested.



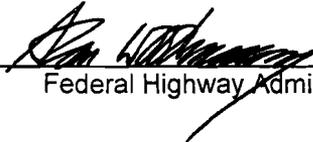
Heidy Bruner
MDT Environmental Services
Billings District Project Development Engineer

Date: Feb 3, 2006



Concur
Thomas L. Hansen, P.E.
MDT Environmental Services
Engineering Section Supervisor

Date: 2/3/06



Concur
Federal Highway Administration

Date: 6 FEB 06

TLH:hsb:S:\PROJECTS\BILLINGS\4850\4850ENPCEFHWA01_CATEX(D).DOC

Attachments

cc: Suzy Althof MDT Contract Plans Section Supervisor
Kent Barnes, P.E. MDT Bridge Engineer
Bruce Barrett MDT Billings District Administrator
Paul Ferry, P.E. MDT Highway Engineer
Tom Hansen, P.E. MDT Environmental Services Bureau Engineering Section Supervisor
John H. Horton MDT Right-of-Way Bureau Chief
David W. Jensen MDT Fiscal Programming Section Supervisor
Jean Riley, P.E. MDT Environmental Services Bureau Chief
FILE MDT Environmental Services
Montana Legislative Branch Environmental Quality Council (EQC)

ALTERNATIVE ACCESSIBLE FORMATS OF THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE PROVIDED UPON REQUEST.

Preliminary Field Review Report

A preliminary field review for the subject project was held on April 30, 2002 with the following people in attendance.

LIST ATTENDEES

Gary Neville	Engineering Services Supervisor	Billings
Damian Krings	Road Design Section	Helena
Dave Leitheiser	Hydraulics Section	Helena
Ned Pettit	MDT Biologist	Helena
Randy Perkins	Road Design Section	Helena
Edgar Lewis	County Commissioner	Golden Valley County
Joan Krause	County Commissioner	Golden Valley County
Joy Schanz	County Commissioner	Golden Valley County
Ceryl Hamilton	Road Superintendent	Golden Valley County

Introduction

The intent of this project is to reconstruct the roadway to provide an 8.0 m finished top width. The work involves major grading, the installation of new drainage structures (culverts) and the placement of base gravel and a new plant mix riding surface. We have also proposed substantial modifications to the horizontal and vertical alignments. The project will require the acquisition of new right-of-way and the relocation of utilities.

MDT will likely take over maintenance responsibilities of this portion of S-238 following construction.

Project Location and Limits

- Location: Secondary Highway 238 in Golden Valley County
- Begin Project: *RP 68.674 – at the end of existing pavement
- End Project: *RP 63.404
- Length: 8.5 km (north to south)

* Note that reference posts increase from north to south along this project, and there is significant confusion with respect to what the actual reference posts are. The project limits indicated above were determined by Gary Neville and Sheila Ludlow and match what is indicated on PPMS. These limits do not match the road log, TIS image viewer, Bridge inventory, or the original project nomination (which do not match each other, either). The project will begin at the south end of the unpaved portion of S-238 (5.6 miles north of Ryegate) near the Bridge over Careless Cr., shown at RP 62.8 in the Bridge Inventory (this more closely matches the in-place reference posts of the southern paved portion of the route). From here it will progress northerly, contra to reference posts, approximately 5 miles. The project length and northern limit will be determined based on available construction funds for the project. A modified funding agreement and change to the project number will be required once the beginning reference post is established.

The project proceeds through rolling terrain used primarily for dryland farming and grazing.

Secondary 238 is classified as a major collector. It functions as a farm-to-market road and provides access to the greater transportation network. The project should have a minor impact on traffic volumes or the economy of the area. The land adjacent to S-238 is sparsely populated and the entire route is not maintained through the winter months, the middle portion of the route is often impassible due to snow cover. The project is on both mail carrier and school bus routes.

The project will utilize new metric stationing. This segment of the route was originally constructed by county forces, and no as-built plans are available. Consequently, there are no ties to existing stationing. Project stationing will increase from south to north, contra to reference posting.

Physical Characteristics

The existing roadway has a gravel surface and provides an average top width of 6.2 m. The surfacing is in fair to poor condition and there is some minor distortion of the roadway template.

The existing cut and fill slopes do not appear to meet the current criteria for major collectors, however there are no major cuts or fills in place on the project.

None of the horizontal curves have transition spirals, and several of these curves do not appear to meet the criteria for the 80-km/hr design speed.

The vertical alignment includes several crest and sag vertical curves that do not appear to meet the minimum stopping sight distance for an 80km/hr design speed. None of the grades on the project appear to exceed 5%.

The alignments will be evaluated in more detail after the field survey is completed.

Traffic Data

The traffic data is summarized below:

2002 ADT = 60
2006 ADT = 60
2026 ADT = 80
DHV = 10
T = 16.7%
80kN ESALs = 7 (daily)
AGR = 1.1%

Accident Data

Four accidents were reported for the time period from July 1992 through June 2002, including 2 accidents that resulted in 3 incapacitating injuries. There were no fatalities. The accident rate was 6.95 and the severity rate was 31.28 compared to statewide rural secondary averages of 1.73 and 4.21 respectively.

Due to the limited number of accidents no trends could be determined and no high hazard locations were identified. We believe the proposed design features will enhance the overall safety of the route.

Major Design Features

Design Speed

The design speed for this project is 80 km/hr based on the Geometric Design Criteria for Major Collectors in rolling terrain. We anticipate that all geometric features will meet the criteria for the 80 km/h design speed. Features that do not meet the criteria will require a design exception approved by the Highways Engineer.

The posted speed limit is 70 mph.

Horizontal Alignment

We anticipate that the proposed horizontal alignment will meet or exceed the desirable geometric criteria for the 80 km/h design speed. The alignment described below is approximate and will be modified based upon information obtained during the survey phase of the project. It will be further refined during the detailed design phase.

At the time of the field review, we intended that the horizontal alignment closely follow existing from the southern end of the project the 830± meters over the railroad tracks, and then 200± meters more between the existing buildings at Franklin. The tangent line between the buildings would be extended, shifting the alignment west of the existing roadway. This shift will require cutting through a low hill just north of the buildings, and will result in an offset alignment for approximately 1.3 kilometers and up to 340 meters of lateral offset at the widest point. By shifting the roadway as described, we will eliminate several short, sharp horizontal curves, and move out of an area of alkali soils that may include wetlands. The remainder of the horizontal alignment will closely follow the existing roadway, with modifications to existing curves to meet desirable design criteria.

Subsequent to the review, a local resident suggested that the horizontal alignment at the south end of the project (and the railroad crossing) be shifted to the east. The location of the existing crossing is not ideal, since there is a fairly sharp horizontal curve south of the crossing, and a moderate grade up and crest vertical curve through the buildings and trees north of the crossing. Sight distance is limited from both directions by these features, and could be improved by moving the crossing east. We will investigate the feasibility of this proposed shift early in the design process and if feasible, compare costs, benefits, etc. with roadway modifications to improve sight distance at the present crossing location.

Vertical Alignment

The proposed vertical alignment should provide the desirable stopping sight distance (SSD) for a 80 km/h design speed. We do not anticipate the need for grades exceeding 5%. If grades steeper than 5% are needed, we will ensure that the desirable SSD for the 80 km/h design speed is provided for the vertical curves associated with these grades.

We will attempt to provide passing sight distance wherever practical. Truck climbing lanes are not warranted due to the low traffic volumes. The lack of development adjacent to the project, allows us the flexibility to coordinate the design of the horizontal and vertical alignments.

Grades should be adjusted as necessary to provide balanced earthwork and to reduce or avoid impacts to natural and man-made features. The grades will also be modified as needed to provide adequate cover over pipes and to reduce snow drifting.

As with the horizontal alignment, the railroad crossing will be a control to the vertical alignment at the south end of the project.

Typical Section & Surfacing

The roadway will be constructed to an 8.0 meter finished top width. This width provides the 7.2 meter top required by geometric design criteria and an additional 0.8 meters to provide for a future overlay. The surfacing inslopes will be constructed to 6:1, with fill slopes varying from 4:1 to 2:1 depending upon fill heights. The cut sections will have 2.0 meters of 4:1 ditch inslopes, 3.0 meter flat bottom (20:1) ditches, with variable backslopes. A v-ditch design although acceptable for this route is not considered to be necessary for this project at this time. If v-ditches are determined to be beneficial for use on this project during the establishment of the alignment and grades, the 4:1 ditch inslope will be extended to the clear zone, and the 20:1 flat bottom will be eliminated.

A preliminary surfacing section of 90 mm of plant mix on top of 300 mm of crushed aggregate course will be used to establish preliminary alignments. This is a minimum plant mix surfacing section and was selected based on the very low anticipated loading and is not likely to change significantly. When a preliminary alignment has been established, we will request that the Surfacing Design Section review the soils survey to determine if it adequately represents the material in the subgrade, and finalize the surfacing recommendation. The final surfacing section will be designed for the anticipated ESALs over a twenty-year design life.

Grading

This project will involve considerable grading and should be paid as Unclassified Excavation. We will attempt to design the earthwork to balance excavation and embankment. Cut and fill slopes should be designed to current standards. Deviations from standards to address site specific problems will be reviewed during the development of the project and design exceptions will be requested as necessary.

Where an offset alignment is used we will try to include the PTW template in the new subgrade. Where the PTW is not included but is in close proximity to the new subgrade, its removal will be accomplished using Unclassified Excavation. Where the PTW and the new roadway are widely separated the removal of the PTW will be paid as Obliterate Roadway.

Geotechnical Considerations

No geotechnical problems were noted at the time of the review. Special foundation designs may be required for some of the larger culverts. We request that the Geotechnical Section provide

recommendations for project shrink/swell and cut and fill slope requirements early in the project process.

Hydraulics

With the exception of Careless Creek there are no major drainages within or adjacent to the project limits. The bridge over Careless Creek is outside the project limits and will be used as is. All existing drainage structures will be replaced as part of the reconstruction. We anticipate that culverts will be adequate for all crossings. The Hydraulics Section will provide recommendations for culvert sizes, materials, skew and end treatments.

There are no delineated flood plains within the project limits.

Several of the large culverts had scour holes at the outlets. The use of riprap or other energy dissipating measures will be evaluated for these crossings. No other erosion problems were noted at the time of the review.

Minor irrigation facilities were noted within the project limits. If impacted, these facilities will be replaced with new facilities that are equivalent to the existing ones.

The Location Hydraulic Survey Report (LHSR), distributed previously, for the project provides further hydraulic information.

Structures

The following structure is off the limits of the project, but is close enough to provide some control the horizontal and vertical alignments at the south end of the project:

S00238062+06381, 31.1 m long, two-span prestressed concrete bridge over Careless Creek. It has an 8.53 m roadway width. Constructed in 1967, it has a Sufficiency Rating = 83.9

No work is anticipated for the structure with this project.

A small timber structure is in place approximately 1.8 km north of Franklin. The structure serves an irrigation crossing, and will be replaced by a culvert with this project.

Traffic

This project has no unique traffic or geometric concerns. The project will include the installation of new signing and pavement markings.

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Considerations

Pedestrian and bicycle traffic is virtually nonexistent on this route. Considering the extremely low traffic volumes, we believe special pedestrian and bicycle features are not necessary. Consequently, no pedestrian/bike features will be included in the project.

Miscellaneous Features

A number of mailboxes are located within the project limits. The mailboxes and supports will be upgraded. Mailbox turnouts are not warranted because of the low traffic volumes.

The need for guardrail will be evaluated during the development of the project. We will try to minimize its use. BOX OR W-beam rail will be utilized if guardrail is needed. No context sensitive design issues have been identified for this project. We will look to eliminate mainline cattleguards on the project.

Right of Way & Utilities

The total existing right-of-way with is 18.29 m and is probably an easement. The acquisition of new R/W will be necessary throughout the project. Temporary construction permits may also be necessary at various locations.

Fencing (generally poor condition) exists along both sides of most of the project. New fencing will be installed throughout the project.

The project will not have limited access control.

We will attempt to minimize impacts to the utilities as much as possible, but some relocation of utilities is unavoidable.

There will be railroad involvement on the project. The existing at-grade crossing on the project is timber, and has passive (no gates or flashers) traffic control. Based on the low traffic volumes, it is anticipated that the signs will be replaced in kind, however we anticipate improving the crossing to concrete.

Environmental Considerations

The proposed scope of work – reconstruction, constitutes a modernization of the highway. In addition, the initial review did not identify any significant environmental effects, issues or cumulative effects of the proposed work. Therefore, we anticipate that a Categorical Exclusion will provide a sufficient level of documentation in accordance with 23 CFR 771.117. The level of documentation may change depending on the result of the various resource assessments conducted during the survey phase of the project.

1. A number of threatened and endangered species may be present in the vicinity of the project. Their presence and the effects of the project will need to be determined.
2. Wetlands may also be affected by the project. We will attempt to avoid and minimize impacts to the wetlands and sensitive riparian areas in the vicinity of the project.
3. No hazardous waste sites were in evidence. We will need to determine the presence and extent of hazardous materials that may be encountered on the project.
5. We will need to determine which historic and cultural resources will be affected by the project.

The above list of items is not all-inclusive. Other factors requiring evaluation will probably be identified by the resource agencies.

Traffic Control

We anticipate that we will need to carry traffic through the project by staging construction longitudinally. Even where offset alignments are used, the PTW will generally be incorporated into the template of the new roadway and not available to traffic. Part-width construction may be employed for some of the culvert installations but we do not anticipate the need for detours.

The sequencing traffic control plan will be reviewed during the project development. All signing, flagging, etc. will be in accordance with MUTCD.

Survey

An aerial survey has been performed for this project. A survey request was previously distributed, and mapping is being completed. The district will be requested to locate underground utilities, pick up survey for any voids in the aerial mapping, and HYD-1 and pipe location/size/condition as identified in the LHSR.

Right-of-way Bureau will request all necessary retracement and section corner ties.

A soils survey will be requested once preliminary alignments are established.

Public Involvement

A news release will be submitted. A public informational meeting will also be conducted to describe the project. We do not anticipate the need for an additional meeting.

We will continue to be in contact with the county commissioners and landowners that will be affected by the project throughout the project's development.

No groups having unique needs or special concerns have been identified.

Constructability Review and Value Analysis

This project will be reviewed for constructability throughout design. A formal Value Analysis process is not needed for this project.

Project Management and Ready Date

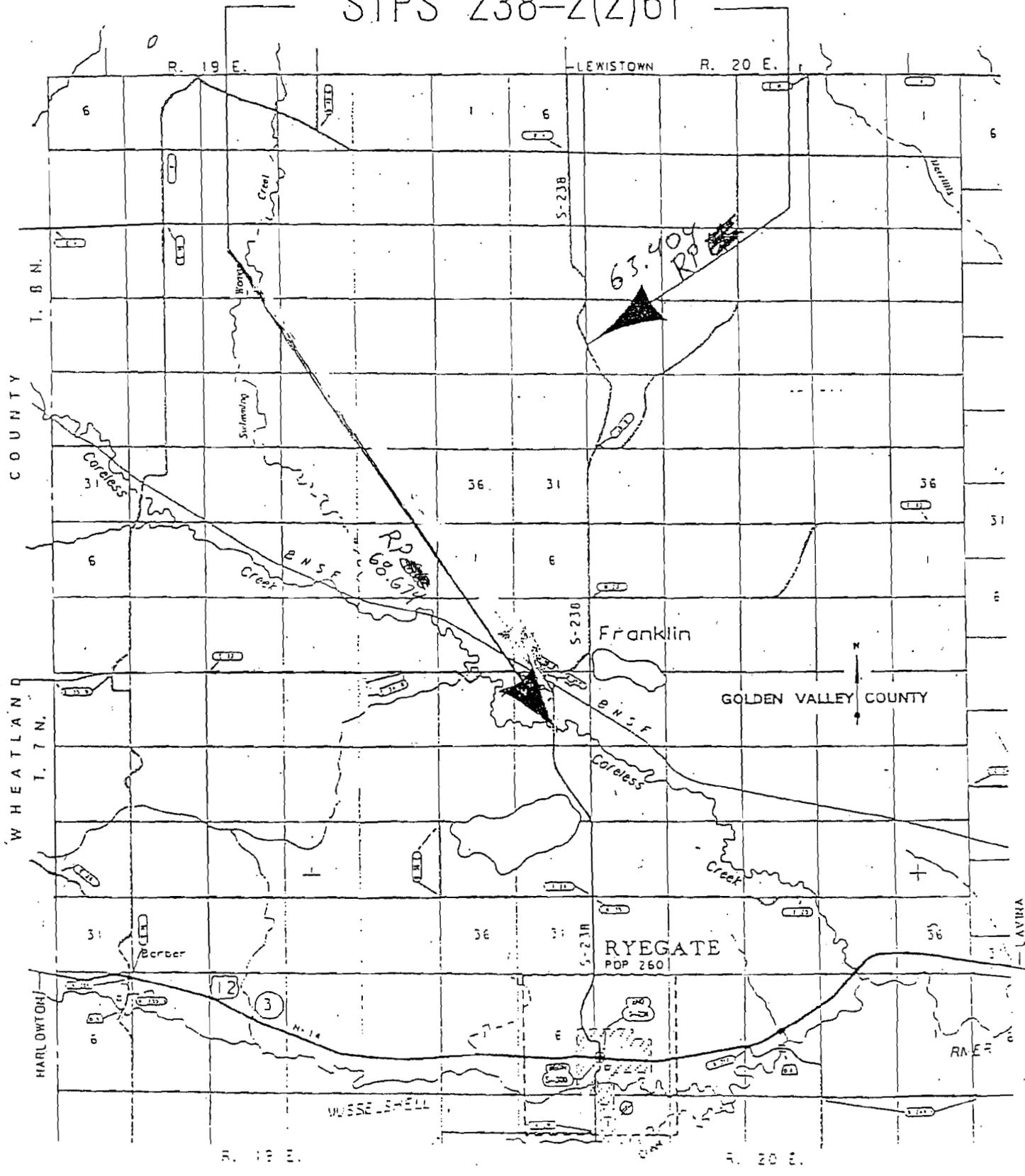
The Billings District design staff will design this project; Gary Neville will be project manager and Aaron Eschler will be the functional manager for all 200 level activities. A ready date has not been established, but we anticipate that the design can be complete by the end of the 2008 calendar year. Based on our current Tentative Construction Plan (TCP) this project will not be fundable for construction until after the 2008 fiscal year.

Cost Estimate

The estimated cost of the project is \$3,300,000 including \$300,000 for Construction Engineering. This project is considered capped for construction. The northern limit of the project may change to meet the construction cost indicated above.

Attached: site map

4 KM NORTH OF RYEGATE - NORTH STPS 238-2(2)61



X:11474 AUG:00CN U7044 13-AUG-2001

11474