

Appendix 1:

Public Comments



Prepared by:

Robert Peccia & Associates

825 Custer Ave | Helena, MT

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ID	Date	Comment
01	07/13/2014	<p>A question, comment or request has been submitted via the "Contact Us" web page.</p> <p>Jesse Oldham</p> <p>Reason for Submission: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted: 07/13/2014 19:46:28 Project/Study Commenting On: I15GoreHillEmersonJct Name: Jesse Oldham Email Address: jesse.oldham@usw.salvationarmy.org</p> <p>Comment or Question: I would like to submit the following suggestions for the I-15 Gore Hill to Emerson Junction corridor study.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The I-15 exit 278/Airport Drive 31st St SW interchange is dangerous. I have lived near and traveled this interchange daily for the past 21 years. 11 of those years I drove a CMV tractor trailer. I am also a member of the Cascade County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). There are two busy truck stops, an industrial area, the County Sheriff's Office and regional jail, Great Falls International Airport and Montana Air National Guard, plus both FedEx and UPS operate out of this area. It is busy. Southbound traffic exiting I-15 and turning left (east) towards the truck stops have difficulty seeing traffic approaching the intersection from the right (airport). <p>This is especially true (and hazardous) for vehicles with limited visibility such as any vehicle from tractor trailer to delivery van that only have a single front passengers side door with window (vs a car or pickup with rear passenger door windows) to see out of. This is worsened considerably as Airport Drive curves back to the right further preventing seeing vehicles approaching from the right. Vehicles as I described have to pull to the left then turn abruptly back to the right within their lane at the top of the exit ramp just to see if anything is coming and if it is safe to enter the intersection.</p> <p>Truck traffic leaving the truck stops and driving south on I-15 are also confounded as exiting southbound traffic turning left preempt the trucks attempting a left turn onto the southbound entrance ramp. This is due to the fact all different approaches to this intersection are offset, some by quite a bit.</p> <p>Solutions: I recommend a large double overpass and roundabout be built for the exit 278 interchange. This will help accommodate both frontage roads, both exit and entrance ramps, and access to the airport as well as the truck stops and future community growth. There currently appears to be sufficient room to accommodate this construction. A second solution would be to realign (somehow) all the approaches and exits that would allow 4 way stop signs or lights at the intersections. Personally though I prefer the idea of two overpasses as part of a large roundabout. This would allow for the smoothest flow possible of all traffic. Traffic entering the roundabout from any entrance would only have to be alert for traffic approaching from the left, or drivers side, before entering the roundabout.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is no southbound entrance to I-15 from the Northwest Bypass in Great Falls. Traffic has to maneuver to the Central Avenue West interchange or the I-315 interchange. This keeps large vehicles as well as those with hazmat loads within the city longer than needed before accessing the interstate. <p>Reference Number = prjcomment_25506591796875</p>
02	10/19/2014	<p>A question, comment or request has been submitted via the "Contact Us" web page.</p> <p>Gregory Forrester</p> <p>Reason for Submission: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted: 10/19/2014 17:50:47 Project/Study Commenting On: I15GoreHillEmersonJct Name: Gregory Forrester Email Address: ggwbikemt@yahoo.com</p> <p>Comment or Question: My biggest issue with Interstate 15 and Gore Hill is the lack of an alternate route climbing Gore Hill. Without trespassing on private property, all traffic including bicyclists and pedestrians MUST use I-15 between exits 277 and 278. I would love to see a second road connecting Gore Hill near the Flying J to either Flood or Fox Farm Road.</p> <p>Reference Number = prjcomment_60430908203125</p>

ID	Date	Comment
03	10/28/2014	<p>A question, comment or request has been submitted via the "Contact Us" web page.</p> <p>Taylor Lonsdale</p> <p>Reason for Submission: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted: 10/28/2014 05:15:04 Project/Study Commenting On: I15GoreHillEmersonJct Name: Taylor Lonsdale Email Address: bnbybike@gmail.com</p> <p>Comment or Question: Please ensure that the connectivity of the bicycle and pedestrian facilities is a priority on this project. The intersection of 10th Ave S and 6th St SW/Fox Farm is a CRITICAL link in the Great Falls community that has poor connectivity for bicycles and pedestrians. There are major facilities that end at or near this intersection. In considering any future construction in this area, ensuring safe and convenient connections for bicycles and pedestrians is a MUST.</p> <p>Reference Number = prjcomment_402801513671875</p>
04	10/28/2014	<p>A question, comment or request has been submitted via the "Contact Us" web page.</p> <p>Patricia Zendejas-Feist</p> <p>Reason for Submission: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted: 10/28/2014 19:43:32 Project/Study Commenting On: I15GoreHillEmersonJct Name: Patricia Zendejas-Feist Email Address: patti.feist@gmail.com Other Details: Corinna Collins</p> <p>Comment or Question: The link provided for the this comment form url in the Great Falls Tribune Newspaper on October 26th regarding the informational meeting to discuss the I-15 GoHill to Emerson Jct., is incorrect. You published www.mdt.gov/comment_form.shtml. The correct site is WWW.MDT.MT.GOV/mdt/comment_form.shtml.</p> <p>Reference Number = prjcomment_954742431640625</p>

ID	Date	Comment
05	11/05/2014 Jess J. Davies Corps of Engineers	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>REPLY TO ATTENTION OF</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT HELENA REGULATORY OFFICE 10 WEST 15TH STREET, SUITE 2200 HELENA MT 59626</p> </div> <div style="text-align: right;"> <p>RECEIVED NOV 06 2014 <i>Robert Peccia & Associates</i></p> </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">November 5, 2014</p> <p>Regulatory Branch Montana State Program Corps No. NWO-2014-02337-MTH</p> <p>Subject: MDT (FHA) - Gore Hill to Emerson Junction Corridor Planning Study - Missouri River</p> <p>Montana Department of Transportation Attn: Tom Martin Post Office Box 201001 Helena, Montana 59620</p> <p>Dear Mr. Martin:</p> <p>We have reviewed your letter requesting information concerning the above-referenced project, which was received by our Helena office on October 10, 2014. The proposed work is located in Cascade County, Montana.</p> <p>The mission of the U.S. Corps of Engineers (Corps) Regulatory Program is to protect the Nation's aquatic resources while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions. In particular, under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, we work to protect the biological, physical, and chemical integrity of the Nation's aquatic resources. Projects are evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine the potential benefits and detriments that may occur as a result of the proposal. In all cases an applicant must avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic resources to the greatest extent practicable.</p> <p>Under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Department of the Army (DA) permits are required for the discharge of fill material into waters of the U.S. Waters of the U.S. include the area below the ordinary high water mark of stream channels and lakes or ponds connected to the tributary system, and wetlands adjacent to these waters. Isolated waters and wetlands, as well as man-made channels, may be waters of the U.S. in certain circumstances, which must be determined on a case-by-case basis. If no waters of the U.S. will be impacted by the project, no DA permit is required. Based on the limited information provided in your letter, we are unable to ascertain if there are jurisdictional resources or regulated activities proposed.</p> <p>Note that this letter is not a DA authorization to proceed. It only informs you of your need to obtain a DA permit if waters of the U.S. will be affected. The project area identified on the map provided should be evaluated to determine if any waters of the U.S. are present. If wetlands are identified within the project area, they should be evaluated in accordance with the Corps' 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual and appropriate Regional Supplement. The wetland delineation report and mapping should be prepared in accordance with the enclosed Wetland Delineation Checklist.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Printed on  Recycled Paper</p>

ID	Date	Comment
		<p>-2-</p> <p>Please contact me at (406) 441-1365 if you have questions and reference Corps File Number NWO-2014-02337-MTH.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>  <p>Jess J. Davies Natural Resources Specialist</p> <p>Enclosure:</p> <p>Wetland Delineation Checklist</p> <p>Copy Furnished:</p> <p>Robert Peccia and Associates Attn: Scott Randall PO Box 5653 Helena, Montana 59604</p>

ID	Date	Comment
06	05/17/2015	<p>A question, comment or request has been submitted via the "Contact Us" web page.</p> <p>J. Casselli</p> <p>Reason for Submission: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted: 05/17/2015 14:07:59 Project/Study Commenting On: I15GoreHillEmersonJct Name: J.Casselli Email Address: camas3prairie@gmail.com Other Details: I-15 Great Falls corridor study comments</p> <p>Comment or Question: Please consider the following in the I-15 Gore Hill Corridor Study and in any future project design: -Provide improved effective signs that minimize sign clutter. -Improve reflective paint and shoulder markers for improved safety especially in poor weather conditions. -Design Highway and interchanges to be attractive and welcoming to the local and visiting public including vegetative landscaping (consider water-wise and native plantings in the design). -Minimize light pollution and comply with dark sky (IDA) lighting standards for all highway lighting. -Mitigate highway noise along this corridor with any proposes highway reconstruction and consider natural and vegetative screening options. -Provide concrete on-off ramps as they have better longevity (less rutting/potholes) from heavy truck traffic. -Any drainage culvert replacements with perennial or seasonal water and wetland areas should maintain aquatic organism passage.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments early in this study process.</p> <p>Reference Number = prjcomment_537689208984375</p>

Comments Received after Publication of the Draft Planning Study Report

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01	05/28/2015	<p>Regarding: Comments and concerns on the 1-15 interchange improvement planning study discussed in the Great Falls Tribune May 27, 2015</p> <p>In reviewing the full draft report online for 1-15 interchange improvements under consideration, we were particularly interested in section 5.35 regarding noise abatement. We want to apprise you of the area within this study where the noise abatement criteria is already exceeded subsequent to the 1997 Fox Farm Rd/10th Ave South Intersection Modification project. A traffic noise Analysis Report was prepared by Bowlby and Associates Inc, Franklin TN, for the Montana Department of Transportation in July of 2003 for 10th Ave S between 14th St SW and the Missouri River. This study was requested with support from our Congressional representatives due to concerns from home owners along Meadowlark Drive regarding the increased noise level on Highway 89 (10th Avenue South) following the intersection modification project a few years previous. The sound study was conducted on Feb 5&6 2003 with significant snow cover on the ground. None of the measurements for Feb 5th was ultimately used due to the snow cover and moisture on the roads the entire day. It was not conducted again in warm weather conditions when motorcycle and other traffic may lead to increasing noise effects along with the standard use of "jake brakes" by semi's traveling along our corridor. As it was, for the residences on Meadowlark Drive with property adjacent to 10th Ave South the noise levels were 66dBA to 70dBA on Feb 6th 2003 which meets or exceeds the FHWA Noise Abatement criteria of 66 (exterior) for residences, motels, hotels, parks, recreation areas etc. Montana DOT defines a traffic noise impact to be when levels approach within 1 dBA of the FHWA criteria.</p> <p>Leq (dBA) refers to the equivalent steady state sound level which in a stated period of time contains the same acoustic energy as the time-varying sound level during the same time period.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Site Description</th> <th>Adjusted 2003 Leq (dBA)</th> <th>Adjusted 2023 Predicted Leq(dBA)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1504 Meadowlark Dr</td><td>66.2</td><td>67.0</td></tr> <tr><td>1510 Meadowlark Dr</td><td>66.3</td><td>67.2</td></tr> <tr><td>1522 Meadowlark Dr</td><td>67.5</td><td>68.4</td></tr> <tr><td>1522 Meadowlark Dr (50' ref)</td><td>73.1</td><td>73.9</td></tr> <tr><td>1524 Meadowlark Dr</td><td>65.7</td><td>66.6</td></tr> <tr><td>1526B Meadowlark Dr</td><td>66.1</td><td>67.0</td></tr> <tr><td>1526C Meadowlark Dr</td><td>67.8</td><td>68.7</td></tr> <tr><td>1528 Meadowlark Dr</td><td>66.2</td><td>67.1</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>After the study was completed, under Mick Johnsons direction, MDT added jersey barriers which did not significantly impact the noise level but does at least give the MDT historical information for the limited impact the barrier had on snowplowing and damage from vehicles crashing into the barriers.</p> <p>When we are in our backyards outdoor conversation in normal tones at a distance of three feet is extremely difficult. Any study into improvements in this area needs to incorporate the already established need for noise abatement east of Fox Farm Road to the Warden Bridge along 10th Avenue South. In addition to noise barriers, MDT should address non-barrier solutions with regard to the pavement such as open-graded asphalt, rubberized asphalt and longitudinal "diamond grinding" of existing concrete pavement.</p> <p>Please include us in the study mailing list.</p> <p>Cherie Bowman-Lyons and Tom Lyons 15126C Meadowlark Dr Great Falls MT 59404 cherietom@gmail.com, phone 406-727-6595</p>	Site Description	Adjusted 2003 Leq (dBA)	Adjusted 2023 Predicted Leq(dBA)	1504 Meadowlark Dr	66.2	67.0	1510 Meadowlark Dr	66.3	67.2	1522 Meadowlark Dr	67.5	68.4	1522 Meadowlark Dr (50' ref)	73.1	73.9	1524 Meadowlark Dr	65.7	66.6	1526B Meadowlark Dr	66.1	67.0	1526C Meadowlark Dr	67.8	68.7	1528 Meadowlark Dr	66.2	67.1	<p><i>Thank you for your comments.</i></p> <p><i>A reference to the Traffic Noise Analysis Report has been added to Section 5.35 of the Corridor Planning Study Report.</i></p>
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02	05/28/2015 Cherie Browman-Lyons	<p>A question, comment or request has been submitted via the "Contact Us" web page.</p> <p>Reason for Submission: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted: 05/28/2015 00:33:49 Project/Study Commenting On: I15GoreHillEmersonJct Name: cherie bowman-lyons Email Address: cherietom@gmail.com Other Details: 10th Avenue South from Warden Bridge to 14th St exit</p> <p>Comment or Question: I reviewed the information on the study regarding Gore Hill/ 10th Avenue South I 315 etc. Section 5.35 addressed noise.</p> <p>After the 10th Ave S road between Warden Bridge and 14th St was redone the noise level increased dramatically causing the Meadowlark Dr neighborhood to request and be granted a noise study after we got Representative Rehberg and Sen Baucus staff involved in our discussions with the state.</p> <p>The study was conducted in backyards adjacent to 10th Avenue South along the areas where the roads were resurfaced including mine (1526C Meadowlark Dr). The sound study found the noise levels exceeded noise level criteria. According to Mick Johnson at the time, because they did not make a significant change to height or width of roadway they were not required to add sound walls even thou the changes significant increased the noise level.</p> <p>The Dept of Transportation band aid solution was the addition of concrete road blocks which slightly muffled the tire noise and assisted with the safety issue of cars sliding off of 10th ave south during winter conditions into our yard. Should any further changes be made, sound walls should be mandated and homeowners in our neighborhood will be very vocal regarding this issue.</p> <p>Reference Number = prjcomment_207763671875</p>	<p><i>Thank you for your comments.</i></p> <p><i>A reference to the Traffic Noise Analysis Report has been added to Section 5.35 of the Corridor Planning Study Report.</i></p>
03	05/29/2015 John Schmidt	<p>A question, comment or request has been submitted via the "Contact Us" web page.</p> <p>Reason for Submission: Ask MDT A Question Submitted: 05/29/2015 15:39:33 Name: John Schmidt Email Address: johnschmidt@bresnan.net</p> <p>Comment or Question: I would like to make two points. I live at 1528 Meadowlark. The noise level was measured on the ground level where the road bed is about the highest by the time it goes by my back yard. When measured at 50' the level of noise was significantly higher at 1522 Meadowlark. Many of the trucks using there jakes are not muffled well enough. I found that when the state enacted the law that all trucks must have mufflers they did not set a decibel level. Talking with Carriers Service officers they are unable to make any enforcement due to this oversight. That is why it is very important that noise level be incorporated in any study or upgrade.</p> <p>I drive a tanker (tuck and pup, 95 feet long), to Billings several times a week. I really like the round about at the airport intersection and have no trouble navigating. I think it would be a great addition to Gore Hill intersection. Trucks coming up the hill would not always have to stop or fight there way into traffic coming out of the two truck</p>	<p><i>Thank you for your comments.</i></p> <p><i>A reference to the Traffic Noise Analysis Report has been added to Section 5.35 of the Corridor Planning Study Report.</i></p>

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		<p>stops. Mang. would loose the right of way but I believe the overall gain would out weigh there delay for that one period of the day. I do not agree with ro-routing the frontage road as I saw it would put the heavy truck traffic into the residential area. Thank you</p> <p>Reference Number = askmdt_28582763671875</p>	
04	<p>06/30/2015 <i>(Submitted after formal public comment period ended)</i></p> <p>Rickey D. Linafelter</p>	<p>A question, comment or request has been submitted via the "Contact Us" web page.</p> <p>Reason for Submission: Comment on a Project or Study Submitted: 06/30/2015 08:27:50 Project/Study Commenting On: I15GoreHillEmersonJct Name: Rickey D. Linafelter Email Address: linafelterr@msn.com</p> <p>Comment or Question: As for the meeting in Great Falls, as I discussed with the two engineers, and you were not recording or taking notes during that meeting, an I have been tied up for the last week, I am hereby submitting written comments that I gave you in verbal form that night at the meeting. 1. You are not even having any consideration to the West Hill overpass. This needs an on and off ramp added to it. I told the MDT division director this 3 or 4 years ago. This will do about 4 things: 1) it will relieve the traffic off of exit 0 for the big RVs headed for Dick's RV Park for both northbound and southbound traffic off of I-15. This will also decrease the response time for fire and ambulance crews on Mclver Road for the Gore Hill Fire Department as well as the Manchester Fire Department: 2) this should be the alternate or the main route for people using the First People's State Park, possible money from the Fish, Wildlife, and Parks should be available for this project; 3) this will also relieve the traffic off of Mclver Road for the subdivision south of the Sun River all the way out to the First People's Buffalo Jump, allowing people to take Mclver Road instead of West Central through the school zones and slower traffic. They can take the Mclver Road and either go north to the West Central exit or go south to the 10th Avenue South exit. They can also go straight through to Dick's RV Park or Market Place. This will also relieve a lot of heavy haul truck, particularly United Materials heavy loaded gravel and concrete trucks to stay off of the West Central residential area coming out of United Materials Mclver pit. Thereby relieving a extreme amount of traffic off of the 10th Avenue South interchange. For right now. a lot of the gravel trucks have to use that in order to go up to Gore Hill to go to the United Material's gravel pit. This will also give the people out of West Hill and Market Place an alternative route to get to the West Central exit.</p> <p>Emerson Junction - This should have had an on and an off ramp placed upon it at the time it was built. This will also relieve United Materials and other gravel trucks going to Mclver pit instead of going through the residential area again. This will give Untied Materials trucks the opportunity for a shorter route if they are on the north run out of Great Falls on north I-15.</p> <p>This will also take the load off of West Central on ramp off of Vaughn Road with heavily loaded 18 wheelers climbing that upgrade and tearing up gears. And people coming to town wanting to exit and get onto the truck Route and get on Emerson Junction will be able to stay out of the residential areas by taking the NW Bypass to go north to Havre. It will relieve the large oil tankers so they can get on and off the interstate without congested traffic to get to and from the refinery, especially with a triple rig.</p> <p>As for the off ramp for the southbound exit on 10th Avenue South, you are absolutely right. The 25 mph exit speed is causing a back-up of traffic and traffic congestion at times.</p>	<p><i>Thank you for your comments and thank you for attending the informational meeting.</i></p> <p><i>Recommendations for the 10th Avenue S, Emerson Junction, and Gore Hill Interchange are included in the report in Chapter 5.</i></p>

ID	Date	Comment	Response
		<p>Gore Hill / Airport - This exit at 3:30 PM with the people coming out of the airport from a couple of flights and the people getting off guard duty, and with all the semis going to the two truck stops now, plus our secure motel (jail) and the response of the Sheriff's time coming out of there, it is well passed time that this gets a traffic light. And being that I own property on the south-side of the intersection, there needs to be a light over there as well, timed with the north light because there is an awful lot of wait-time getting off the off ramp with all the semis coming off the interstate and from the two truck stops, making major delays.</p> <p>I hope you will take time to consider my thoughts as I gave them to you verbally in Great Falls at the Civic Center. It is well passed time that these areas of concern have not been addressed.</p> <p>Respectively, Rick Linafelter linafelterr@msn.com (406) 452-8276 - home (406) 799-8276 - cell</p> <p>cc: County Commissioner Joe Briggs County Commissioner Jane Weber County Commissioner Jim Larson Representative Randy Pinocci Representative Wendy McKamey</p> <p>(406) 727-3688 - fax</p>	