Executive Summary

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) proposes to provide safe and improved access between US 93 and the Miller Creek area in Missoula County, Montana. The Miller Creek area is generally bounded by Miller Creek Road/Upper Miller Creek Road on the east and Lower Miller Creek Road on the west and south and extending to include areas to the south of the Miller Creek. Primary access to the Miller Creek area is currently provided by Miller Creek Road with an indirect access provided by Gharrett Street.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process is used to objectively evaluate federally funded transportation improvements and fully disclose the potential positive and negative environmental consequences of those improvements. This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) discusses alternatives identified in early stages of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process that were later eliminated and those that are still being considered for future implementation.

This Executive Summary highlights the major findings of this FEIS related to the first four chapters of the document:

1. Purpose and Need
2. Alternatives
3. Affected Environment
4. Environmental Consequences and Mitigation

This Executive Summary also discusses other major governmental actions in the project area and any unresolved issues affecting the proposed action or the EIS process.

ES.1 Purpose and Need

Originally, the purpose and need focused on providing a second access to the Miller Creek area. Based on scoping and public input, the purpose and need was revised to:

The purpose of the Miller Creek Road EIS project is to provide safe and improved access between US 93 and the Miller Creek area.

For more information on the changed purpose and need, please refer to Section 1.1.1, page 1-1.

Project opportunities and constraints were identified during project visioning as described in Section 5.3.4, page 5-5. The goals for the project are defined as:

- Provide a transportation solution for efficient and safe access between US 93 and the Miller Creek area, including access to US Forest Service System lands.
- Maintain or improve future operations of US 93.
- Create a transportation solution that is long term and consistent with area comprehensive and transportation plans and accommodates planned growth within the Miller Creek area.
- Design an economically and environmentally responsible project.
- Preserve and enhance the character of the neighborhood.

The project area is situated in one of the fastest growing areas in Missoula County. Population growth is expected to continue into the future, and current development plans would result in approximately 3,000 dwelling units by 2025, thereby affecting the capacity, mobility, and safety of project area roads, including US 93 and Miller Creek Road. The existing primary roadway

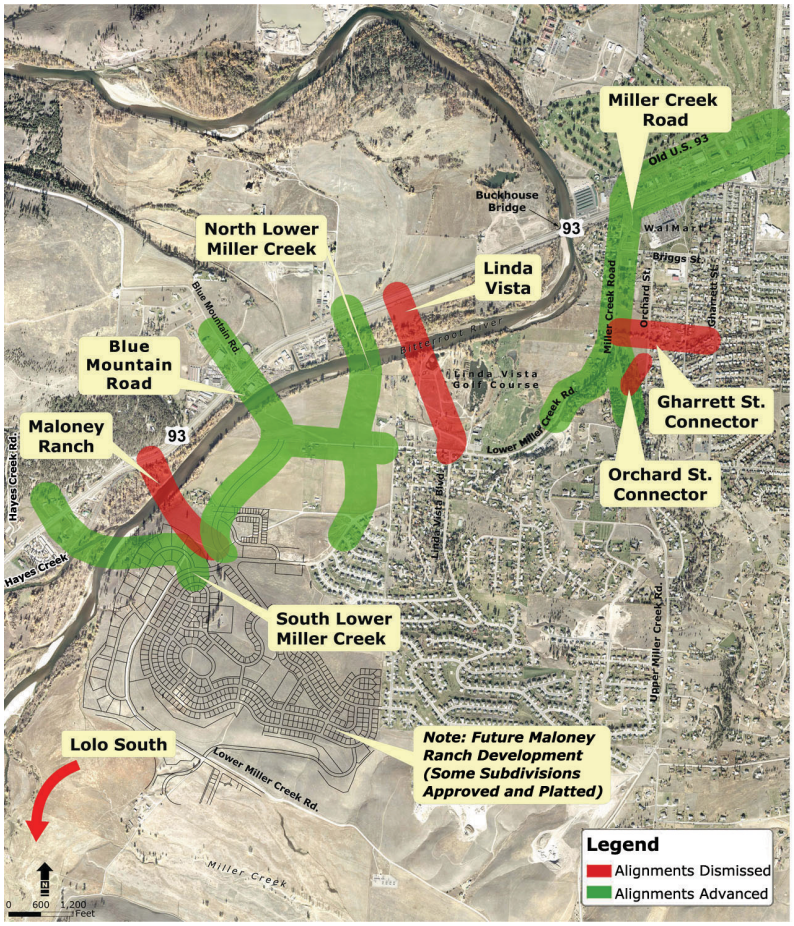
access to and from the project area is *at capacity,* and traffic volumes are expected to increase over the next 20 years with expected full build-out of the Miller Creek area. The following summarizes the needs for a safe and improved access between the Miller Creek area and US 93.

- Address high congestion levels at the Miller Creek Road/US 93 intersection.
- Address roadway deficiency and safety concerns at the Upper Miller Creek Road and Lower Miller Creek Road "Y" intersection, at the Miller Creek Road and US 93 intersection, and on US 93.
- Provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities and public transportation access.
- Improve access for emergency service providers.

ES.2 Alternatives

The alternatives presented in this FEIS were developed through an extensive public and agency coordination process combined with thorough environmental and engineering analysis. Nine corridors were identified as potential alignments to meet purpose and need within the project area (**Figure ES-1**). These alignment corridors were evaluated for fatal flaws, refined, and combined with US 93 connection options that then became the range of alternatives considered. These alternatives were evaluated for feasibility and reasonableness, after which five alternatives were dropped from further consideration. The outcome of this process was four build alternatives that best could meet the purpose and need by providing safe and improved access between the Miller Creek area and US 93. **Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection - Alternative 5A has been identified as the Preferred Alternative.** The four build alternatives and the No-Action Alternative are described below.

Figure ES-1
Initial Alignment Corridors



Three build alternatives were developed that provide a second access to the Miller Creek area from US 93 and require a new structure over the Bitterroot River. The bridge alternatives: North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection (Alternative 2B), Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection (Alternative 3B), and South Lower Miller Creek Interchange (Alternative 4C) all include the Limited Improvements to Miller Creek Road (see **Figure 2-6, page 2-20**). The Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection (Alternative 5A) would upgrade the existing access along Miller Creek Road. Miller Creek Road would be widened to four lanes with additional turn lanes at Briggs and US 93.

All of the build alternatives include the same improvements to Old US 93 and the intersection improvements of Old US 93 with Brooks Street, Brooks and Reserve Streets, and a new signal at Old US 93 and Reserve Street. As proposed in the DEIS, Old US 93 would be widened to three lanes with a left-turn lane, sidewalk, and bike lanes (as shown on **Figure 2-5, page 2-19**). Based on public comments on the DEIS regarding impacts to the Missoula Country Club, the Old US 93 typical section was revised to minimize and avoid impacts to the Missoula Country Club. The modified typical section for Old US 93 eliminates the proposed drainage ditch and eight-foot shoulder and replaces it with an underground stormwater system with curb and gutter and a five-foot bicycle lane. The five-foot bicycle lane would replace the existing shoulder that may be currently used as a bicycle lane. Low retaining walls, approximately three feet high, would be used behind the curb to further reduce right-of-way impacts. These revisions to the proposed typical section would reduce the impacts to the Missoula Country Club.

Alternative 2B: North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection with Limited Improvements to Miller Creek Road—Alternative 2B would provide access between US 93 and the Miller Creek area with a new road with bicycle lanes and sidewalks that would extend north from the junction of Maloney Ranch Road and Lower Miller Creek Road on a bridge across the Bitterroot River. With Alternative 2B, the bridge would cross over the Montana Rail Link (MRL) track and US 93 then descend to a location approximately 350 feet north of US 93. From this point, the road would curve to the east and south back to a new signalized intersection with US 93. This "T" intersection with US 93 would provide full movement access/egress to and from US 93 (see **Figure 2-12, page 2-28**).

Alternative 3B: Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection with Limited Improvements to Miller Creek Road—Alternative 3B would provide a new roadway with bicycle lanes and sidewalks extending Blue Mountain Road south in a grade-separated bridge crossing of US 93, the MRL track, and the Bitterroot River to connect to Lower Miller Creek Road in the Miller Creek area. A new two-lane access ramp would connect US 93 and Blue Mountain Road with right-in/right-out unsignalized intersections. This access ramp could connect with Blue Mountain Road in a modern roundabout or "T" intersection (see **Figure 2-13, page 2-29**).

Alternative 4C: South Lower Miller Creek Interchange with Limited Improvements to Miller Creek Road—Alternative 4C would provide an interchange with the addition of ramp merge and diverge lanes at US 93, north of the intersection of US 93 and Hayes Creek Road. Two two-lane bridges would be required: one to cross over the Bitterroot River and MRL track, and a second bridge to cross over the US 93 mainline and interchange ramp transitions. The grade of the railroad at this location is sufficiently lower than the grade of the highway to not interfere with the US 93 access configuration. East of the Bitterroot River, a new two-lane roadway with bicycle lanes and sidewalks would connect to the realigned segment of Lower Miller Creek Road (see **Figure 2-15, page 2-32**).

Alternative 5A: Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection (Preferred Alternative) —The segment of Miller Creek Road between US 93 and the north "Y" intersection would be widened to provide four travel lanes (two lanes in each direction) with a left-turn lane at the southbound and northbound approaches to Briggs Street, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks. A new signal would be installed at the intersection of Miller Creek Road and Briggs Street (see **Figure 2-18, page 2-35**).

The north "Y" would be realigned to the north and west of its current location to form a more perpendicular "T" intersection. A new signal would be installed at this intersection.

Alternative 1: No-Action Alternative—Each of these alternatives was compared to the No-Action Alternative. The No-Action Alternative consists of transportation improvements that are already in progress or are programmed for development by FHWA, Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), Missoula County, or the City of Missoula. The No-Action Alternative also includes minor safety and maintenance improvements that might be required along the US 93

corridor. This alternative is fully evaluated in the FEIS and is used as a "baseline" against which the build alternatives are compared. The No-Action Alternative is assumed to include locally funded widening improvements to Miller Creek Road.

ES.3 Summary of Impacts

The existing social, economic, environmental, and transportation conditions within the project area are described in Chapter 3.0 of this FEIS. Chapter 4.0 presents a thorough discussion of potential consequences, both adverse and beneficial, that could reasonably be expected to result from each of the alternatives considered. Chapter 4.0 also discusses potential mitigation measures to offset impacts that could occur with the No-Action Alternative and four build alternatives.

Alternatives Carried Forward for Analysis in this FEIS
Alternative 1: No-Action Alternative
Alternative 2B: North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection
Alternative 3B: Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection
Alternative 4C: South Lower Miller Creek Interchange
Alternative 5A: Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection (Preferred Alternative)

The major environmental impacts discussed in this document are summarized in **Table ES-2, page ES-13.**

ES.4 Mitigation

Mitigation measures in this document are generally described for impacts that could result from the build alternatives under consideration in **Table ES-2, page ES-13.**

ES.5 Identification of Preferred Alternative

Comparison of Alternatives

This section and **Table ES-2, page ES-13** describe the major impacts associated with all of the alternatives evaluated in this FEIS. While Alternative 5A has been identified as the Preferred Alternative because it meets the purpose and need for the project, was found to be acceptable when evaluated against criteria established for the project (see **Table 2-2, page 2-13**), and is supported by the assessment conclusions documented in Chapter 4, other alternatives have strengths that are worthy of mention. The bridge alternatives (2B, 3B, and 4C) provide the additional emergency evacuation benefits associated with a second access.

Alternative 5A provides the best operational performance for US 93 based upon future traffic projections, costs the least, and has the least impact to the human and natural environment. Moreover, Alternative 5A would improve traffic operations on Miller Creek Road and the US 93/ Miller Creek Road intersection over the No-Action Alternative. In addition, the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulations require selecting the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative for issuance of a 404 Permit, which was Alternative 5A (see Section 4.10.9, page 4-101).

Based upon the projected increase in traffic on US 93, traffic modeling shows the majority of traffic exiting the Miller Creek area via a second bridge (Alternatives 2B, 3B, and 4C) during the AM peak period would be forced to merge into a long queue of traffic extending to, or past Blue Mountain Road. Furthermore, most drivers would still have to travel through the Miller Creek intersection.

Alternative 5A is expected to function at an acceptable LOS during typical weekday peak travel periods through the year 2025. However, a second connection to the Miller Creek area and other system improvements (including measures to reduce travel demand and/or increase capacity on the US 93 corridor) may be warranted if future traffic volumes on US 93 and Miller Creek Road exceed the year 2025 forecasts. If needed, the second connection and other system improvements will be complimentary to Alternative 5A.

Project Purpose: The purpose of the Miller Creek Road project is to provide for safe and improved access between US 93 and the Miller Creek area. The Miller Creek area is situated in one of the fastest growing areas in Missoula County. Population growth is expected to continue into the future, and current development plans would result in approximately 3,000 dwelling units by 2025, thereby affecting the capacity, mobility, and safety of project area roads, including US 93 and Miller Creek Road. The existing primary roadway access to and from the project area is at capacity and traffic volumes are expected to increase over the next 20 years with expected full build-out of the Miller Creek area.

Table ES-1 compares all the build alternatives to the project needs and summarizes the reasons and findings for Alternative 5A as best meeting the project needs.

In addition, the social, economic, transportation and environmental assessments documented in Chapter 4 support identifying Alternative 5A as the Preferred Alternative.

- All of the build alternatives would require acquisition of private property for right-of-way purposes. Alternative 5A would require acquisition of the least amount of private property with 7.9 acres, and would not require any commercial relocations. Alternative 2B would require 24.2 acres, Alternative 3B would require 35.8 acres, and Alternative 4C would require 66.7 acres of private property. In addition, Alternatives 3B would require 4 commercial relocations and Alternative 4C would require 3 commercial relocations; both of these alternatives would also require more access closures.

Table ES-1
Comparison of Project Needs and the Build Alternatives

Project Needs		Build Alternatives Comparison
1.	Address high congestion levels on Miller Creek Road and at the Miller Creek Road/US 93 intersection.	Compared to the No-Action Alternative, all alternatives have comparable intersection operations at US 93/Miller Creek Road. Alternative 5A addresses the high congestion issue with fewer impacts to the natural area than other build alternatives. Additionally, Alternative 5A, as compared to other build alternatives, will result in higher VMT on collector/local roadways within the Miller Creek area and a reduction in VMT along US 93 (i.e., less congestion compared to other build alternatives) east/south of the Miller Creek Road/US 93/Old US 93 intersection (see **Table 4-7, page 4-23**).

Table ES-1
Comparison of Project Needs and the Build Alternatives

Project Needs		Build Alternatives Comparison
2.	Address roadway deficiency and safety concerns at the Upper Miller Creek Road and Lower Miller Creek Road "Y" intersection, at the Miller Creek Road and US 93 intersection, and on US 93.	All of the alternatives would enhance safety at the north "Y" intersection of Upper Miller Creek Road and Lower Miller Creek Road with the addition of a traffic signal and reconfiguration of the intersection. Compared to Alternatives 2B and 4C, Alternative 5A would not include a new connection to US 93 and thus would not introduce interruption to the traffic flow along US 93. Minimizing interruptions to traffic flow is especially important along congested roadways because interruptions slow down traffic when merging is required or a signal is present and thus increases the crash potential in the area of the interruption. Compared to the other build alternatives, Alternative 5A would have the least impact to traffic operations on US 93.
3.	Provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities and public transportation access.	All of the alternatives would provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities along Miller Creek Road and would remove existing roadway deficiencies (i.e., narrow width and lack of pedestrian facilities) that could discourage future expansion of transit service. Alternative 5A would not provide a second connection to US 93 and would potentially limit viable circulation route options for public transit; however, there is no current transit service to the area.
4.	Improve access for emergency service providers	Compared to the No-Action Alternative, all of the build alternatives would result in improved traffic conditions and reduced traffic travel times, thus improving emergency response times. Alternative 5A would not provide a second connection to US 93 for emergency service providers, whereas the other build alternatives would provide a second access via the new bridge. However, the new fire station in the Miller Creek area (see **Figure 3-4, page 3-14**) completed in March 2007 and traffic lanes being added to Miller Creek Road will improve emergency response times and help during emergency evacuation.

- Alternative 5A would convert the fewest amount of residential and commercial land to a transportation use with 7.9 acres. Alternatives 2B, 3B, and 4C would result in the direct conversion of 24.2 acres, 35.8 acres, and 66.7 acres, respectively, of residential, commercial, agricultural, open space, and undeveloped land to a transportation use.
- Alternative 5A and 4C would not require conversion of farmlands. Alternatives 2B and 3B would directly impact 7.6 and 4.8 acres, respectively, of Farmland of Prime, Statewide, and/or Local Importance by converting land to a non-agricultural use.
- Alternatives 3B and 5A are most effective at improving overall operations on US 93 and key intersections. Alternative 3B would enhance traffic flow along the rural segment of US 93 south/west of Buckhouse Bridge to greatest extent, and Alternative 5A would most effectively improve traffic flow and operations through the US 93 intersections at Miller Creek Road/Old US 93 and Brooks/Reserve Streets. Alternative 5A adequately accommodates and enhances mobility and safety for multiple transportation modes through 2025.
- Alternatives 2B, 3B and 5A would impact the fewest acres of wetlands with 0.2 acre of impact each. Alternative 4C would impact 0.3 acre of wetlands. However, Alternatives 2B, 3B, and 4C would also impact minor amounts of riparian vegetation along the Bitterroot River associated with bridge construction.

- Alternative 5A would have no river impacts or piers in the river because it does not include a bridge. Alternatives 2B, 3B, and 4C require a bridge to cross the Bitterroot River and have associated piers below the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). Alternatives 2B and 3B have two piers in the active channel and 4C would require three piers in the channel. These impacts require permits from regulatory agencies (US Army Corps of Engineers, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, and US Fish and Wildlife Service).
- The determination of effect for bald eagles under all alternatives is *may affect, not likely to adversely affect*. This species was delisted on August 8, 2007. However, the species is still protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The proposed alternatives would have *no effect* on grizzly bears, gray wolves, or Canada lynx. The proposed alternatives would not destroy or adversely modify proposed critical habitat for Canada lynx. Should critical habitat be designated prior to construction of a Preferred Alternative, the project would have *no effect* on designated critical habitat for Canada lynx.
- Alternative 5A would have *no effect* to bull trout or designated critical habitat. Alternatives 2B, 3B, and 4C, which cross the Bitterroot River, *may affect, and are likely to adversely affect*, bull trout and designated critical habitat.
- The build alternatives have the potential to increase wildlife mortality. Alternative 5A would have the least impact to wildlife because it is located in a more urbanized area. Alternatives 3B and 4C have been determined to have the highest potential for increased impact to wildlife.
- All of the build alternatives would result in noise impacts. Alternative 2B is predicted to impact 14 residential properties due to noise increase over the FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). Alternative 3B was predicted to impact 17 properties (14 residences and 3 businesses) by noise increases over the FHWA NAC and a property that has substantial increase over existing noise levels. Alternative 4C was predicted to impact 21 properties (20 residences and 1 church) by noise level increases. Preferred Alternative 5A is predicted to impact 20 properties (19 residences and one church) due to noise increases over the FHWA NAC. The No-Action Alternative is predicted to impact 32 properties (28 residences, 1 church, and 3 commercial properties).
- All of the build alternatives would increase the amount of impervious surface area. Alternative 5A would have the smallest increase of impervious surface area with 6.0 acres. Alternatives 2B, 3B, and 4C would increase the amount of impervious surface area by 13.5 acres, 19.0 acres, and 14.5 acres, respectively.
- Alternative 5A would require the least amount of fill within the floodplain at 0.6 acre. Alternative 4C would require 0.7 acre of fill within the floodplain. Alternatives 2B and 3B would require approximately 3 to 4 acres of fill, respectively, within the 100-year floodplain due to construction of the new road extension south of the Bitterroot River into the Miller Creek area. Alternatives 2B, 3B, and 4C would cause an increase in the flood surface elevation that is below the 0.25-foot increase regulation by Missoula County.
- All of the build alternatives have the potential to impact hazardous waste sites. Alternative 5A and 3B would each impact the fewest potential hazardous waste sites with five potential sites impacted. Alternative 3B would impact nine potential sites and Alternative 4C would impact seven potential sites.
- All of the build alternatives impact the following National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligible historic properties: The Bitterroot Branch of the Northern Pacific Railroad (MRL line) and the Miller-Kelley and Cave-Gannon Ditch, which crosses Miller Creek Road. Impacts are minor and do not affect the historical character or function of the properties.
- None of the build alternatives would impact public parks or public recreation sites.

- The privately-owned Missoula Country Club would be impacted by Old US 93 road widening associated with all build alternatives. From the existing driveway entrance along the southwest property line toward US 93, approximately 30 feet of right-of-way would be acquired from the Country Club to accommodate additional turning lanes at the Old US 93 and US 93 intersection. The landscaped area adjacent to the parking lot and entrance driveway would be impacted. No impacts would occur to the parking lot. The entrance driveway would remain in its current location but would be shortened by approximately 30 feet to match the new Old US 93 edge of pavement. The only impact that would occur to the Country Club along the southern property line east of the entrance driveway in the area of holes 8 and 9 fairway and rough is to portions of the vegetative hedge or gravel maintenance area. In order to accommodate the wider Old US 93 typical section, an area of right-of-way approximately 250 long and 5 feet wide would be acquired as permanent right-of-way. No impacts to the 8th and 9th holes, fairways, or trees along the fairways would occur. For the remainder of the property line to Post Siding Road, all permanent improvements would remain within the existing highway right-of-way. However, to provide construction access for improvements, a five- to ten-foot temporary construction easement may be needed from the Country Club. It is not anticipated that use of the golf course would be limited by the construction easement. This represents approximately 0.2 acre of right-of-way impact to the Missoula Country Club.
- Alternative 5A is estimated to have the shortest construction period of all the build alternatives.

In conclusion, Alternative 5A was found to meet the purpose and need for the project, have the fewest impacts, and most reasonable cost of all the alternatives considered. The relatively low cost of Alternative 5A as the Preferred Alternative compared to the other build alternatives may make it easier to identify funding to include the project in the local fiscally-constrained Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

ES.6 Other Major Governmental Actions

There are several major projects underway or proposed within the project area. These projects are discussed in Section 4.23.2, page 4-162. Minor transportation improvement actions are described and included within the description of the No-Action Alternative in Chapter 2.0.

Implementation of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 5A) would require one or more of the following governmental actions, permits, or approval:

- Issuance of a Section 404 (of the Clean Water Act) permit by the USACE for impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and Waters of the United States.
- Approval for floodplain encroachments from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and floodplain permit from Missoula County.
- A Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) and Final Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) issued by the FEMA may be required with Alternative 5A, depending on review of the regulatory floodplain impacts.
- The project is not in Missoula's current TIP (2007-2011) and would need to be included in a fiscally-constrained LRTP prior to inclusion in the TIP. The preferred alternative is not considered to be of regional significance to the area. However, it would be in the mix of projects used to evaluate conformity during the current transportation plan process if the alternative proceeds successfully through the local transportation planning process. In addition, at least one subsequent phase (e.g., preliminary engineering, final design, right-of-way, utility relocation, or construction) of the project has to be included in the approved TIP before FHWA can sign the Record of Decision (ROD). Section ES.7, page ES-9, provides definitions of these planning terms.

- MDT approval and permitting for any new access to US 93 and approval of any roadway modifications to US 93, Old US 93, and intersections with US 93/Reserve Street.
- The Montana Transportation Commission is the only entity that can award contracts on, or delegate authority to others to let contracts on Montana's highway system.
- A weed control plan approved by Missoula County.
- Effective March 10, 2003, construction activity that results in the disturbance of equal to or greater than one acre of total land area would require permit coverage under MDEQ's "General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activity."
- Coordinate with MDEQ for concurrence of proposed activities related to MDEQ TMDL development for impaired 303(d) listed waterbodies.
- A 318 Authorization for short-term turbidity. If required, this authorization would be obtained from the MDEQ's Water Protection Bureau prior to the start of any highway construction.
- Alternative 5A may require the following permits under the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1251-1376):
  - A Section 402/MPDES permit from the MDEQ's Permitting and Compliance Division. A Notice of Intent (NOI) for Stormwater Discharges under the MPDES and a General Permit (MTR 100000, effective June 8, 2002) would be required with the MDEQ for the control of water pollution for both specific and non-point sources.

    The goal of the MPDES regulation program (ARM 16.20.1314) is to control point source discharges of wastewater such that water quality of the receiving streams is protected. All point sources of wastewater discharge are required to obtain and comply with MPDES permits. Any interchange construction project would typically require coverage under the MPDES "General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activity." This permitting process would serve only as a notice of intent to discharge, rather than a submittal for agency review or approval of a SWPPP.
- Alternative 5A would require the following permit for air quality from the MDEQ:
  - Air and Waste Management Bureau, asphalt plant and crusher permit.
- Alternative 5A would require the following permits, if applicable, for relocation of utilities, from the Montana Department of Transportation's Missoula District:
  - RW131 permit for utilities located in the right-of-way.
  - RW20 permit for encroachment in the right-of-way.
  - RW20S permit for attachment of utilities to structures.
  - Approach permit for access to US 93.
- Migratory bird survey prior to construction and obtain necessary permits and approvals prior to construction or disturbance.

ES.7 Major Unresolved Issues

In accordance with the federal Clean Air Act and the Transportation Conformity Rule (40 CFR 93.104), proposed projects must be found to conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) before they are adopted, accepted, approved, or funded by FHWA or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

The following definitions provide background on the outstanding fiscal constraint and air quality conformity issues related to this project:[1]

- Missoula's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee, which is made up of representatives from Missoula County, City of Missoula, MDT, Missoula Consolidated Planning Board, Missoula Urban Transportation District, FHWA, Ravalli County, and Missoula City/County Health Board. The MPO has the authority and responsibility to ensure that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs are based on a comprehensive planning process. In non-attainment or maintenance areas for air quality, the MPO is responsible for coordinating transportation and air quality planning (see definitions of non-attainment and maintenance areas below).
- A Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a plan developed by the MPO that addresses future projects by considering roadways, transit, non-motorized transportation, and projected demand for transportation services over 20 years. The LRTP considers regional land use, development, housing, and employment; project cost estimates and reasonably available funding sources. Missoula's LRTP is updated every four years.
- The Missoula Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) identifies the transportation projects to undertake over a five-year period based on short-term transportation priorities, and is updated annually. All projects receiving federal funding must be in the TIP. It is realistic in terms of available funding and is not just a "wish list" of projects. This concept is known as fiscal constraint.
- Fiscal constraint is a demonstration of sufficient funds (federal, state, local, and private) to implement proposed transportation system improvements, as well as to operate and maintain the entire system, through the comparison of revenues and costs.
- A non-attainment area is a geographic area that does not meet the federal air quality standards. If no violations of air quality standards have been found, the area is considered to be in compliance, or attainment, with federal air quality standards. In order for a Plan and TIP to meet the conformity requirements, it cannot include projects that create new violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), increase the frequency or severity of existing violations of the standards, or delay attainment of the standards. In order to be eligible for federal funding and approval, the transportation plans must meet air quality goals. The regulations in 23 CFR part 450, subpart C, require that MPOs be designated for each urbanized area. MPOs must prepare transportation plans that identify regionally significant transportation projects that are likely to be funded and built. Emissions from all of the included projects cannot exceed emissions budgets contained in the State Implementation Plan (SIP). A conformity analysis is performed each time the transportation plan is updated. To demonstrate conformity, a project must be included in a conforming Transportation Plan and TIP. A conformity determination of the Transportation Plan and TIP is a finding by the MPO policy board, and subsequently by FHWA.

Alternative 5A is not in Missoula's current TIP (2007-2011). The project would need to be included in a fiscally constrained conforming LRTP and currently it is not. In addition, at least one subsequent phase (e.g., preliminary engineering, final design, right-of-way, utility relocation, or construction) of the project has to be included in the approved TIP (and it currently is not) before FHWA can sign the Record of Decision (ROD). The Miller Creek Road reconstruction project included in the current TIP will construct a portion of the No-Action Alternative using local funds.

Missoula is currently working on the 2008 LRTP, and it is scheduled for completion in June 2008. During the long range transportation planning process, the project is weighed against other

1. Source: *The Transportation Planning Process: A Briefing Book for Transportation Decisionmakers, Officials, and Staff*, A publication of the Transportation Planning Capacity Building Program, FHWA and FTA. Web site accessed February 12, 2008: www.planning.dot.gov/documents/briefingbook/bbook.htm#2BB.

projects competing for local funding to develop a fiscally-constrained plan. All projects in the process are evaluated to determine the optimum mixture that best meets the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

If the preferred build alternative is included in a fiscally constrained conforming transportation plan and TIP, the FHWA can sign a Record of Decision (ROD) for Alternative 5A. Conversely, if it is not in such plans, then FHWA could not sign a ROD advancing a build alternative. In addition, FHWA can delay issue of a ROD until the LRTP and TIP include the project or can select the No-Action Alternative. The relatively low cost of the preferred alternative compared to the other build alternatives may make it easier to identify funding to include the preferred alternative in local planning documents, given that this alternative adequately meets and enhances the overall plan's goals and objectives to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods for current and future transportation demand.

The preservation of corridors within metropolitan areas is not eligible for federal aid funds if the construction project within the preserved corridor cannot be completed within the planning horizon.

ES.8 Public Comments and Hearing on the DEIS

A Public Hearing was held on October 17, 2006 at the Quality Inn and Conference Center (Big Sky Room), 3803 Brooks Street, Missoula, Montana. Notices announcing the availability of the DEIS and Public Hearing were mailed to addresses on the project mailing list, bulk mailed to addresses in the project area, advertised in local papers, and displayed on posters placed at locations in and around the study area. Approximately 190 people attended the public hearing and 270 comments were received on the DEIS, including 65 comments received at the public hearing. The initial DEIS comment period took place from September 22, 2006 through November 6, 2006. However, due to the high level of interest, the public comment period was extended 30 days to December 6, 2006. More information about the public hearing, notifications, and comment period can be found in Chapter 5.0.

The main issues expressed in public comments received included:

- NEPA process and change in project purpose and need.
- Project funding.
- Need for a second access to Miller Creek area and questions about why a bridge alternative was not identified as the Preferred Alternative.
- Why were Old US 93 improvements included with all build alternatives?
- Impacts to the Missoula Country Club.
- Miller Creek Road (access, traffic operations, "Y" intersection operations, Wal-Mart).
- Traffic forecasting.
- US 93 operations.
- Speed limits on area roads.
- Cold Springs Elementary School traffic and child safety.
- Project construction impacts.
- Transit, rail, and bus options.
- Community planning and Missoula bypass.

All comments received on the Miller Creek Road Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) are contained in **Volume 2, Appendix E**. Because of the large number of similar comments received, Summary Responses were developed and included in the appendix to provide a simplified, yet comprehensive format for a specific issue in one of the following ways:

- Summary responses: This section of Appendix E provides responses to similar comments received on the DEIS. To find responses to a specific comment, readers can locate the comment in the Appendix E Table of Contents, note the corresponding response letter (A, B, or C, etc.), and refer to the corresponding lettered response in the Summary Response section of the appendix.
- Unique comment responses: Responses to unique comments are provided on the same page as the comment in the latter part of the appendix.

At the end of each summary response in **Appendix E**, any modifications made to the Miller Creek Road Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in response to comments are noted.

This table provides a summary of impacts and mitigation for each resource by alternative to distinguish the alternatives from each other. Impacts shown for the No-Action Alternative include impacts associated with planned locally funded improvements to Miller Creek Road only for comparison purposes. These improvements are not a part of this federally funded project. Impacts shown for Alternatives 2B, 3B, and 4C include the impacts for the Bitterroot River bridge crossing and new roadway, the intersection/interchange with US 93, improvements on Old US 93, and the Miller Creek Road Limited Improvements. Impacts shown for Alternative 5A include impacts on Old US 93 and Miller Creek Road. For a complete description of impacts and mitigation for each resource, please refer to Chapter 4.0 of this document.

Table ES-2
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Alternative 1 No-Action	Alternative 2B North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 3B Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 4C South Lower Miller Creek Interchange	Alternative 5A Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection **(Preferred Alternative)**
Land Use				
Impacts • No change to population growth trends or development patterns. • No changes to existing land uses and zoning designations.	**Impacts** • Direct conversion of 24.2 acres of land from residential, commercial, agricultural, open space, and undeveloped use to transportation use. • Promotes new development in undeveloped areas. • Could accelerate planned development.	**Impacts** • Same as Alt. 2B, except 3B would impact 35.8 acres and have greater impact to land use character.	**Impacts** • Same as Alt. 2B, except 4C would impact 66.7 acres and have greatest impact to land use character at Hayes Creek Road area. • Would bisect a Maloney Ranch conservation easement located along east bank of Bitterroot River.	**Impacts** • Converts 7.9 acres of residential and commercial land to transportation use.
	Mitigation: • No mitigation is necessary.			
Farmland/Agriculture				
Impacts • None	**Impacts** • 7.6 acres of Farmland of Local Importance. • Bisects 100-acre agricultural/ranch property.	**Impacts** • 4.8 acres of Farmland of Local Importance. • Acquisition of approximately 8 acres of agricultural/ranch property. • Bisects 2 agricultural/ranch properties. • Relocation of irrigation ditch near Bitterroot River where proposed bridge would touch down.	**Impacts** • None.	**Impacts** • None.
	Mitigation: • No mitigation is required.			

Table ES-2
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Alternative 1 No-Action	Alternative 2B North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 3B Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 4C South Lower Miller Creek Interchange	Alternative 5A Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection **(Preferred Alternative)**
Social and Environmental Justice				
Impacts • No change to projected population increases. • One residential relocation. • No disproportionate impacts to minority or low-income Environmental Justice populations.	**Impacts** • Improved capacity on Miller Creek Road due to Miller Creek Limited Improvements. • No disproportionate impacts to minority or low-income Environmental Justice populations. • Second access would improve emergency access. • One residential relocation. • Signal at Briggs Street and Miller Creek Road could encourage cut-through traffic. However, capacity improvements on Miller Creek Road would reduce the likelihood for cut-through traffic.	**Impacts** • Similar to Alt. 2B, except has more residential right-of-way and access impacts at US 93/Blue Mountain Road intersection. • No disproportionate impacts to minority or low-income Environmental Justice populations. • Removal of signal at Blue Mountain Road makes access to and from Hayes Creek Rd. neighborhoods more challenging. • Second access would improve emergency access. • Two residential relocations. • Signal at Briggs Street and Miller Creek Road could encourage cut-through traffic. However, capacity improvements on Miller Creek Road would reduce the likelihood for cut-through traffic.	**Impacts** • Similar to Alt. 2B, except Alt. 4C has most social impacts of build alternatives (12 residential relocations, including one trailer home). • No disproportionate impacts to minority or low-income Environmental Justice populations. • Second access would improve emergency access. • Impacts to trailer park have been minimized. • Signal at Briggs Street and Miller Creek Road could encourage cut-through traffic. However, capacity improvements on Miller Creek Road would reduce the likelihood for cut-through traffic.	**Impacts** • Fewer overall right-of-way and access impacts than other build alternatives. • No disproportionate impacts to minority or low-income Environmental Justice populations. • One residential relocation. • Emergency access capacity out of Miller Creek is improved over the No-Action Alternative. • Signal at Briggs Street and Miller Creek Road could encourage cut-through traffic. However, capacity improvements on Miller Creek Road would reduce the likelihood for cut-through traffic.
	Mitigation • No mitigation is necessary.			

Table ES-2
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Alternative 1 No-Action	Alternative 2B North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 3B Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 4C South Lower Miller Creek Interchange	Alternative 5A Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection **(Preferred Alternative)**
Transportation				
Impacts • Congestion would continue to worsen with reasonably foreseeable build-out of Miller Creek area. • Potential for vehicles to get trapped on tracks would increase as traffic volume and congestion increase. • Minimal to no improvement to emergency access.	**Impacts** • Most evenly distributes traffic between Miller Creek Road and second access. • Reduces traffic volume along Miller Creek Road to greatest extent. • Worst impact to US 93 traffic flow. • Worst operations on US 93. • Adds signal and potential conflict locations at new intersection on US 93. • Reduces travel across railroad track. • Enhances potential transit and ride-sharing route options and circulation. • Provides additional grade-separated crossing of US 93. • Traffic signal would reduce potential vehicle/train conflicts at Miller Creek Rd./US 93. • Least impacts to rail service. No new grade crossing. • Second access would improve emergency access.	**Impacts** • Least impact to US 93 traffic flow in rural section south of Buckhouse Bridge. • Best overall operations on major roadways and at major intersections in Miller Creek area. • Introduces traffic to high-speed section of US 93. • Eliminates signal, secondary approaches, and provides grade-separated access to Blue Mountain Road. • Adds at-grade railroad crossings. • May provide best potential transit route circulation in Miller Creek area. • Traffic signal would reduce potential vehicle/train conflicts at Miller Creek Rd./US 93. • New modified at-grade MRL track crossing. Potential for vehicle/train conflicts greater due to higher traffic volumes at new crossing. • Second access would improve emergency access.	**Impacts** • Greatest travel shift from local system to US 93. • Least shift of traffic from Miller Creek Road to second access. • Worst roadway and intersection operations of build alternatives. • Introduces traffic to high-speed section of US 93. • Provides grade-separated access to Hayes Creek Road from Miller Creek area. • Second access likely outside Missoula Urban Transportation District (MUTD). • Provides best access to Hayes Creek Road for ride-sharing. • Provides best access between Miller Creek area and Hayes Creek Road. • High-speed interchange not desirable for nonmotorized travel. • Traffic signal would reduce potential vehicle/train conflicts at Miller Creek Rd./US 93. • New access road to US 93 would cross over MRL track, avoiding an at-grade crossing. • Second access would improve emergency access.	**Impacts** • Best overall traffic performance. • Maintains current travel patterns in area. • Least impact to US 93 traffic volumes and overall flow. • Best operations at US 93/Miller Creek Road intersection. • Highest volumes at US 93/Miller Creek Road intersection. • Greatest number of travel lanes on Miller Creek Road crossing railroad track. • Route options for future bus access to/from the Miller Creek area would be limited to Miller Creek Road. • Greatest width and number of lanes to cross on Miller Creek Road. • Traffic signal would reduce potential vehicle/train conflicts at Miller Creek Rd./US 93. • Increase in traffic and number of lanes on Miller Creek Road would result in increased risk of vehicle/train conflicts at MRL crossing on Miller Creek Rd. • Miller Creek Road improvements provide additional lane on Miller Creek for improved emergency access.
	Mitigation • Measures to minimize adverse transportation impacts are incorporated into conceptual design of each alternative. No additional transportation mitigation measures have been identified.			
Right-of-Way and Utilities				
Impacts • No right-of-way acquisitions, easements, or construction permits for federal action. • Right-of-way and relocations would occur as part of locally funded improvements along Miller Creek Road (3.7 acres and one residential relocation).	**Impacts** • 1 residential relocation • 1 undeveloped acquisition. • 24.2 acres required. • Railroad easement (2 crossings). • Construction easements may be required.	**Impacts** • 4 commercial relocations. • 2 residential relocations. • 35.8 acres required. • Railroad easement (2 crossings). • Construction easements may be required.	**Impacts** • 3 commercial relocations. • 12 residential relocations. • 66.7 acres required. • Railroad easement (2 crossings). • Construction easements may be required.	**Impacts** • 1 residential relocation. • 7.9 acres required. • Railroad easement (one crossing). • Construction easements may be required.
	Mitigation • Right-of-way acquisition will be done in compliance with the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.			

Table ES-2
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Alternative 1 No-Action	Alternative 2B North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 3B Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 4C South Lower Miller Creek Interchange	Alternative 5A Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection **(Preferred Alternative)**
Economic				
Impacts • No impact to economic growth trends or businesses in or adjacent to the project area.	**Impacts** • All parking that is currently occurring on the gravel shoulder within the Old US 93 right-of-way would be eliminated. • The US 93/Yuhas Ranch Lane access would be relocated. • No commercial relocations.	**Impacts** • Same as Alt. 2B, plus business accesses US 93 northwest of Blue Mountain Road intersection would be consolidated. • Changes in access to properties south of US 93 could result in temporary loss of business. • Removal of signal at Blue Mountain Road may impact access to businesses along US 93, due to loss of gap in traffic that results from signal. • 4 commercial relocations.	**Impacts** • Same as Alt. 2B, plus requires some out-of-direction travel for Miller Creek residents traveling to Missoula. • 3 commercial relocations in Hayes Creek Road area.	**Impacts** • No commercial relocations. • All parking that is currently occurring on the gravel shoulder within the Old US 93 right-of-way would be eliminated.
	Mitigation • Mitigation for permanent and temporary construction-related economic impacts include maintaining accurate and up-to-date information for businesses and the public. • Business accesses would remain open to the maximum extent possible and closures kept to a minimum. • Signage indicating changes in access to businesses will be installed when needed and as determined practicable.			
Air Quality				
Impacts • Same or higher levels of localized carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations compared to build alternatives. • Increased congestion can lead to higher localized pollutant concentrations, particularly in winter months.	**Impacts** • Air quality impacts from increased CO concentrations are not anticipated under the build alternatives. Further, signalized intersection operation improves in almost all cases between the No-Action Alternative and the build alternatives. • There would be a small reduction in regional and project-area vehicle miles traveled (VMT). • There is generally little difference between the alternatives related to air quality. The degree to which differences in VMT and intersection operation vary under each alternative is relatively minor, and is unlikely to have much effect on pollutant concentrations. Air quality is therefore unlikely to be a significant factor in selecting a build alternative.			
	Mitigation • No mitigation is necessary.			
Noise				
Impacts • 28 residential noise-related impacts. • 1 church would receive noise impacts. • 3 commercial properties receive noise impacts.	**Impacts** • 14 residences impacted.	**Impacts** • 14 residences impacted. • 3 businesses impacted.	**Impacts** • 20 residences impacted. • 1 church impacted.	**Impacts** • 19 residences impacted. • 1 church impacted.
	Mitigation • No mitigation is recommended.			

Table ES-2
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Alternative 1 No-Action	Alternative 2B North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 3B Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 4C South Lower Miller Creek Interchange	Alternative 5A Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection **(Preferred Alternative)**
Water Resources and Water Quality				
Impacts • No impacts to water resources and water quality.	**Impacts** • Requires 2 piers in Bitterroot River. • Increase in impervious surface area is 13.5 acres. • Additional surface water runoff is 15 acre feet. • Improvements on Old US 93 include storm sewer connection along both sides.	**Impacts** • Requires 2 piers in Bitterroot River. • Increase in impervious surface is 19.0 acres. • Additional surface water runoff is 21 acre feet. • Improvements on Old US 93 include storm sewer connection along south side. • No impacts to Big Flat Canal.	**Impacts** • Improvements on Old US 93 include storm sewer connection along south side. • Requires 3 piers in Bitterroot River. • Increase in impervious surface is 14.5 acres. • Additional surface water runoff is 14 acre feet.	**Impacts** • No impacts to Bitterroot River. • Increase in impervious surface is 6.0 acres. • Additional surface water runoff is 7 acre feet.
	Mitigation • Incorporation of BMPs and SWPPP.			
Wetlands				
Impacts • Could directly impact <0.2 acre of wetlands as part of locally funded project. • No wetland impacts as part of federal action.	**Impacts** • Directly impacts 0.2 acre of non-jurisdictional Wetland #13. • Requires 2,700 cu. yds. of dredge/fill material in Waters of the United States.	**Impacts** • Directly impacts 0.2 acre of non-jurisdictional wetland. • Requires 2,700 cu. yds. of dredge/fill material in Waters of the United States.	**Impacts** • Directly impacts 0.3 acre of wetland (of which 0.1 acre is a jurisdictional wetland). • Requires 4,050 cu. yds. of dredge/fill material in Waters of the United States.	**Impacts** • Directly impacts 0.2 acre of non-jurisdictional wetland.
	Mitigation • No compensatory mitigation is proposed. • Schedule construction when sites are dry to minimize sedimentation during construction. • Use acceptable erosion control devices and install best management practices (BMPs) at edge of wetlands and Waters of the US prior to construction. • Prepare Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). • Temporarily disturbed wetland areas would be revegetated with desirable species at earliest practicable date following disturbance.			

Table ES-2
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Alternative 1 No-Action	Alternative 2B North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 3B Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 4C South Lower Miller Creek Interchange	Alternative 5A Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection **(Preferred Alternative)**
Vegetation, Wildlife and Aquatics				
Impacts • Wildlife mortality rates could increase as traffic volumes increase on US 93.	**Impacts** • 0.1 acre riparian impacts. • 15 acres grassland. • Terrestrial wildlife: riparian zone along Bitterroot River is winter range for deer and other wildlife. • Wildlife crossing would be accommodated under bridge along Bitterroot River. • Aquatic impacts:2 bridge piers in river below the ordinary high water mark (OHWM).	**Impacts** • 0.2 acre riparian impacts. • 19 acres grassland. • Terrestrial wildlife: wildlife mortality along US 93 could increase with Alt. 3B. • Wildlife crossing would be accommodated under bridge along Bitterroot River. • Aquatic impacts: 2 bridge piers in river below OHWM.	**Impacts** • 0.3 acre riparian impacts. • 28 acres of grassland. • Terrestrial wildlife: same as Alt. 3B. • Wildlife crossing would be accommodated under bridge along Bitterroot River. • Aquatic impacts: 3 bridge piers in river below OHWM.	**Impacts** • No riparian or grassland impacts. • Minor terrestrial wildlife impacts. • No impacts to Bitterroot River.
	Mitigation • Stormwater treatment and use of BMPs. • In-water permits • Re-establishment of riparian habitat. Enhancements Identified for the Bridge Alternatives: • Incorporation of bat-friendly habitat features.			
Floodplains				
Impacts • 0.5 acre of fill within floodplain would be associated with locally funded project along Miller Creek Road. • No impacts from federal action.	**Impacts** • 3.1 acres of fill within floodplain. • 8 bridge piers in floodway.	**Impacts** • 4.1 acres of fill within floodplain. • 4 bridge piers in floodway.	**Impacts** • 0.7 acre of fill within floodplain. • 4 bridge piers in floodway.	**Impacts** • 0.6 acre of fill within floodplain.
	Mitigation • Design will seek to minimize impacts to floodplains in compliance with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and Missoula County requirements.			
Threatened, Endangered or Sensitive Species				
Impacts • No impacts to bull trout or bald eagle.	**Impacts** • Bull trout: may affect, likely to adversely affect. • Bald eagle habitat: may affect, not likely to adversely affect.			**Impacts** • Bull trout: no effect. • Bald eagle habitat: may affect, not likely to adversely affect.
	Mitigation • Bull trout: conservation measures include in-water work timing restrictions; implement SWPPP; install erosion control devices and BMPs; develop revegetation and erosion control plans; revegetate disturbed wetland areas with desirable species; contain wet concrete and wash water; protect inlets/catchments from fresh concrete, tackifier, paving, or paint striping; clean all equipment prior to use below OHWM; fuel and maintain equipment 100 feet away from river, prevent ground disturbance outside project limits, grub vegetation only from areas undergoing permanent alteration. • Bald eagle: conservation measures include raptor-proofing relocated overhead power lines and locate construction-related activities in compliance with all laws.			**Mitigation** • Bald eagle: Same as Alts. 2B, 3B, and 4C.

Table ES-2
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Alternative 1 No-Action	Alternative 2B North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 3B Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 4C South Lower Miller Creek Interchange	Alternative 5A Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection **(Preferred Alternative)**
Cultural Resources				
Impacts • 2 National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-eligible properties would be affected by locally funded project along Miller Creek Road. • No impacts from federal action.	**Impacts** • 2 NRHP-eligible properties impacted. • Section 4(f) analysis determined "de minimis" impacts.	**Impacts** • 2 NRHP-eligible properties impacted. • Section 4(f) analysis determined "de minimis" impacts.	**Impacts** • 3 NRHP-eligible properties impacted. • Section 4(f) analysis determined "de minimis" impacts.	**Impacts** • 2 NRHP-eligible properties impacted. • Section 4(f) analysis determined "de minimis" impacts.
	Mitigation • No mitigation is necessary. • In the event that previously unrecorded cultural material is found during construction, activities would be halted and the project archaeologist would be contacted to assess the find.			
Hazardous Waste				
Impacts • 2 hazardous waste sites would be affected by locally funded project. • No impacts from federal action.	**Impacts** • 5 hazardous waste sites impacted.	**Impacts** • 9 hazardous waste sites impacted.	**Impacts** • 7 hazardous waste sites impacted.	**Impacts** • 5 hazardous waste sites impacted.
	Mitigation • Phase II environmental investigation would be conducted prior to construction.			
Visual				
Impacts • No impacts.	**Impacts** • Widening Old US 93: impacts Missoula Country Club Golf Course hedge; widened pavement along Old US 93 and Brooks/Reserve Street; a retaining wall along Larchmont Golf Course property and Missoula Country Club. • New bridge structure over Bitterroot River may block views and cause shading beneath it. • Limited Improvements along Miller Creek Road would cause additional loss of vegetation and wider pavement; includes sidewalk and bike lanes with boulevard treatment.			**Impacts** • Widening Old US 93: impacts Missoula Country Club Golf Course hedge; widened pavement along Old US 93 and Brooks/Reserve Street; a retaining wall along Larchmont Golf Course and Missoula Country Club property. • Miller Creek Road widening would cause additional loss of vegetation and wider pavement; includes sidewalk and bike lanes with boulevard treatment.
	Mitigation • Where new right-of-way or a construction easement is needed on Missoula Country Club property and the fence and/or hedge is impacted, replacement fencing and/or landscaping would be installed in coordination with the property owner. • Provide architectural interest or color in retaining wall design, bridges, and other structural features to blend with natural surroundings. • Revegetate disturbed areas with desirable species as soon as practicable consistent with adjacent landscape features.			

Table ES-2
Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

Alternative 1 No-Action	Alternative 2B North Lower Miller Creek Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 3B Blue Mountain Road Grade-Separated Intersection	Alternative 4C South Lower Miller Creek Interchange	Alternative 5A Miller Creek Road At-Grade Intersection **(Preferred Alternative)**
Parks and Recreation				
Impacts • No impacts to public parks and public recreation facilities.	**Impacts** • No impacts to Lolo National Forest or Blue Mountain Recreation Area. • Indirect effects to future Maloney Ranch Park. • Old US 93 impacts: impacts Missoula Country Club (private) entrance and landscaping; no impacts to Larchmont Golf Course.	**Impacts** • No impacts to Lolo National Forest or Blue Mountain Recreation Area. • Minor indirect effects to future Maloney Ranch Park. • Indirect effects to Buckhouse Bridge Boat Camp and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) Parcel 4. • Old US 93 impacts: same as 2B.	**Impacts** • No impacts to Lolo National Forest or Blue Mountain Recreation Area. • Indirect effect to MFWP Parcel 4. • Old US 93 Impacts: Same as 2B.	**Impacts** • Old US 93 impacts: impacts Missoula Country Club (private) entrance and landscaping; no impacts to Larchmont Golf Course. • No impacts to Lolo National Forest or Blue Mountain Recreation Area.
	Mitigation • Where new right-of-way or a construction easement is needed on Missoula Country Club property and the fence and/or hedge is impacted, replacement fencing and/or landscaping would be installed in coordination with the property owner. • Design and construction of any improvements along Old US 93 would include appropriate signage to alert drivers on Old US 93. Such signage could likely include a "Do Not Block Driveway" sign on Old US 93 to alert southbound (westbound) drivers of the need to maintain access to the Missoula Country Club driveway. A traffic management plan may be needed if large events like tournaments are expected to start or end during rush hour.			
Construction				
Impacts No impacts.	**Impacts** • Decreased mobility during construction, dust, noise, runoff, detours and traffic delays, construction vehicle emissions, temporary access restrictions, visual intrusions to motorists and residents, vegetation removal, construction debris, and risk of accidental hazardous material spills like fuel or oil. • Short-term construction impacts to business access. • Average traffic-related impacts and time frame to construct.	**Impacts** • Decreased mobility during construction, dust, noise, runoff, detours and traffic delays, construction vehicle emissions, temporary access restrictions, visual intrusions to motorists and residents, vegetation removal, construction debris, and risk of accidental hazardous material spills like fuel or oil. • Worst construction-related traffic impacts. • Potential for economic losses both during and after construction due to access changes for businesses near the intersection.	**Impacts** • Decreased mobility during construction, dust, noise, runoff, detours and traffic delays, construction vehicle emissions, temporary access restrictions, visual intrusions to motorists and residents, vegetation removal, construction debris, and risk of accidental hazardous material spills like fuel or oil. • Would have the longest time frame to construct.	**Impacts** • Decreased mobility during construction, dust, noise, runoff, detours and traffic delays, construction vehicle emissions, temporary access restrictions, visual intrusions to motorists and residents, vegetation removal, construction debris, and risk of accidental hazardous material spills like fuel or oil. • Fewest construction-related traffic impacts of build alternatives. • Would have the shortest construction period.
	Mitigation • Mitigation measures for impacts to air quality, noise, water quality, traffic control, and visual quality have been identified under individual resources.			