



Welcome

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is finalizing plans to reconstruct over 7 miles of Montana Highway 41 (MT 41) between Dillon and Twin Bridges.

The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Review the status of the multi-year project planning and development process.
- Present the planned improvements and answer questions.
- Discuss the next steps in the project process.





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**STONE CREEK
NORTH**

RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

Project Team

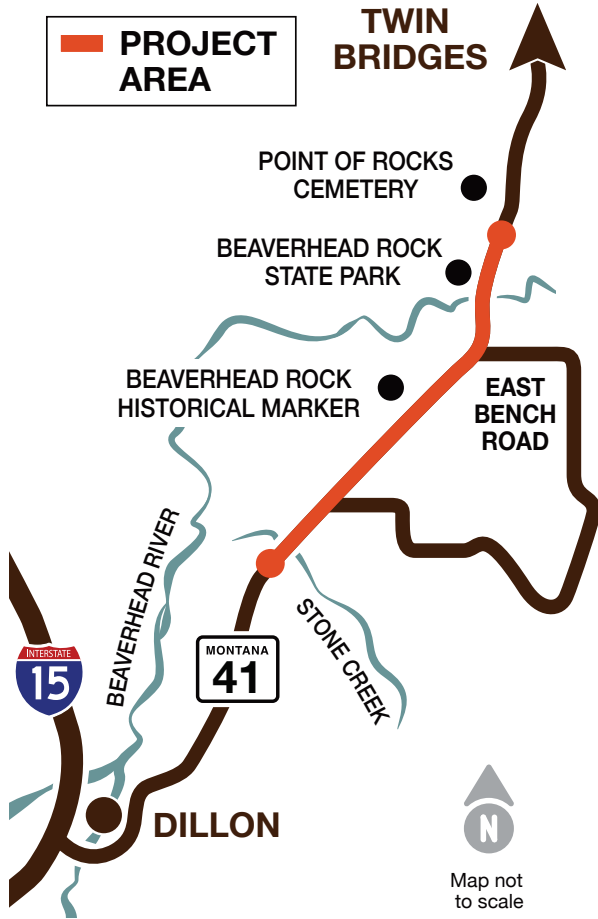


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Project Overview



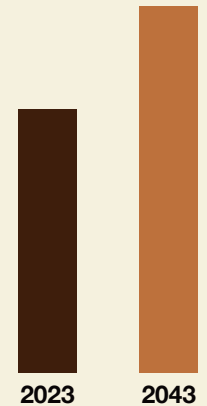
The project area begins north of Dillon near the Stone Creek Bridge and ends just south of the Point of Rocks Cemetery. The purpose of the project is to enhance safety features and improve operations for all roadway users.

The improvements planned as a part of this project will improve sight distance, provide more passing opportunities, and add 8-foot shoulders and shoulder rumble strips to address roadway departure crashes.

Existing and Future Conditions

In 2023, the average number of vehicles using the road daily was 2,403.

Over the next 20 years, that number is forecasted to increase to 3,340 vehicles each day.



Project Process and Schedule



The project is currently in final design and beginning the right-of-way acquisition phase. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2027 depending on design approval, right-of-way acquisition, and the availability of funding.

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE

Acquire necessary right-of-way	2025
Present planned improvements to public	Early 2025
Finalize engineering designs	2024–2026
Project ready for construction	2027
Construction	2027–2028

Funding

Construction of the planned improvements is estimated to cost \$36 million.

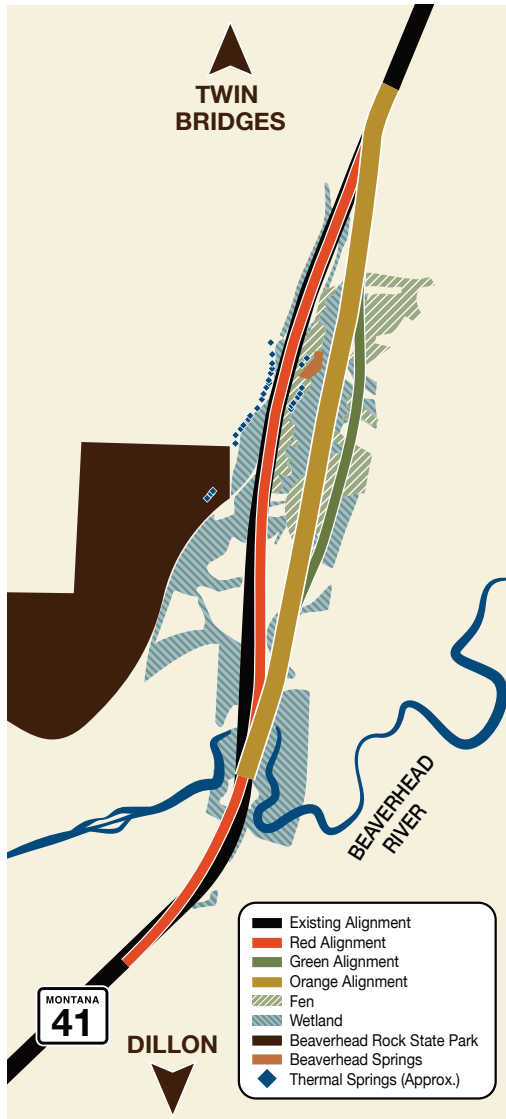
MDT has acquired a \$23.9 million grant from the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) program's Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program, which is overseen by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of the Secretary of Transportation.

Costs beyond the grant monies will be funded through a combination of Federal and State funds. The cost share is 86.58% Federal funded and 13.42% State funded.



Alignment Alternatives

During project design, MDT evaluated several alternatives for realigning the roadway north of the Beaverhead River. The top three potential alignment alternatives were then compared against several criteria, with the orange alignment option satisfying all criteria and the red option satisfying none. MDT chose the orange alignment to pursue as it is the most practical option.



CATEGORY	DESIGN CHALLENGE	ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVES		
		RED	GREEN	ORANGE
Cost	Construction requires limited traffic control.	NO	YES	YES
	Construction requires shorter time periods during ground settling – reducing overall construction time.	NO	YES	YES
Ease of construction	Construction without building temporary structures.	NO	YES	YES
	Flexibility in construction methods. Allows contractor to propose a wider variety of options when tackling construction methods.	NO	YES	YES
Logistics	Minimizes the number of curves in the roadway.	NO	NO	YES
	Long-term maintenance – Meets or exceeds the MDT/industry standard of roadway surfacing.	NO	YES	YES
	The roadway would settle in a uniform way that avoids joint weakness.	NO	YES	YES
	Shortens delays to the traveling public during construction.	NO	YES	YES
Environmental	Minimizes impacts to thermal water features.	N/A	YES	YES
	Minimizes impacts to wetlands.	N/A	GOOD	BEST
	Minimizes impacts to fens (peat-forming wetlands).	N/A	GOOD	BEST

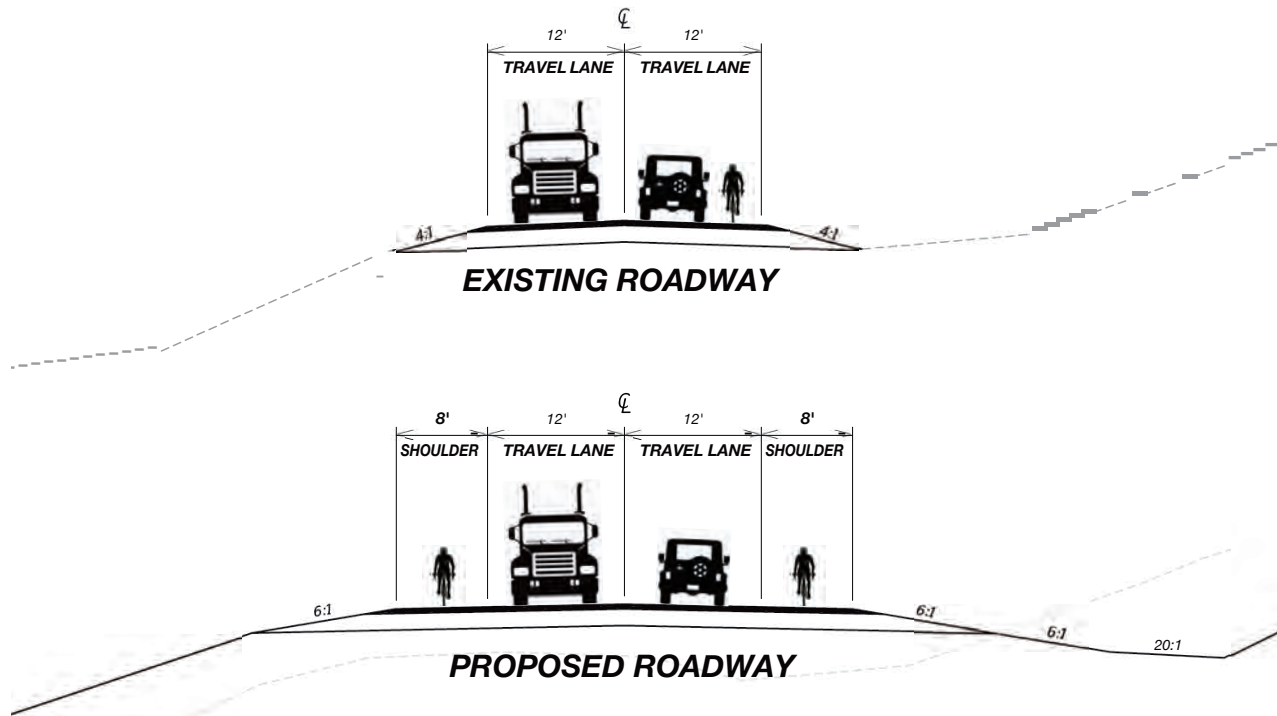


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Planned Roadway and Safety Improvements



Rendering of planned highway widening improvements.

The project will reconstruct over 7 miles of roadway and make several other safety enhancements. Planned improvements include:

- Realigning the roadway north of Beaverhead River.
- Reducing the vertical grade (steepness) of hills.
- Adding 8-foot shoulders.
- Adding shoulder rumble strips and replacing centerline rumble strips.
- Flattening steep slopes on the side of the road.
- Upgrading guardrail and drainage.



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Environmental Considerations

MDT evaluated the project's potential impacts on the environment under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA).

The evaluation considered impacts to threatened and endangered species, migratory birds, wildlife crossings, and wetlands.



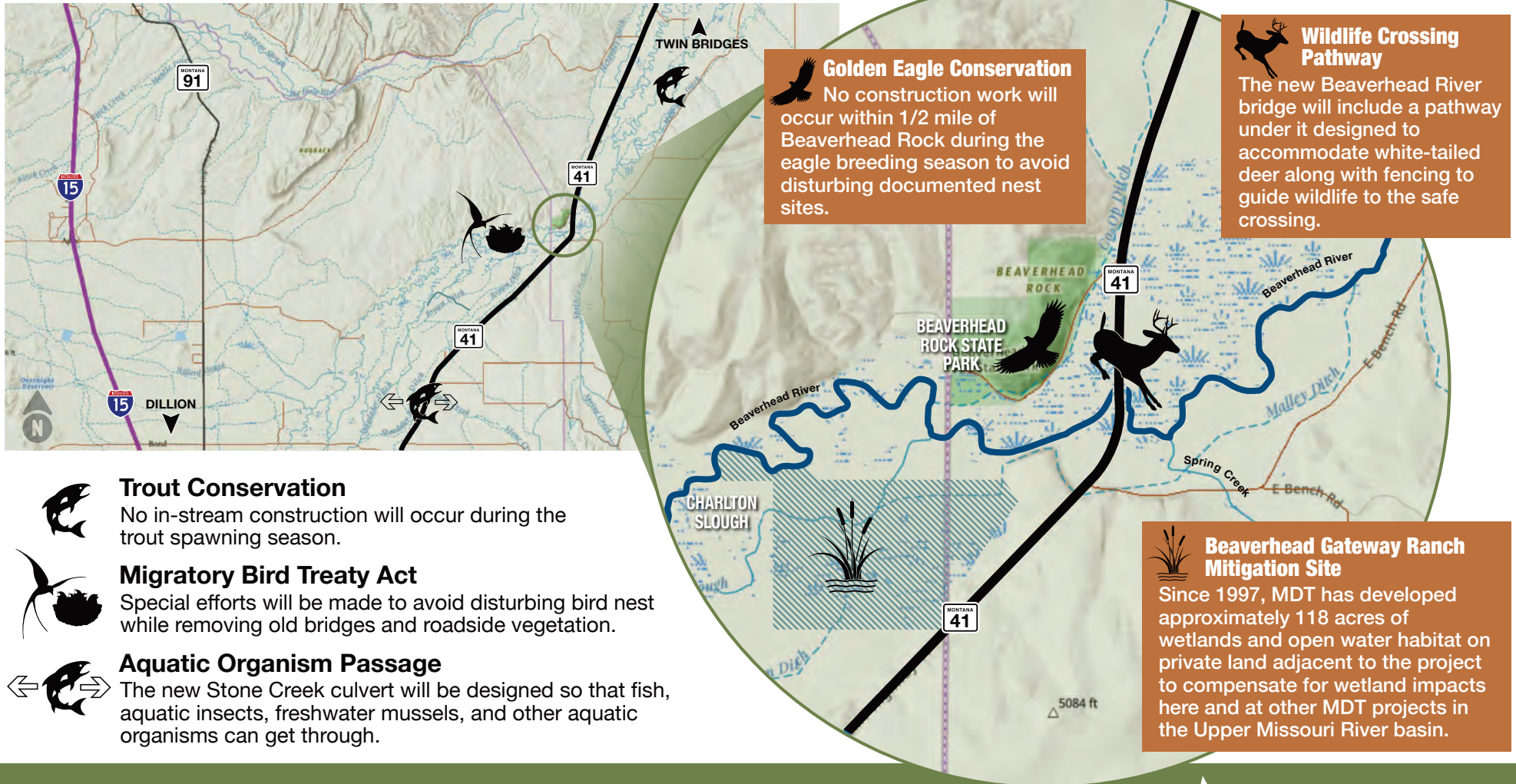


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Environmental Considerations



Golden Eagle Conservation
 No construction work will occur within 1/2 mile of Beaverhead Rock during the eagle breeding season to avoid disturbing documented nest sites.

Wildlife Crossing Pathway
 The new Beaverhead River bridge will include a pathway under it designed to accommodate white-tailed deer along with fencing to guide wildlife to the safe crossing.

Beaverhead Gateway Ranch Mitigation Site
 Since 1997, MDT has developed approximately 118 acres of wetlands and open water habitat on private land adjacent to the project to compensate for wetland impacts here and at other MDT projects in the Upper Missouri River basin.

Trout Conservation
 No in-stream construction will occur during the trout spawning season.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act
 Special efforts will be made to avoid disturbing bird nest while removing old bridges and roadside vegetation.

Aquatic Organism Passage
 The new Stone Creek culvert will be designed so that fish, aquatic insects, freshwater mussels, and other aquatic organisms can get through.

Wildlife Considerations

MDT has identified several improvements to enhance safety for motorists and wildlife within the project area. Improvements include:

- A path will be excavated beneath the Beaverhead River Bridge to increase headroom for wildlife passage.
- Wildlife barrier fencing will be installed near the Beaverhead River to direct wildlife to the excavated path beneath the bridge and help keep them off the roadway.
- Wildlife jump outs will be installed to allow wildlife to escape the wildlife barrier fenced in area.
- Wildlife guards will be installed at approaches to allow motorists to access the roadway.
- Wildlife friendly fencing will be installed as negotiated with landowners except where the wildlife barrier fencing is in place.
- Wildlife warning signage including flashing lights will be installed along the roadway.



Beaverhead River Bridge.



Example wildlife guard.



Example wildlife jump out.

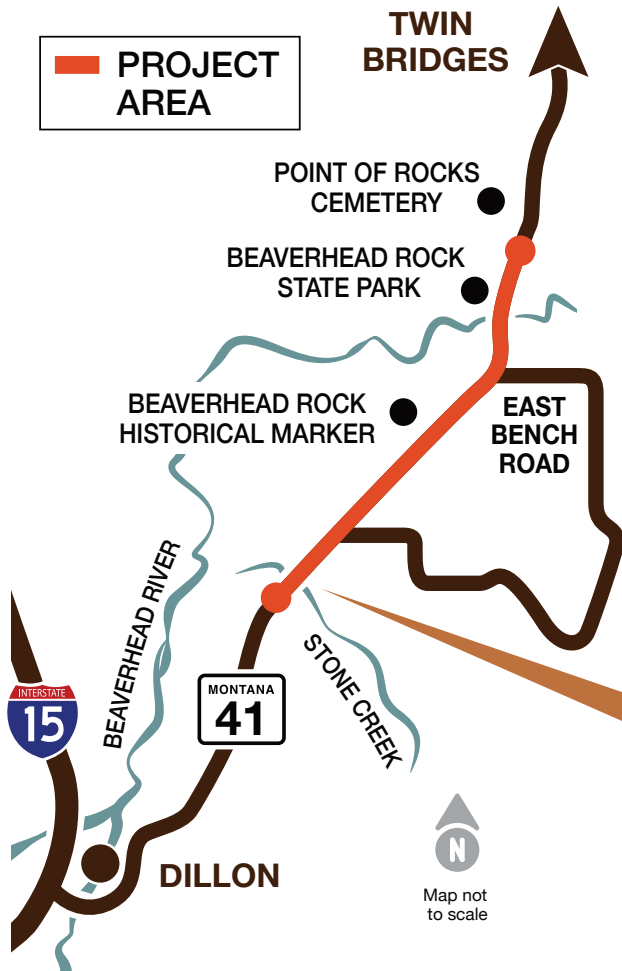


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Stone Creek Bridge Improvements



The project will replace the Stone Creek and Beaverhead River bridges.

Stone Creek Bridge

Planned Improvements:

- Replace the bridge with a wider “double-cell” concrete box culvert for both stream and livestock passage.
- The bottom of the stream side of the culvert will be covered in gravel and natural streambed material to allow better passage for fish, aquatic insects, freshwater mussels, and other aquatic organisms.
- The bottom of the livestock side of the culvert will be covered with dirt and gravel to match the surrounding ground cover.

Beaverhead River Bridge Improvements

The project will replace the Beaverhead River and Stone Creek bridges.

Beaverhead River Bridge

Planned Improvements:

- Replace the bridge with a 181-foot long, single-span design with no piers.
- A wider structure to accommodate 8-foot-wide shoulders and 12-foot-wide travel lanes.
- Steel beams (girders) and a concrete deck (driving surface).
- 75-year design life.
- Improved movement/passage for wildlife under the bridge with the longer, single-span bridge with no piers.
- New location to the east of the current bridge. This allows the existing bridge to be used for traffic during construction of the new bridge.



Image showing the location of the future bridge compared to the existing bridge.



Anticipated Traffic Control

It is still too early in the process to determine how the contractor will stage construction. Traffic control plans will be developed as the project gets closer to construction. Some of the new roadway will be built to the side of the current highway, which will minimize impacts and delays during construction.





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What's Next?



- Following the public meetings, MDT will review the input received from the public and finalize the design plans.
- MDT will also continue acquiring the right-of-way necessary to construct the improvements.
- Once the design plans are finalized and the right-of-way is acquired, the project will be ready for construction.



Thank you

Thank you for your participation.

Public involvement is important to MDT and the success of the project.

How to stay informed

Visit the project website for the most up to date information at <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/stonecreeknorth/>

Join the project's mailing list by submitting contact information to **Brandon Coates** at **Brandon@rbci.net**

Contact

Brandon Coates, Public Involvement Manager, RBCI

PHONE 406-465-3350

EMAIL Brandon@rbci.net



SCAN ME