

## **9 ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS**

Environmental commitments include complying with all federal and state laws and regulations and complying with all project related permits and approvals. ITD also maintains a set of standard specifications that state the requirements and standards for construction of ITD projects. The ITD Standard Specifications (ITD 2012c) and its updates would be used to prepare the contract documents for the construction of the alternative if an Action Alternative is selected.

The ITD Standard Specifications requires that a SWPPP be prepared and implemented for this project. This would include Best Management Practices (BMPs) for protection of wetlands, water quality, floodplains, and other sensitive areas. It requires BMPs for erosion and sediment control, spill prevention, revegetation, and environmental construction compliance monitoring. The most current versions of the ITD Standard Specification for Highway Construction, the ITD Maintenance Manual and Best Management Practices may be found at the ITD website: <http://itd.idaho.gov/manuals/manualsonline.htm>.

ITD standard specifications also include provisions for:

- Unanticipated discovery of cultural resources
- Preparation of a revegetation plan
- Preparation of a Traffic Control Plan
- Use of weed free materials and noxious weed control on the construction site
- Maintain access to all roadways during construction
- Handling and disposal of waste
- Approval of material sources, waste sites, haul routes, staging areas and stockpile sites
- Control of fugitive dust

ITD also maintains a set of standard drawings that provide guidelines for highway design elements. These standard drawings incorporate several measures that would minimize visual impacts of the project including:

- Reseeding exposed soils with native grasses.
- Farming to the bottom of the ditch on slopes of 4:1 or flatter.
- Creating rounded slopes and gradually tying slopes back to blend with the existing terrain.
- Balancing cuts and fills which would reduce the overall scarring of the landscape.

Avoidance and measures to minimize adverse effects are described in Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences. Table 74. Mitigation Measures are measures that will be implemented in order to compensate for unavoidable effects resulting from the Action Alternatives.

**Table 74. Mitigation Measures**

Resource	Mitigation Measure	Mitigation for Alternative <sup>19</sup>		
		Modified W-4	C-3	E-2
Socio-Economic	Maintain access to and from the right-of-way at existing public road connections and existing approaches.	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Economic	Develop a traffic management plan to ensure customer/supplier access and parking for existing businesses during construction.		✓	
Socio-Economic	Coordinate with city, county and university officials to identify scenic turnout locations, including potential signage for the university and Paradise Ridge.	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Economic	ITD will meet with landowners during the design process to find opportunities to minimize impacts to properties.	✓	✓	✓
Socio-Economic/ Environmental Justice	Coordinate with the Hidden Village/Benson Mobile Home parks and the Woodland Heights Mobile Home Court residents and owners during final design.		✓	✓
Land Use and Recreation	In accordance with the Latah County Comprehensive Plan the project will provide shoulders for bicyclists and pedestrians and sidewalks in the curb and gutter section. The project will follow ITD's Access Management Policy for Expressway access standards, which will only allow access at ITD designated locations. All alternatives will maintain access to Paradise Ridge and other recreational resources.	✓	✓	✓
Farmland	Limit the accesses or approaches on the new US-95 to limit farmland conversion.	✓	✓	✓
Farmland	ITD will work with adjacent landowners and seek to construct farmable slopes that will quickly be converted back to pre-existing uses.	✓	✓	✓

<sup>19</sup> ✓ The described mitigation only applies to the alternative(s) for which the box is checked. A blank box denotes that no mitigation is required for that alternative.

Resource	Mitigation Measure	Mitigation for Alternative <sup>19</sup>		
		Modified W-4	C-3	E-2
Floodplains	A No Rise Certification will be completed during the permitting process and before construction. In floodplains without designated floodways, the encroachments will not result in more than a one-foot rise in base flood elevations or affect beneficial values of the floodplain. Any effects to the floodplains will be mitigated. In the floodways, a No Rise certification will certify that the project will result in no increase to base flood elevations. If W-4 or C-3 are selected a CLOMR and/or LOMR will be completed and submitted to FEMA.	✓	✓	
Cultural Resources/Section 4(f) resources	If the W-4 Alternative is selected, a complete archaeological investigation of any previously uninvestigated portion of the alignment will be completed prior to the commencement of any ground-disturbing activities. These investigations may include, but are not limited to, intensive pedestrian survey and subsurface archaeological investigations.	✓		
Floodplains	Floodplain effects will be minimized using engineering solutions such as steepening slopes and constructing culverts to pass a 25-year flood event.	✓	✓	
Floodplains	Any constructed fills or structures in floodplains will be designed to result in no more than a one-foot rise in the base flood elevation.	✓	✓	
Wetlands and Tributaries	Effects to tributaries will be mitigated according to the Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources; Final Rule (33 CFR 325 and 33 CFR 332, 40 CFR 230). Affected stream channels and wetlands will be mitigated by using the credits from the Cow Creek Mitigation Area, which has already been constructed. If after detailed design, it is determined that additional impacts and mitigation are required, then the Valencia Mitigation Bank may be used for the additional mitigation requirements.	✓	✓	✓

Resource	Mitigation Measure	Mitigation for Alternative <sup>19</sup>		
		Modified W-4	C-3	E-2
Wetlands and Tributaries	BMPs will be installed along the perimeter of the work area during construction and maintained throughout construction to reduce sediment from entering waterways. Highly visible orange fencing will be installed and maintained throughout construction around wetlands and waterways that are not to be disturbed. These areas will not be used for temporary crossings or staging areas. Turbidity testing will occur daily during in water work. Riparian areas disturbed will be reestablished with deep rooted native vegetation that can provide shade from direct sunlight, all chemicals used during construction will be stored away from waterways or will have secondary containment measures in place to minimize the potential for contamination and spills. Channel alteration will provide sinuosity to simulate natural channel paths and reduce scour.	✓	✓	✓
Wetlands and Tributaries	ITD will minimize the impacts to the PSS wetlands during the design and will evaluate the use of engineering solutions such as reducing the fill slopes or using crossings that span the wetlands where practicable to allow for large wildlife movement.			✓
Groundwater	ITD will work with Idaho Department of Water Resources to decommission or restrict well construction within 300 feet of the roadway for the selected alternative.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	If the E-2 Alternative is selected, ITD will monitor AVCs near Paradise Ridge in the identified ungulate crossing area. The monitoring of AVCs will use existing ITD programs including the ITD/IDFG Road Kill & Wildlife Salvage Database, which is a road kill reporting and mapping tool. ITD also evaluates highway accident data annually and identifies high accident locations (HALs) based on the previous three years of crash data. These locations are investigated to determine contributing factors to accidents, including AVCs, and solutions are proposed and programmed. Should it be identified as a problem, ITD will take action to address AVCs and will collaborate with IDFG as needed to identify effective solutions.			✓

Resource	Mitigation Measure	Mitigation for Alternative <sup>19</sup>		
		Modified W-4	C-3	E-2
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	If disturbed, existing water features (ponds, tributaries or wetlands) will be maintained or replaced away from the roadway to benefit of numerous wildlife species.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	Construct and install bat boxes at selected sites to provide bat roosts. See the Bat Conservation International website at <a href="http://www.batcon.org">www.batcon.org</a> or Nongame Wildlife Leaflet No. 11 on bats (Wackenhut and McGraw 1996) for details on building a bat house.			✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	Nuthatch nest boxes will be installed at selected sites near the affected ponderosa pine stands to augment the nesting sites currently available.			✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	Tree removal will be accomplished between August 2 and March 30 to minimize effects to nesting birds.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	ITD will coordinate with IDFG and USFWS to survey the grasslands for nesting activities prior to construction to avoid affecting nesting of migratory grassland birds.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	Under crossings of county roads will be designed to accommodate ungulates and include appropriate wildlife fencing.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	Overpass structures for county roads and culverts for streams and riparian areas will be constructed with adequate width to provide passage of small terrestrial wildlife. This may include potential retrofitting of existing structures where appropriate.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	ITD will discuss the possibility of future retrofits of culverts during road improvements along the existing US-95 (loop road) with the NLHD during the road transfer negotiations.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	ITD will work with IDFG before final design to determine details of the mitigation measures proposed including culvert sizing for small animal movement, bridge width and clearance for wildlife movement, wing fencing, wildlife fencing, sidewalls and paths, bat and bird boxes and other wildlife considerations. Provisions for wildlife crossings will only be made where wildlife use is expected and where wildlife is welcome on private lands (deer, elk and moose).	✓	✓	✓

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		Modified W-4	C-3	E-2
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	Where practicable, culvert designs may include box culverts, bottomless box culverts, and corrugated metal culverts placed at grade or the use of stream simulation designs. This may include potential retrofitting of existing structures where appropriate.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	ITD will work with local weed experts before final design to develop a project seed mix designed to compete against weed establishment and infestations and to discourage wildlife foraging near the roadway. The seed mix will be used on all appropriate disturbed areas within project limits.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	ITD will work with USFWS, IDFG and the Latah County Conservation District to salvage native trees and shrubs that may be removed for construction as practical, and to make them available for use in local restoration projects.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	ITD will implement its Vegetation Management Plan in conjunction with USFWS, IDFG and landowners within the project area. This may include providing funds to landowners for weed control in prairie restoration sites, constructing farmable slopes to minimize weed establishment and spread, and revegetating slopes and fills with native grasses and forms to minimize weed establishment and spread along the roadway. Species will be determined in consultation with USFWS and NRCS to help ensure compatibility and successful establishment.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	ITD will implement their Vegetation Management Plan, which includes measures to control of weeds and roadside vegetation. ITD will work with USFWS, IDFG, NRCS, Latah County Conservation District and landowners before final design to implement additional weed control measures targeted towards Palouse remnants and restoration sites within 0.6 miles of the selected alternative. ITD will also monitor the success of weed and vegetation control measures and adapt them as necessary.	✓	✓	✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	ITD will consult with IDFG before final design about possible installation of special reflective posts or delineators near the highway for protection of Short-Eared Owls.			✓

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		Modified W-4	C-3	E-2
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	ITD will install day and night roosting facilities; Roosting installations will be relocated away from the highway to reduce collisions. New structures will be designed without sealed joints to discourage roosting.			✓
Vegetation, Fish and Wildlife	Waste, material, staging and stockpile areas will be identified by the contractor and approved by ITD before construction activities begin. Sensitive areas that should be avoided will be identified in consultation with agencies and will be indicated on plan sheets to be retained and protected. Material sources will be commercial sites and therefore will be in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The staging and stockpile sites are expected to be within the existing alternatives' footprints.	✓	✓	✓
Threatened and Endangered Species	If streams need to be realigned, adequate drainage facilities will be maintained without interruption and prior to construction.	✓	✓	✓
Threatened and Endangered Species	Ground disturbing activities will occur during the dry season to minimize the potential for introducing sediment to ephemeral streams and to control erosion in the Project Area.	✓	✓	✓
Threatened and Endangered Species	Sediment fences will also be installed between areas of disturbance and ephemeral streams, and will be cleaned regularly to maintain function.	✓	✓	✓
Threatened and Endangered Species	Immediately (no longer than 30 days) after construction activities are completed in an area, all disturbed areas adjacent to the highway will be treated with tackifier or similar methods to minimize weed establishment or will be seeded according to Standard Specification 621 during the ITD approved seeding window.	✓	✓	✓
Threatened and Endangered Species	To minimize the potential for introducing hazardous materials to ephemeral streams in the project area, precautionary measures will be taken to reduce the risk of spills. A spill prevention and contingency plan will be prepared by the construction contractor, approved by ITD prior to construction, and submitted to EPA prior to project implementation.	✓	✓	✓
Threatened and Endangered Species	All staging, stockpiling, fueling, storage, wasting, and maintenance areas will be located away from ephemeral streams and adequately buffered from drainage areas by at least 150 feet.	✓	✓	✓

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		Modified W-4	C-3	E-2
Threatened and Endangered Species	In case of emergency, a hazardous materials spill kit will be kept on site during construction that is appropriate for the solvents involved in operation and maintenance of vehicles and machinery used during the project.	✓	✓	✓
Threatened and Endangered Species	If additional Spalding's catchfly surveys discover the species at any remnant locations that may be affected by selected alternative, ITD will work with the USFWS to establish appropriate vegetation management practices suitable for the location and the species occurrence.	✓	✓	✓
Transportation	ITD will request a Road Closure Maintenance Agreement from the local agency (NLHD) on any existing roadway that will be abandoned as part of new US-95 alignment. ITD will negotiate the transfer of existing US-95 loop road to NLHD. Once the agreement has been signed all documents pertaining to that section of roadway (right-of-way plans and descriptions, roadway plans and agreements) will be turned over to the local agency.	✓	✓	✓
Transportation	ITD will coordinate with the City of Moscow regarding the undeveloped City street access and the accommodation of the proposed Ring Road project.	✓	✓	✓
Visual Quality	ITD will implement measures to help blend highly visible roadway features with the setting through measures such as use of native grass species, balancing cut and fills, and painting metal beams to blend with the surrounding environment.	✓	✓	✓
Visual Quality	ITD will utilize specific geotechnical information and topographic survey data to more specifically design cuts and fills and look for opportunities to minimize the visual impacts of the project.	✓	✓	✓
Hazardous Materials	A Phase II Hazardous Materials Study will be completed during preliminary and final design to identify sites requiring cleanup and special handling and disposal of hazardous materials. If there are sites requiring hazardous materials cleanup, that work will be accomplished by a qualified contractor specializing in hazardous materials cleanup before or during construction	✓	✓	✓
Hazardous Materials	Demolition of structures will be in compliance with applicable laws and regulations regarding lead and asbestos.	✓	✓	✓