

U.S. 95 Thorncreek Road to Moscow Comments Feb. 2006 – July 2007

Comment #1

Can you provide, for each alternative alignment:

Number of miles of US95 that would be turned over to Latah County Number of miles that would be 5-lane non-divided o transcript of DVD voiceover (she must have been reading it from a text document)

Thanks.

Comment #2

I strongly urge you to abandon grandiose and expensive plans to relocate parts of the highway south of Moscow. Instead I favor the less expensive option of improving the existing highway by adding passing lanes and turn lanes where appropriate. Please consider this option.

Thank you for your consideration.

Comment #3

I am not in favor of plans to extend Highway 95 using the W-4 route. Thank you for noting this in your research of community desires.

Comment #4

I'm a Moscow resident whose property borders the University of Idaho Arboretum. In recent months, our neighborhood has been involved in negotiations with the City of Moscow to avoid disrupting the beauty and tranquillity of the Arboretum by a Parks and Recreation Department proposal to build a seven-field ballpark across from the Arboretum on Palouse Drive. Those negotiations, involving a large parking lot, concession stand, water use, night lights, and a sound system, are ongoing. Regarding the proposed ballfields, the University administration has also voiced a desire to minimize the impact on the Arboretum.

Adjacent neighborhoods have been united in seeking to protect the Arboretum as a one-of-a-kind asset to our community. It is home to dozens of species of birds and animals, as well as being a showcase for trees and plants from around the world. Hundreds of people use it as a refuge for meditation and walking and as a popular site for warm-weather concerts and weddings.

Because of the noise and visual disruption a four-lane highway creates, any plan to extend Highway 95 using the W-4 route would undermine the Arboretum's function as a peaceful and educational urban retreat.

Please do not route a four-lane highway alongside this irreplaceable and unique asset to our neighborhoods and to the City of Moscow.

Comment #5

I am writing to urge you to take the least drastic and least expensive and least destructive option to improve US 95 between Thorn Creek and Moscow: just widen the existing highway and make curves better engineered. Don't create a 2 whole new disturbed areas by making a new divided highway in ANY other location.

Please remember that the EPA's guidelines include maximizing reuse of existing infrastructure. Also, the Federal Highway Administration has the goal of using context-sensitive design.

I urge you to NOT let this project get away from you and turn into an overly expensive overly destructive and overly hideous new highway. Save money. Save the palouse prairie. Be practical. Just fix the old highway!

Comment #6

We very much prefer the central corridor routes, especially C-3. These central routes invade less undeveloped land than the western or eastern routes.

We are most against the western routes because of the noise and despoliation of view that they would have on the University of Idaho Arboretum and the Palouse River ball park currently in the final design phases. They would also invade the peace of the large neighborhoods immediately to the north of Palouse River Drive as well as the planned development of 250 houses on the northern slope of Clyde Hill.

Comment #7

I am planning to use the US 95 Thorncreek Road to Moscow Project as a design project in my Landscape Architecture 362 studio this spring; having the students examine the information IDOT has compiled and evaluate the alternatives in light of landscape restoration and sustainable development practices.

It is a short project of only six weeks, starting March 20. I especially want them to consider stormwater management, perhaps just for a small section. Has your analysis included stormwater? I attended the open house in mid-Jan. and several breakfast meetings, so I have

your CD of the Environmental Reports but didn't see anything about stormwater. Maybe I just missed it... Would it be possible to obtain 14 copies of this CD for my students? Also I have the DVD of Jason Pfaff's 3D visualizations. Could I get 14 copies of that, too? Would one or more of your staff be able to visit the class for a preliminary critique and/or a final presentation of the students' work? Could you please send a map with all 10 route alternatives/alignments (as a pdf file)? I can't seem to find one on your website.

I look forward to working with you. Thank you for your time.

Comment #8

Please reject the "W-4" option for the western corridor of the new route for Highway 95 from Genesee to Moscow. W-4 is a bad idea. The visual impact it would have is not "minimal" at all-- on the contrary, it would degrade the natural environment in a maximal way!

Comment #9

Just checking to see if all three proposed alignments have now gone forward to the federal agencies. If so, when do you expect to hear back? Will the feds be indicating a particular route or just verifying that any or all are acceptable to go forward to ITD?

We are just looking for some kind of time frame on the final decision for the route.

One more time, public opinion is only one component, right? We have been looking at the summary.

Comment #10

Can you let us know what your recommendation will be to FHWA (based on the environmental consultant's comments) when you submit your letter in April? Will it be on the ITD web site?

Comment #11

There appear to be two un-numbered mailed-in comments, which could be called "M23.5" and "M28.5." And, of course, my lost comments, "M31."

Your summary states:

"Respondents were split on ITD's recommendation to carry forward E2. Slightly more respondents agree with ITD's recommendation than disagree with

it."

How do you reach that conclusion?

There were 201 comments submitted at the open house in January regarding the eastern alignments. By my count, 114 were against carrying alignment E2 forward, while 72 said that ITD should continue to consider that alignment. You also received 33 comments by mail or e-mail. These comments generally were much more detailed. Of those, 17 were (often vehemently) against either the eastern alignments in general or E2 specifically, while only four were specifically in favor of the eastern routes. Three (M8, M25, M28) preferred the central alignments, and one (M3) preferred the west.

114 to 72 not 'slightly more.'

Against alignment E2:

I notice now that I miscategorized a couple of entries; I should have double-checked my late-night work. But they are close.

Comment #12

I was just doing a driver record check on the State of Idaho web page. I didn't see any new information about the highway project. Just checking to see if the EIS has gone forward to the federal agency yet. If not, can you tell us where we are in the process?

Comment #13

Good to see you this morning, and as usual, you were very helpful in sharing information.

After the meeting Steve was talking with David Hall and he told him about a discrepancy in the count of For and Against E2. He said there were 114 comments that were AGAINST Alignment E2 and 72 Comments FOR. I wondered how that could be since you had reported that the count was slightly over half FOR. I got to wondering about what you told Steve and I this morning, regarding a letter with 52 or 54 ? signatures on it. I remember you said something about "checking the signatures that there were not duplicates with other letters sent." (That is an approximate quote. :>)) In any case, I'm guessing that those 50 some signatures got "counted" as For "votes" for E2 ?? That would make the numbers "slightly over" on the FOR side? If that was the case, that really changes the "comments" to "votes" it seems ?? In this way, what was a clear message that E2 was not preferred got completely skewed the other way due to signatures on ONE letter. We could have done the same gathering even more signatures. However, the message we have heard continuously is that "this is not a vote"

I am very concerned that sending the FHA a summary report that states that "slightly more than half the comments" favored E2 will certainly influence their decision making. It seems unfair

that someone could go around collecting signatures of people who didn't even attend the meeting, study the information, and invest in learning about the options can be counted as giving "comment" with just a quick signature solicited by one person.

Back in Summer of 2002 (? I'm forgetting the exact year now!!) when I went down to ITD and read ALL the 845 (approximate number) of comments submitted to ITD, there were two petitions (One was FOR what is now E2 and one was Against.) The number of signatures was almost equal - both exceeding 800 by a few!) At that time I did note that the signatures on the FOR petition had many chains of the same last name, possibly indicating the signatures of many family members including children ??? The point I am trying to make, is that we could have gathered signatures again of equal or greater number, but didn't even consider that it would be acceptable given the "this is not a vote" concept ITD has repeated at meetings.

I'll look forward to hearing if my guess of what happened is correct. I am very concerned that this could end up having a very unfair influence.

Comment #14

Dear ITD, I travel this road 10 times/week. Glad to see it is going to be changed. I believe priority should be given to the safest and shortest route --- The East Option. The road now is definitely not safe, and with fuel costs what they are, priority should go to the shortest route with least elevation change, which will help in the winter.

Comment #15

I am worried that maybe you did not receive the last two e-mails I sent. My last reply from you was about the 3rd week in May when you said you were busy on another project and would answer my questions after May25th. But, I never did get a reply and sent a couple more messages.

????

Hopefully, you got them.

Please let me know. I hope to hear from you.

Thanks so much!

Comment #16

Thank you for your reply. We missed you at the breakfast meeting this morning :>) Ken gave us a lot of information regarding time-line of the process. Which was good to know.

I think my biggest concern regarding the issue I wrote to you about is that in the end there could be another headline like in 2002 when ITD stated that "the majority of people favored the Paradise Ridge route for 95 South." I think that that would be an untrue statement based on the actual comments. And, again, we could easily submit a petition with additional signatures of

those who do not favor the E2 route, as was done by somebody pushing for the E2 route. I hope you can follow what I am trying to say here.

I think you do know that you ARE appreciated and highly respected for the extraordinary work you have done and continue to do!

Comment #17

We have not been able to attend the last few highway meetings but it sounds like the process is speeding forward. We noted in the paper that the federal approval of routes has taken place, albeit, 4 or 5 months ahead of when we thought you mentioned it would. We also noted that you indicate the final approval of a route will not take place until 2008. We thought that some decision or at least a strong indication would take place this year and we would not have to endure two more years of not knowing the fate of our home. Could you please explain the discrepancy.

Comment #18

I consider the western route to be the poorest choice. It would destroy the tranquility of the quietest area in Moscow. The Arboretum and Botanical garden is a treasure to Moscow and to the entire state of Idaho. There is nothing comparable in any urban area in Idaho. It is as close as one to get from walking in the wilderness. A highway so close to it would destroy much of its tranquility.

In addition many people have built homes overlooking the valley of the

Palouse River, again because of the beauty of the Palouse vista and the quiet atmosphere. The hillside south of the Palouse River will soon have houses on its higher slope. This will impact the view from the Arboretum and the homes on the North slope, but with much less visual and noise impact than a noisy highway and road cuts on the hillside.

I think a route following as much as possible the existing US 95 is highly preferable. There may be problems with putting a divided highway near Moscow through the existing corridor because of commercial and residential development. It seems to me that a single three or four lane roadway in the last few miles from Moscow would be acceptable. Even with all the improvements to US 95, it will still meet with the congestion of going straight through a city already congested with local and highway traffic. How much does it matter that traffic on the highway must slow down a mile or two on the southern approach to the city?

Comment #19

I wanted to add my opinion about this project and the route. I think the “E-2” route is the best one. I hope it will be built on that route and the sooner the better.

Comment #20

I am a resident of south Moscow and a member of the University of Idaho Arboretum Associates. I have participated in several of your public events, and appreciate the work you and your people are doing to take input on the Highway 95 project.

I am very concerned that the western variant (W-4) is still under consideration. This longest and most expensive option, would have a drastic negative impact on the south side of Moscow. The hill it would run on, Clyde Hill, is slated to have a new residential neighborhood! All these folks, and all of us in the existing quiet neighborhoods will be exposed to the noise of the highway.

Also, the most beautiful and quiet park in Moscow is located there: the University of Idaho Arboretum. At times we can now hear the existing highway 95. Moving the route directly south of the Arboretum and our neighborhood would greatly increase our exposure to the noise. Especially big trucks braking and coming down the hill would cause a disappointing noise burden on us. Several folks in our neighborhood are very worried about the noise and our property values.

We hope you will not select the western route (W-4) for the new Highway 95.

Comment #21

I am writing this letter regarding the impact of proposed variant W4 of the Highway 95 project on the University of Idaho.

As Chair of the University of Idaho Faculty Arboretum Advisory Board I would like to voice my concern about the impact variant W4 would have on the University of Idaho Arboretum. This tranquil, world-class Arboretum would be impacted negatively by the sounds and lights emitted from traffic on the proposed route. It has taken nearly 30 years of careful planning and labor to create this quiet Arboretum. Constructing a major arterial highway within a short distance would undo most of that effort.

As a further point of reference, I would like to let you know that the University of Idaho Astronomy Observatory is located adjacent to the Arboretum. Recently a request for lighting of a proposed ball field south of the Arboretum was denied, due to concerns of light pollution on the Observatory. Traffic rounding Clyde Hill, undoubtedly would have a similar negative impact on the Observatory.

I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss these negative impacts of Variant W4 on the University of Idaho with you in the near future.

Comment #22

I am writing to express my concern and objection to the western route (W-4) for I-95 to Moscow. I am a resident of 1885 Pinto Drive, Moscow, Idaho, which adjoins the U of I Arboretum—a community treasure. I object to the potential environmental impact of this route on the residences adjoining the University of Idaho's Arboretum, and on the peaceful ambience of the Arboretum itself. The noise and light impact of this route would be very detrimental to the adjoining neighborhoods and to the Arboretum. Please consider other options for I-95 to Moscow. Thank you!!!

Comment #23

I would like to add my comments on the Thorncreek alternatives chosen by the agencies and public. I hope you are still taking comments.

Based on the assessment, I strongly believe E2 Route is the most ecologically sound, the most cost effective and practical route to choose. Given, the higher cost of the West route and loss of ag land, and the loss of families and Businesses with the central route, it is correct to choose the E2 route.

The effect on rare plants and animals was more detrimental by the large number of people who flocked to Paradise Ridge over the years, and had little concern for these species as they built their homes and planted their lawns. The migration by the same environmental minded people continues today without respect for the home of the species. As far as the wildlife effects and the involvement of the IDFG. The IDFG should never have taken a position, primarily because they want something out the deal; if there is an opportunity to get more state land through a wildlife preserve then they will support any type of project.

Comment #24

I was out of town when ITD held public input sessions regarding the building of the future highway 95 near the Moscow area, so I hope you will consider my input which comes a bit late but hopefully will be considered by you. First of all, I wanted to thank all of you from having had so many informative sessions regarding this highway construction, and for being willing to take public input. In that note I hope you will not accept the E2 proposal because of the damage it would cause to the landscape of and near Paradise Ridge. I also hope you will not accept the W4 proposal across Clyde Hill. Both of these proposals would do serious damage to the beautiful landscape that surrounds Moscow in these areas. I hope that instead you will decide on the C3 choice. C3 is the closest to the current highway 95, why mar the landscape with additional lanes of highway when there is already the current highway? Instead of cutting up the

landscape some more, build the highway close to the existing one, it will cause so much less damage to the area surrounding our beautiful town. Thanks for reading this.

Comment #25

Now is the time to speak up to protect our beautiful Palouse country! At the New Cities meeting on Tuesday, August 22nd, the consultants reminded the audience that one of the chief assets we have here is the beautiful Palouse scenery that surrounds us. We can lose much of this if the Idaho Transportation Dept. decides to build the future Hwy 95 to the east or the west of the current highway. We need to tell them that we do not want a 4 lane highway cutting across the flank of Paradise Ridge, (which is their choice E2;) nor do we want a 4 lane highway slashing from west to east across Clyde Hill, (which is choice W4.) Both of these choices would mar our beautiful landscape with cement, cars, lights and noise. Yes ITD has held many meetings and put up displays and sent out postcards and we do appreciate their efforts at communication. But they have not been clear enough in telling the public what choices E2 and W4 will look like from Moscow and how it will affect Moscow and the University of Idaho. We all need to contact them before it is too late to request that they choose the C3 option for Hwy 95, which is the closest to the current road. Speak up by emailing ITD at thorncreekroadtomoscow@itd.idaho.gov.

Comment #26

Greetings!

I am a resident of Moscow Idaho. This is in regards to your upcoming decision concerning the route of US Highway 95 from Thorn Creek Road to Moscow.

Please remove from consideration both E2 and W4. Both options stray too far from the current highway route and would mar the beauty of our area and damage fragile eco-systems.

Route C3 seems to be the most viable of the available options. Please choose it.

Comment #27

Dear Sir, I strongly feel the east alignment, I believe it is E2, over the edge of the ridge is the best route, least expensive, the least impact on residential and just makes the most sense. Please go with this option if at all possible. I know the group "Don't pave paradise" aka, citizens against everything are in a definite minority, as most people agree with the logical choice of the eastern route. Can't wait to drive it! The portion under construction looks great! Keep up the good work.

Comment #28

I am writing to express my decided preference for the C3 option for highway 95 into Moscow. I have reviewed the data at the Kiosk's, been to the reviews and demonstration and data presentations at Eastside Market Place, and visited various sites along the routes. Paradise creek is best left residential. The far West route will bring traffic lights reflecting into the arboretum and the observatory (I frequent both). Both routes seem unnecessary when the C3 route exists and is a straight shot into Moscow. I liked it best on the video dramatization and still think it serves the citizens of Moscow the best.

Comment #29

The purpose of this letter is to formally notify your agency that the Giant Palouse Earthworm, *Driloleirus americanus*, has recently been petitioned to the USDO I for listing with the Endangered Species Act. We have received the 30 day letter, are continuing to negotiate with the agency, and are proceeding with the listing process.

The Giant Palouse Earthworm's habitat is within the scope of this project and DEIS.

I am concerned that your project may impact this species existence, potentially causing it to become extinct.

You are required to consider the impacts to this species in your deliberations concerning this highway expansion project.

I am especially concerned that the Paradise Ridge route will impact this important species' habitat.

On 8/30/06, a coalition of individuals and groups from the Palouse bioregion of northern Idaho and Eastern Washington filed a formal petition with the U.S. Department of Interior to protect the Giant Palouse Earthworm under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The Giant Palouse Earthworm (*Driloleirus americanus*) is a native of the fertile deep soils of the Palouse and is found only in the few remnants of the native Palouse Prairie grasslands of northern Idaho and Eastern Washington, as well as Palouse Prairie associated habitats.

Once considered abundant, this worm has been reported only three times since 1987. On May 27, 2005, a graduate student from the University of Idaho, Yaniria Sanchez-de Leon, unearthed one specimen of this earthworm, while studying earthworm populations and carbon dynamics in a rare prairie habitat. Prior to her sighting, the species was thought to be extinct.

The Giant Palouse Earthworm is described as the largest and longest-lived earthworm on this continent (attaining the length of three feet). It is reported to have a peculiar flowery smell (*Driloleirus* is Latin for lily-like worm) and to be cream-colored or pinkish-white. It lives in permanent burrows, as deep as fifteen feet. It has been reported to spit at attackers and move quickly through the soil to escape predators.

The extreme destruction of its prairie habitat is the main reason that the native earthworm is rare. Less than one percent of the Palouse Prairie remains in its natural form. The native Palouse Prairie is considered to be the rarest ecosystem in Washington.

This (and all species of the Phylum, Annelida) are extremely susceptible to the toxic chemicals associated with road construction, maintenance and daily usage.

Earthworms have well-known positive effects on soil and plant growth, and are necessary for proper soil function. They are an important species. The Giant Palouse Earthworm may be essential to the native Palouse Prairie habitat.

You may access the petition and more information about this important species at:
<http://palouseprairie.org/invertebrates/palouseworm.html>.

Please incorporate this comment and this petition into your scoping documents for this DEIS.

And do not hesitate to contact for with any questions that you may have.

Please respond to this email address that you have received this formal comment.

Comment #30

I urge that in relocating and reconstructing U.S. HWY 95 between Thorn Creek and Moscow the present route be followed as closely as practicable, in the interests of minimizing conversion of agricultural or other open lands to non-agricultural uses and needless harm to wildlife ecology.

It seems to me that lowering the crest elevation of the Reisenauer hill, and a slight shift of route of the north side slope to the west should be feasible, and would greatly minimize the hazards presented by the steepness and the curve at the lower end of that slope.

Moreover, the current highway 95 southern entrance portal to the city should not be relocated or reconfigured.

Comment #31

Please do it right for Idaho, the first time. Not for the granola's, not for the riches' on the hill, not for the Washingtonian's, but for the safety of all and the efficiency of the future of Idaho. Our state connected!

Comment #32

I am writing to express my opposition to the west option currently being considered for the realignment of Hwy. 95 between Thorncreek and Moscow. The west alignment would inevitably

have negative audible and visual impact on one of Moscow's invaluable assets, the University of Idaho arboretum.

Traffic, particularly trucks, traveling the Clyde Hill grade would pump noise up the arboretum valley, harming the marvelous experiences it offers. What is now a beautiful vista of Palouse hills would be lost. The arboretum contributes economic benefit, recreation, and quality of life to the Moscow community. It is a fragile asset, dependent entirely upon its seclusion and serenity. Please do not diminish it.

The same west option impacts would also harm Moscow's special, historic University Heights neighborhood. This post-war development is unique for the reason that it was built not by professional developers and builders, but by private citizens, largely U of I faculty, who pooled their resources to build their own homes and their own neighborhood. Please consult Latah Legacy, Volume 31, 2002, for the details of this phenomenon.

Please reject the west option for realignment. Thank you for your attention to my concerns.

Comment #33

9294

Latah County
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

P O Box 8068 ♦ 522 South Adams ♦ Moscow, Idaho 83843
Barbara Coyner, Chair ♦ Dorothy Anderson, Genesee, Vice Chair
Dorothy Anderson, Troy, Secretary ♦ Bob Callison ♦ Dan Crandall ♦ Mary Reed
Chris Nicholson, County Assoc. Planner ♦ Karen Owsley, County Liaison

INFO	DR	ACT	GR
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DE		
	DYE		
	MTLS		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	EPB		
	URS		
	ROT		
	ADP		
	RE-A		
	RE-B		
	PCE		
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	FW		
	MTCE		
	MTG FRAM		
	ALL SHEDS		
	DBM		
	ALL SUPV		

March 30, 2007

Ken Helm, Project Manager
 95/Thorncreek to Moscow Project
 Idaho Department of Transportation
 3311 West State Street
 PO Box 7129
 Boise ID 83707-1129

Dear Mr. Helm:

I am writing to express concern regarding the west realignment option (West Corridor, designated W-4) of State Highway 95 between Thorncreek and Moscow, with specific reference to its negative impact on the Deesten/Davis farmstead, located at 3611 US 95 South. The W-4 realignment would pass close to this culturally important property, diminishing its integrity, and presenting a loss to Idaho and the nation.

The Deesten/Davis Farmstead was originally patented to William Plummer on April 10, 1882 as a Cash Entry land claim. This farmstead complex, located immediately west of US 95 and approximately four miles south of Moscow, consists of eight primary buildings: a farmhouse, garage, barn, granary, chicken house, smoke house, shop, and equipment shed. This early farmstead remains relatively intact, with the house, barn, and other primary buildings standing and in good condition. Unlike most agricultural properties in the area, no intrusive modern elements detract from the historical layout of the farm. Noteworthy vegetation on the property includes two groves of trees planted in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps; an orchard with various heirloom apple, cherry, and plum varieties; vintage raspberry bushes; cottonwood planted around 1904; a conifer windbreak south of the house; and a black walnut tree from Germany. The fact that the homestead is still situated amidst pasturelands, a stream and the accompanying vegetation lends to its overall sense of place. It is important that this surrounding space also be respected and preserved as an essential element of this historic site's integrity.

Since 2003, Latah County Historic Preservation Commission has worked to prepare a Multiple Property Designation (MPD) for agricultural buildings in Latah County. In addition to documenting the history of agriculture in Latah County, this MPD identifies properties eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as administered by the National Park Service. We have selected the Deesten/Davis farmstead, deemed eligible for listing in the NRHP under both Criteria A and C of its

guidelines, as one of our initial two nominations to the National Register. This nomination will be completed during 2007, as will the larger MPD study.

In light of its historic and cultural significance, the Deesten/Davis farmstead warrants special respect in the deliberative process that will culminate in choosing a realignment option for US Highway 95. We urge you to consider the negative impacts of option W-4 on this important property. We would welcome the opportunity to answer your questions, and thank you for your kind attention to our concerns.

Comment #34

RECEIVED

APR 09 2007

DIV. OF HIGHWAYS
LEWISTON, IDAHO

9297
ACTION #

7-0197

April 6, 2007

Idaho Transportation Department
PO Box 837
Lewiston, ID 83501-0837

INFO	D2	ACT	ISG
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
IDE	OTE	MTLS	EPS
	DRI	EST	ADDE
	RE-A	RE-B	PDC
			LIBRARY
			ENV
			MITCE
			MFC FARM
			ALL SHLOS
			DRM
			ALL SUPPLY

To: Ken Helm

I was sorry to miss the March breakfast meeting. We were in Indiana with our daughter's family over Spring Break. David Hall tried to catch me up on what went on. You certainly deserve a medal for your faithful monthly meetings! :-> I've missed a few.

I've been wanting to check with you on something and thought it more appropriate to ask you directly instead of taking up breakfast meeting time. **What I wanted to check on was how you have included Kas Dumrose's pages of petition sent in Fall 2006 into the public input data.** Also, I was wondering if you had sent copies of these pages to Rosemary?

I realize that Kas's petition campaign was out of the framework of other public comment forums. However, it was a response to learning that a comment form from the Jan. 2006 Public meeting favoring the E1 route had come in with 50 some signatures and that those individual signatures were figured into a summary statement about route preferences. An "informal summary statement" stated that "slightly more than half" favored the E1 route. Yet, in an actual count of individual comment forms from the web, David Hall noted that a significantly greater number of individual comment forms were NOT in favor of the E1 route.

This matter has disturbed me since learning of this nearly a year ago. Others, who spent time at the incredible presentation of information at the Jan. 2006 Public Meeting and who then wrote thoughtful comments based on studying all the information presented, were also disturbed by the false summary statement reflecting a petition embedded in one comment form. It was hoped that the petition pages sent to you would give you valuable input to indicate that more people of the area do NOT favor the E1 route.

I realize that public preference is only one component of the decision criteria. However, it is important, and what we are asking is that it be fairly represented in your data.

Thank you very much for your attention to this.

Comment #35

The meeting on tuesday morning is an informational meeting. Ken Helm will update people on the progress of the work being done from the top of the Lewiston Hill to Thorne Creek and also on where the Thorne Creek to Moscow project stands. It is not the last opportunity to impact the decision on the new route. In fact, tomorrow's meeting probably will have no impact on that decision but people should show up anyway and pester Ken with questions (sorry Ken!). The ITD submitted three choices to the feds (one from the west, one from the central area and one from the east). Supposedly the feds are only going to approve or deny the projects (or recommend changes) and send them back to ITD. Some time in the future, perhaps next fall or winter, the ITD will come back and present the three proposed routes and I believe that is where public input will be taken again.

That being said, I believe the ITD absolutely prefers the Paradise Ridge route (for whatever reasons) and will try to select that route. Whether or not it's a done deal, I have no idea but I have always felt that it is true. However, gut feelings are not proof. The time to impact their decision is during the next round of public hearings where people will be able to voice their opinions.

Having written all that, I just checked the ITD web page and then linked to the Thorne Creek project page (<http://www.northwestmedia.net/us95/>). More current info is available there as well as links to other information such as previous public input. I suggest everyone check it out and prepare to show up for the public hearings whenever they happen. If, after reading the ITD web pages, you have more questions, Ken's email is: thorncreekroadtomoscow@itd.idaho.gov

On Jun 11, 2007, at 11:31 AM, wrote:

Does anyone have a pipeline into the Idaho Dept of Transportation?
in the note below, Joann Muneta says that the department has selected the Paradise Ridge route for ID Highway 95 south of town. can anyone verify that choice has been made -- or that it's likely? and as Joann notes, the meeting at the Mark 1V restaurant 7 am tomorrow (June 12) will be the last opportunity to impact that decision....BL

Dear Friends,

I have been told that the powers that be are going to ignore all the research and input and select the Paradise Ridge route for new hwy 95. (E2)

There is one more meeting which is tomorrow, June 12 at 7am at Mark IV. It would be great to have a good showing of people interested in this issue.

Could you send this info and publicize it to your lists please.

Comment #36

I was very disturbed by things you openly revealed at the breakfast meeting today. Your response to Jack Flack's long commentary, "Excellent comment!" made your motives and intent very transparent. Although Rosemary Curtin has tried to assure me that you really were "starting from scratch" with honest public involvement and really were willing to listen and compromise, I have always had a hard time believing this was true. Real skepticism began when absolutely nothing about the 3 alternatives ITD presented to the public in Jan. 2006 was altered after extensive public input. Then today at the breakfast meeting you concurred with all that Mr. Flack said including his bashing of the judge who simply required ITD/FHWA to follow it's own regulations. Your exchange with the gentleman enjoying eggs and bacon followed the same tenor. All that I have just mentioned makes your parting words today seem most insincere when you assured us that you were listening to all our comments. Thus, the extraordinary effort on the part of Rosemary to seriously involve the public in this project seems superfluous.

Comment #37

US 95 Realignment – Thorncreek to Moscow

**We OPPOSE ITD Pursuing
the Eastern (Paradise Ridge) Alternative**

Because:

- This route uses the least amount of existing US 95 and its footprint
- This route is no safer than the other alternatives.
- This route has the greatest impact on wildlife, sensitive animal species, and native vegetation, including endangered Palouse Prairie.
- This route has extreme negative impact on the Hidden Village Community, whereas other alternatives have a benign effect while providing improved, safe access to these citizens.
- The route is simply unnecessary and is not Context Sensitive in design.

*This petition included 361 signatures.
ITD received pages from Aug. 3 to Dec. 12, 2006.*

Comment #38

We are avid **BIRD WATCHERS** on the Palouse. We **OPPOSE** the Idaho Transportation Department moving US 95 near Paradise Ridge. The native vegetation and, especially, the Palouse remnants (including shrub steppe and ponderosa pine woods) provide critical habitat for nearly 100 species of birds. The native vegetation and seclusion of this region makes it one of the prime areas in Latah County, and in northern Idaho, for recreational birdwatching. Research studies show that road noise disrupts breeding of many species; birds are killed crossing multi-lane highways; nocturnal birds are affected moreso. Building E2 is not necessary for public safety. Other realignments can provide similar safe routes.

We ask ITD to choose a route that:

- Keeps the new route as close as possible to the old route, thereby disrupting less new ground (and current bird habitat). E2 doesn't.
- Avoids wildlife, especially birds, and avoids any pockets of native vegetation, particularly Palouse Prairie and associated shrub steppe and ponderosa pine stringers, that birds use. E2 doesn't.
- Maintains our ability to bird watch for recreation. E2 doesn't.

*This petition included 14 signatures.
The petition was not dated.*