

# BRIDGER CANYON Corridor Planning Study



## Public and Agency Involvement Plan

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Prepared for:



Prepared by:



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## 1.0 Introduction

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has initiated a corridor planning study on MT 86. The limits of the study will begin at reference post (RP) 1.95 at the intersection of MT 86 and Story Mill Road, and extend northeasterly to the intersection of MT 86 and US 89 (RP 37.5) for an approximate length of 35.5 miles. This roadway is located in Gallatin and Park Counties beginning just east of Bozeman and ending approximately one mile north of Wilsall, MT.

This corridor planning study will examine the geometric characteristics, crash history, and existing and projected operational characteristics of the corridor, as well as physical conditions, land uses, and environmental resources within the planning corridor. The planning effort will recommend short-term and long-term improvement options to address corridor needs and objectives. These recommendations will assist MDT in targeting the most critical highway needs and allocating resources appropriately.

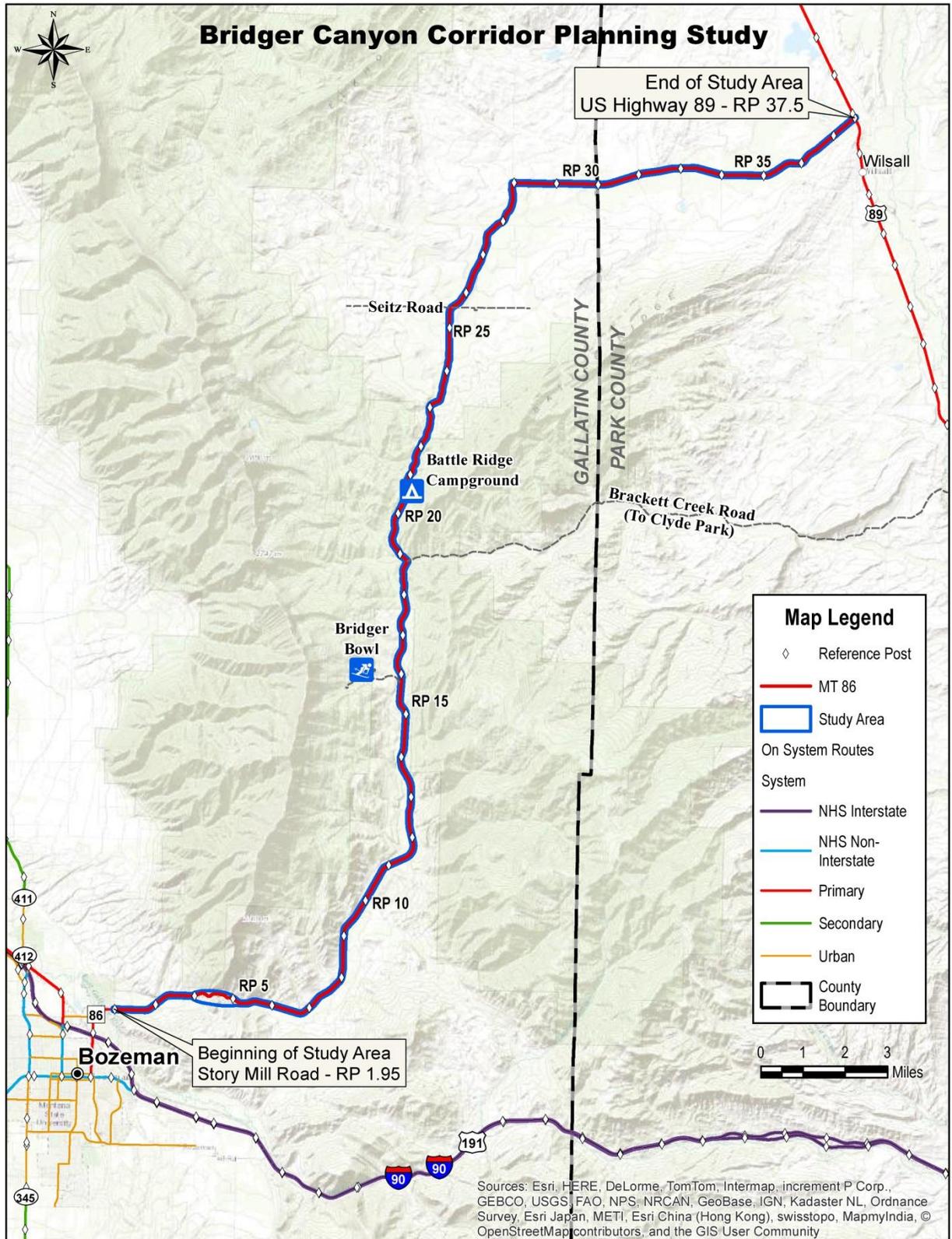
### 1.1. Study Area

Figure 1 illustrates the study area. The corridor includes private ranches and homes; Gallatin National Forest; amenities such as trailheads and campgrounds; the Bridger Bowl alpine ski area; Bohart Ranch cross-country ski center; and small streams. These features create a diverse travel demographic and vehicle type using the corridor. From Bozeman to Bridger Bowl (approximately 16 miles), the roadway is 25 to 30 feet wide with limited physical constraints. Beyond Bridger Bowl, the roadway narrows with roadway widths of 22 feet in some locations.

### 1.2. Goal of Public and Agency Involvement Plan

The primary goal of this plan is to provide opportunities for members of the public, stakeholders, and resource agency representatives to learn about the process, review information about the corridor planning study, and provide input throughout the planning effort. In support of this goal, the following sections identify procedures that will guide the public and agency involvement effort.

Figure 1 Study Area



## 2.0 Study Contacts

Contact information for MDT and the consultant will be provided in all published materials.

### **Jeff Ebert, MDT District Administrator**

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT)  
Butte District Office  
3751 Wynne  
PO Box 3068  
Butte, MT 59702-3068  
406.494.9625  
[jebert@mt.gov](mailto:jebert@mt.gov)

### **Katie Potts, MDT Project Manager**

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406.444.9238  
[kpotts@mt.gov](mailto:kpotts@mt.gov)

### **Sarah Nicolai, Consultant Project Manager**

DOWL HKM  
1300 Cedar Street  
Helena, MT 59601  
406.442.0370  
[snicolai@dowlhkm.com](mailto:snicolai@dowlhkm.com)

## 3.0 Media Coordination

Announcements will be developed by DOWL HKM and advertised by MDT at least three weeks before informational meetings. Advertisements will announce the meeting location, time, and date; the format and purpose of the meetings; and the locations where documents may be reviewed. The *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*, the *Belgrade News* and the *Livingston Enterprise* may carry display advertisements.

MDT may also issue press releases to local radio and television stations announcing informational meetings. Specific media outlets will be identified during the course of the study as appropriate.

## 4.0 Study Website

DOWL HKM will develop content for a website to be hosted by MDT. The website will provide a description of the planning effort, a description of public involvement opportunities, study contacts, links to available documents, and an anticipated study schedule.

## 5.0 Document Availability

### 5.1 Newsletters and Meeting Materials

DOWL HKM will develop two newsletters for the study. The first newsletter will be issued at the time of the first informational meeting and will introduce the study and describe its purpose, illustrate the study area and study components, and describe key findings from the existing and projected conditions report. The second newsletter will be distributed at the time of the second informational meeting and will present proposed improvement options and potential impacts and mitigation strategies. DOWL HKM will also develop meeting materials for each informational meeting, including agendas, static exhibits, and other presentation materials. Print copies of newsletters and meeting materials will be available at each of the two informational meetings hosted for this study. MDT will publish electronic versions of newsletters and meeting materials on the study website at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/bridger/> following the meetings. Print and/or electronic copies of newsletters will also be distributed to the study mailing list.

### 5.2 Reports

MDT will publish electronic versions of reports on the study website. Print copies of the environmental scan report, existing and projected conditions report and the study report will be available at the MDT Rail, Transit, and Planning Division Office (2960 Prospect Avenue; Helena, MT). Print copies of these reports may also be made available at the following locations.

- MDT Bozeman Office (907 North Rouse Avenue; Bozeman, MT)
- Gallatin County Department of Planning and Community Development (Gallatin County Courthouse, 311 West Main Room 108; Bozeman, MT)
- Park County Planning Department (414 East Callender St; Livingston MT)
- Bozeman Department of Community Development (20 East Olive St #202; Bozeman, MT)
- Gallatin National Forest Field Office (3710 Fallon St., Suite C; Bozeman, MT)

## 6.0 Meetings

### 6.1 Advisory Committee Meetings

Advisory committee (AC) meetings will generally be scheduled every four weeks for the duration of the study period. AC members will discuss study progress, analysis methodologies, and any issues or concerns that arise during the study. The AC will also review study documentation before publication. Representatives from MDT, FHWA, Gallatin County, Park County, and Gallatin National Forest will be invited to participate in the advisory committee.

### 6.2 Informational Meetings

Two informational meetings will be held during the course of the study. The first informational meeting will be held part-way through the planning process after the consultant has evaluated environmental, social, and land use conditions and conducted

crash and operational analyses within the study area. During the first meeting, the consultant will introduce the study, present findings from the existing and projected conditions report, and discuss issues and concerns in the study area. Members of the public will be asked to provide feedback on potential improvement options at the second informational meeting.

Comments will be considered throughout the planning process. A public and agency comment period will occur following publication of the draft study report. All comments will be considered before the report is finalized.

### 6.3 Resource Agency Meeting

MDT will host a single resource agency meeting at the MDT offices in Helena, with conference call arrangements at the MDT Butte District Office and at the Bozeman Department of Community Development, as appropriate. The purpose of the meeting will be to present findings from the draft environmental scan report and existing and projected conditions report. Resource agencies will be asked to identify initial avoidance areas, mitigation needs, and opportunities.

### 6.4 Stakeholder Meetings

DOWL HKM will be available to meet with stakeholder groups as needed during the planning process.

## 7.0 Public, Agency, and Stakeholder Comments

Public, resource agency, and stakeholder comments are welcome throughout the planning process. Written comments may be submitted by mail to Sarah Nicolai, DOWL HKM, P.O. Box 1009, Helena, MT 59624; by email to [snicolai@dowlhkm.com](mailto:snicolai@dowlhkm.com); or online at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/missoulabridges/comments.shtml>

## 8.0 Accessibility

The State of Montana attempts to provide accessible information and services to all individuals. MDT will employ the following measures for the Bridger Canyon Corridor Planning Study.

- MDT will host informational meetings in locations that are accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- MDT and the consultant will confer with community leaders and representative organizations about how best to involve traditionally-underserved populations.
- MDT and the consultant will communicate effectively at the informational meetings by avoiding technical jargon and exercising appropriate conduct and judgment. Alternative accessible formats of study materials will be provided upon request.

## 9.0 Study Schedule

The Bridger Canyon Corridor Planning Study began in June 2014 and is expected to be completed by the end of April 2015. Figure 2 illustrates the anticipated study schedule.

Figure 2 Anticiapted Study Schedule

