

FAQ's

Petty Creek Road Missoula County, Montana

Q. I thought the project was going to start in July 2011. Why is there no construction activity?

A. *Earlier this year the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) completed construction plans for the project. During project development, coordination with several resource agencies, including the Corps of Engineers, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, and the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, was conducted. It appeared that their concerns had been addressed and despite not yet having permits in hand, the FHWA felt confident enough to proceed with advertisement of the project. Just prior to advertisement it was discovered that the wetland delineations were outdated and as per the Corps' regulations, the Corps requested updated delineations. With snow on the ground, updates were not feasible until mid-May. As spring approached there were other issues that needed to be addressed with the resource agencies. Some redesign to better accommodate fish passage and stream habitat has been necessary. Additionally, FHWA misinterpreted calculation methods on a new stream impact mitigation requirement of the Corps permit application. The Corps has offered to help FHWA re-calculate impacts once the design revisions are finalized. Without permits from these agencies the FHWA has not given the*

construction contractor a notice to proceed.

Q. Will the funding for the project be lost?

A. *No. Funding for this project comes from the Federal Forest Highway program. These funds are dedicated to the project and will not be lost.*

Q. Who will do maintenance between now and the time construction starts?

A. *The FHWA is entering into an agreement to fund Missoula County to have the road maintained during the interim.*

Q. Who is the construction contractor?

A. *The project has been awarded to West Company, Inc. from Spokane, Washington. They are standing by awaiting the permits to begin.*

Q. Will the project still be completed?

A. *The FHWA is working closely with the resource agencies to address their concerns. The FHWA met with the agencies in the field on June 1, 2011 to hear their concerns with the plans. Issues centered on fish passage culverts and streamside habitat impacts in areas where the road was adjacent to the stream. The FHWA has a meeting*

scheduled for July 28, 2011 with the agencies to present design modifications that should meet with their approval. This is a delay to construction, but the project is still anticipated to proceed.

Q. Has all the right-of-way been acquired for the project?

A. *Missoula County is actively pursuing right-of-way acquisition. They have made contact with all property owners where right-of-way is required. The project was phased to allow time for right-of-way acquisition and the County is ahead of that phasing plan.*

Q. Once construction starts how long will it take?

A. *Depending on when construction starts it will likely take two full construction seasons (roughly June through October) to complete the project. In-stream work during low flows is a very critical time element.*

Q. Why is this project being done at all?

A. *Environmental concerns such as dust and water quality, safety concerns caused by dust and the rough road, and*

maintenance costs are the primary factors driving this project.

Q. What delays can be expected during construction?

A. *The contractor must maintain through traffic at all times. There may be up to 30 minute delays for some operations. The contractor is required to get emergency vehicles through immediately.*

Q. How can I stay informed of the latest information on the project?

A. *The FHWA will maintain a website, including a project email address, at:*

<http://www.wfl.fhwa.dot.gov/projects/mt/petty-creek/>

The public is encouraged to check the site regularly. In addition, the FHWA will hold a public meeting a few weeks before construction begins and will publish a newsletter periodically during construction.