

WHAT IS NEPA AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO THIS PROJECT?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a procedural statute (40CFR sec 1500) for decision-making during federal projects which assures proper analysis of social, economic and environmental impacts are performed.

This project is federally funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and as such is subject to federal regulation. ITD is required to prepare a “NEPA” document for FHWA.

The NEPA documents will study a reasonable range of alternatives based on the Purpose and Need, consider appropriate mitigation for impacts, include interagency coordination and consultation, and provide the public opportunity to participate in the process and comment on the project.

At the end of the process, the studies, agency coordination, public participation and comments are wrapped up into a document called a Categorical Exclusion.

A HISTORIC BRIDGE

The Snake River Bridge is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because of its design and contribution to economic development in the region. Historic bridges are protected by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Both require mitigation of any adverse impacts to a historic bridge.

A Memorandum of Agreement will be developed to define mitigation for the Snake River Bridge removal. The MOA will be signed by:

Owyhee County Historical Society

Owyhee County Certified Local Government

State Historic Preservation Office

Idaho Transportation Department

Federal Highway Administration



MARSING ISLAND PARK

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 says that the Federal Highway Administration (funding this project) cannot approve the permanent or temporary use of land from publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife refuges or historic sites unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative and the action includes all possible planning to minimize impacts to the property or its users. The standard FHWA requirement is known as “de minimis (minor) impact,” which requires the agreement of the owner or administrator (City of Marsing).

ITD has proposed a plan to the City of Marsing to meet the standard of “de minimis” impact. It includes the following measures:

- **Shorten the construction schedule as much as possible.**
- **Fully restore the park to its pre-construction condition.**
- **Construct a second park access on the northern side. This will provide access to park users during construction. After construction, it will become a right-turn exit from the park to enhance access and improve safety for drivers and park users. See Station 3 for a map.**



SNAKE RIVER PHYSA SNAIL

The riverbed below the Snake River Bridge contains suitable habitat for the Snake River physa snail.

This snail is protected under the Endangered Species Act. It is found only in the middle Snake River of Idaho.

A Biological Assessment was completed to analyze potential impacts to the snail. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concluded that the impacts from this project will not jeopardize the continued survival and recovery of this species.

Marsing Island Park: 6(f)

The park was developed with federal dollars from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Section 6(f) of that act requires any park land taken by this project must be replaced. This project will not require taking land from the park. No 6(f) impacts will result.

