

Targhee Pass (U.S. 20: Idaho 87 - Montana Line)

ENV. ASSESSMENT INFO

January 2019

YOU'RE INVITED!

Targhee Pass EA Public Hearing

You are invited to attend a public hearing to review the Targhee Pass EA, ask questions, and provide comment on the EA.

DATE: Thursday, January 17

TIME: 4-7 p.m.

LOCATION: Island Park EMS Building (4124 County Circle Road).

Hearing materials will be made available on the study website (www.islandparkus20.com) the day of the hearing for those unavailable to attend in-person.

HOW TO COMMENT

Attending the public hearing is not a requirement for submitting a comment. Comments can also be submitted via:

Phone: (208) 220-5937

Email: targheepass@langdongroupinc.com

Regular Mail: Idaho Transportation Department District 6 (Attn: Public Involvement Coordinator), P.O. Box 97, Rigby, ID 83442-0097

Comments pertaining to the Targhee Pass EA through any of the above methods will become part of the record for this project

Comments may be submitted through February 1, 2019.

www.IslandParkUS20.com

TARGHEE PASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) OVERVIEW

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) initiated an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate risks, benefits, opportunities, and costs associated with reconstruction of Targhee Pass (U.S. 20 between



its junction with Idaho 87 and the Montana state line). At this time, pavement condition in this segment of the corridor is beyond routine repair and requires reconstruction, as well as consideration of upgrades to meet current design safety standards.

FHWA is the lead agency on the EA. The EA is being completed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). For more information on FHWA and NEPA, visit www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/projdev/index.asp

Where can I review the EA?

ITD and FHWA released the EA on January 2, 2019. A print copy of the EA is available at the Island Park City Offices, the Fremont District Library (Island Park Branch), Fremont County Planning & Zoning office, and the ITD District 6 office in Rigby. Print copies are also available at ITD headquarters and FHWA Offices in Boise, and a digital version is available online at www.IslandParkUS20.com and the ITD website at <https://itd.idaho.gov/d6/>.

Commenting on the EA

Comments can be submitted via public hearing testimony, phone, email or regular mail (see information on the left side of this page for details on how to comment). Comments may be submitted through February 1, 2019.

Turn over for more information



Does the EA identify a preferred alternative?

ITD looked at a number of possible alternatives to improve roadway structural integrity, traffic flow and safety of the Targhee Pass segment of U.S. 20, and identified Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative.

Roadway improvements included with Alternative 3 (and all of the build alternatives) are:

- An additional travel lane in the uphill direction from S.H. 87 to the Montana State line
- Shoulder widening from 5-feet to 8-feet
- Hill cut to improve stopping sight distance
- Left- and right-turn lanes into Big Horn Hills Estates entrances
- Tree clearing to reduce shade
- Road subsurface reconstruction and drainage improvements

In addition to the roadway improvements, Alternative 3 would include installation of an animal detection system throughout the 4-mile segment of U.S. 20. The system would alert drivers to the presence of animals. This alternative does not include crossing structures with wildlife fencing.

ITD's considerations for preferring Alternative 3 include:

- No easements would be required on private or USFS lands.
- Alternative 3 would not require installation of cattleguards or electric mats and pedestrian access gates, such as entrances to Big Horn Hills Estates.
- Alternative 3 would not introduce a new load height restriction for oversize loads; U.S. 20 is the only corridor running north to Montana with no existing structures limiting load height.
- Local elected officials have communicated that they do not support wildlife crossings and fencing as improvements for the U.S. 20 corridor.
- Implementing Alternative 3 would provide an opportunity to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions on Targhee Pass. This would partially support objectives of the State Wildlife Action Plan and recommendations of the Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy by reducing mortality. Fremont County Commissioners have indicated through a land use plan resolution (April 2018) that they would support animal-detection systems for reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions.
- On a statewide and districtwide priority, the Targhee Pass location does not have the highest frequency of wildlife vehicle collisions. With limited funding, priority locations that have a greater safety benefit should be implemented prior to wildlife crossing through the Targhee Pass area.

QUESTIONS? NEED MORE INFORMATION?

If you have questions, concerns or need more information, please feel free to contact our EA study team at 208-220-5937 or targheepass@langdongroupinc.com. More information can be found at www.IslandParkUS20.com

