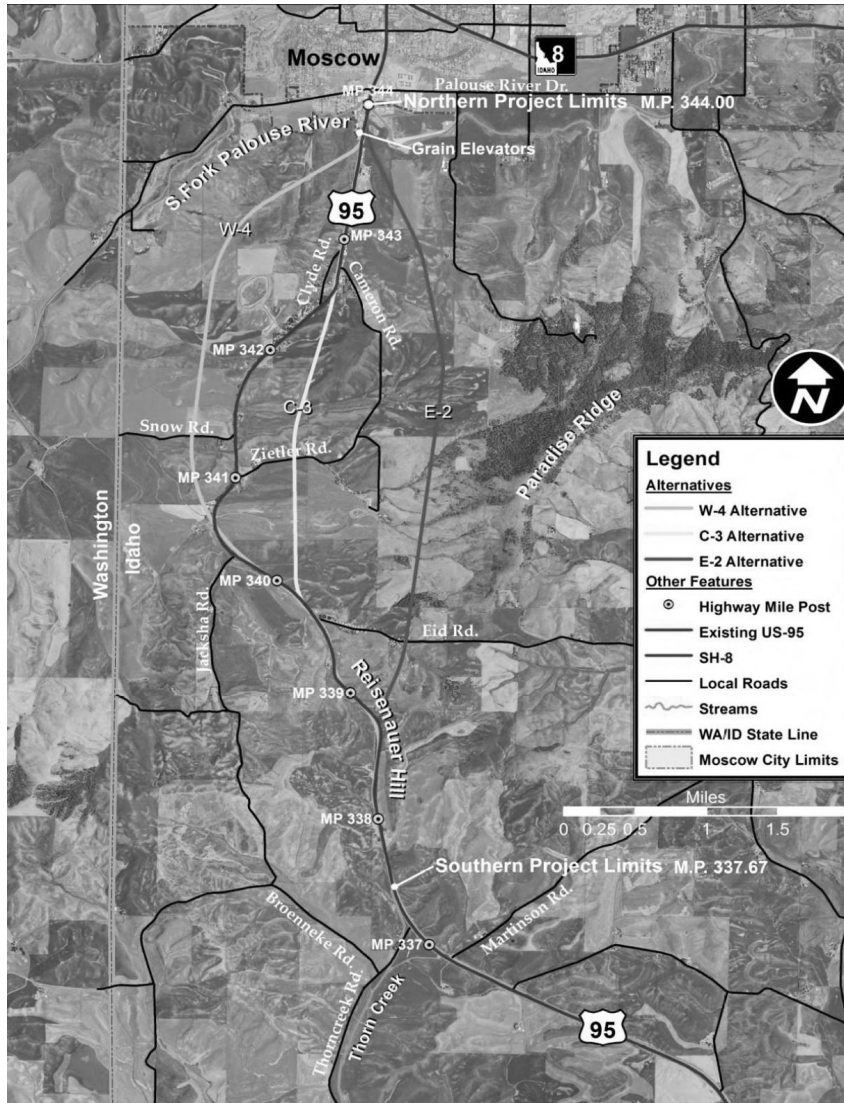


SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUMMARY

C-3 would fulfill the DEIS purpose and need to increase Highway 95 safety, better than E-2. ITD wrongly indicates that C-3 would have slightly less safe conditions and cause higher business and residence displacements than E-2.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMARY

E-2 would have by far the greatest detrimental environmental effects – much greater than those of C-3. The Idaho Fish and Game Department and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Fish and Wildlife Service strongly recommend against E-2 implementation.



Prepared by Paradise Ridge Defense Coalition



U.S. Highway 95 Thorn Creek Road to Moscow Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Comment by March 25 to: Comments@ITD.Idaho.gov

Office of Communications, Idaho Transportation Department

P.O. Box 7129, Boise, ID 83707-1129

Sign the Petition and Get Comment Suggestions:

Paradise Ridge Defense Coalition (PRDC)

Website: Paradise-Ridge-Defense.org

Email: PRDC@Paradise-Ridge-Defense.org

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) considers three alternatives in its U.S. 95 Thorncreek Road to Moscow Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Section 4(f) Evaluation, and will accept public comments on its analysis until March 25 (US95ThornCreek.com). An eastern route would cross Paradise Ridge (E-2), a central route would utilize a significant amount of the current road alignment (C-3), and a western route would be substantially longer than the other two (W-4). This summary compares the attributes of the PRDC-favored C-3 alternative and the ITD-preferred E-2 alternative that is similar to a previous ITD proposal for eastern realignment of Highway 95.

Prepared by Paradise Ridge Defense Coalition

DON'T PAVE PARADISE!

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

* **Land Use:** C-3 would take the least prime farmland of statewide importance and Conservation Reserve Program land, whereas E-2 would use twice as much. City of Moscow staff consider C-3 the most consistent with city/area of impact land use goals and more compatible with a proposed Moscow ring road.

* **Access:** C-3 requires the least amount of new right-of-way and would have the most access points providing the most convenience and best emergency response times for local residents. The addition of frontage roads currently not proposed by ITD could correct the slightly higher accident rate due to access and result in a C-3 safety rating similar to that of E-2.

* **Businesses/Residences:** C-3 would affect eight businesses with more noise, whereas the other two alternatives could undermine their viability in the absence of Highway 95 traffic. C-3 would dislodge one residence and affect no domestic wells; E-2 would move five-plus residences and impact two wells.

* **Accidents & Safety:** Based on a flawed DEIS safety analysis that does not consider weather conditions and C-3 corrections of the unsafe sections of the current highway, about 4.7 predicted fatal and injurious crashes could occur on C-3 per year, compared to 3.8 on E-2. E-2 would abandon these dangerous stretches as a county road, and accidents would continue to occur there.

* **Weather:** ITD reports that 57 percent of highway section accidents happen during inclement weather. But the DEIS only analyzes snowless conditions between January 1 and May 31, 2005, during the mildest winter in 25 years. E-2 would traverse the highest weather-exposed elevations for the longest distance.

* **Aesthetics:** C-3 would cause the least visual impact, whereas E-2 would have the greatest effect with its higher elevation and ground disturbance. E-2 would impose the most noise, impacting seven structures compared to one by C-3.

* **Costs:** Although E-2 would be the shortest route, C-3 would be only 0.09 miles longer. C-3 and E-2 would require about equal construction costs.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

* **Palouse Prairie:** 14 Palouse Prairie remnants lie within one kilometer of, but not close to, C-3. 24 remnants exist within one kilometer of E-2, and many of these occur nearly adjacent to the proposed route. E-2 would also bisect a proposed prairie restoration site contiguous with an extremely significant Paradise Ridge prairie remnant. The detrimental effects of E-2 would extend into this large remnant and thus have a much greater negative impact on the endangered Palouse Prairie ecosystem than C-3.

* **Ungulate Habitat:** C-3 would pass through poor to marginal ungulate habitat and affect no moderate ungulate habitat. E-2 would cross through marginal to moderate ungulate habitat and impact 4.4 acres of moderate ungulate habitat, significantly challenging conservation of native wildlife. The better habitat surrounding E-2 would sustain more ungulates and would increase the likelihood of vehicle-ungulate collisions.

* **Pine Stands/Species:** C-3 impacts no pine stands and reliant species, whereas E-2 would destroy four acres of pine stands and associated habitat for the northern alligator lizard, pygmy nuthatch, and long-eared myotis bat.

* **Wildlife:** C-3 would have the least effect on general wildlife.

* **Wetlands:** C-3 would least impact wetlands, but E-2 would affect over twice the acreage of wetlands as C-3, thus altering wildlife habitat and flood control significantly influenced by wetlands.

* **Stream Tributaries:** Both C-3 and E-2 would cross five stream tributaries, although C-3 would traverse them for a greater distance than E-2.

* **Impervious Surfaces:** C-3 would create the least new areas of impervious surfaces and thus lesser amounts of pollutant runoff into area streams.

ITD DEIS: US95ThornCreek.com, March 25 Comment Deadline
Information: Paradise-Ridge-Defense.org, WildIdahoRisingTide.org