

the Montana Department of Transportation and TRRC that relate to potential environmental impacts and the implementation of mitigation measures.

H. Develop any appropriate mitigation.

2. Land Use

The SEIS will:

A. Evaluate impacts to property owners along the Western Alignment in terms of property acquisition, agricultural productivity, and recreational activities.

B. Evaluate the impact to parcels with a future potential for mechanical irrigation.

C. Evaluate indirect or secondary impacts to land uses such as homes located upstream from creek and river crossings.

D. Evaluate the impact of sidings as well as the rail line itself.

E. Develop appropriate mitigation to address issues such as fencing, weed protection, cattle passes, and compensation for livestock killed by trains.

3. Biological and Aquatic Resources

The SEIS will:

A. Establish a baseline for diversity of species for the Tongue River Region. The SEIS will map existing habitats using aerial photography and will describe the existing resources in the Tongue River Valley, including vegetative communities, wildlife and wildlife movement (especially pronghorn, elk, and deer migration, and also the impact to the movement of smaller species such as turtles and other amphibians), fisheries, and Federally threatened or endangered species. Wildlife inventories will be verified through field surveys when and if acquisition of the project right-of-way is completed.

B. Include a Biological Assessment of species, updating information from *Tongue River II* as appropriate. Specifically, the assessment will investigate species identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the species list recently provided for this project.

C. Include a delineation of all prairie dog colonies to assist in determining the presence of the Black-Footed Ferret.

D. Include a survey of sensitive plant species, including the woolly twinpod, Barr's milkvetch, and nuttall desert-parsley.

E. Include wetland analysis for all wetlands, riparian areas, and waters of the U.S., including creek and river crossings.

F. Develop appropriate mitigation to address potential impacts to livestock

and to wildlife migration along the project corridor.

G. Develop appropriate mitigation to ensure adequate protection from the introduction and spread of noxious weeds.

H. Develop an appropriate mitigation plan for all wetlands and waters of the United States.

I. Develop appropriate mitigation plans for erosion control, riverbank stabilization, and the reclamation and replanting of cut/fill slopes.

4. Soils and Geology

The SEIS will:

A. Evaluate the potential for soil erosion during construction and long-term operation.

B. Evaluate soil composition and the need for blasting.

C. Evaluate the effect of blasting on the Tongue River Reservoir dam, and require a mitigation blasting plan if such activity is found to be necessary.

D. Evaluate the effect of topography changes on runoff and flooding.

E. Evaluate proposed engineering of bridges and culverts.

F. Develop any appropriate mitigation.

5. Water Quality

The SEIS will:

A. Include a hydrological analysis of the *Tongue River* and the potential impact of the construction and operation of *Tongue River III* upon it.

B. Evaluate the specific potential of erosion from cut/fill slopes to degrade the current water quality of the *Tongue River* and tributary streams, specifically as it relates to Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) established for these water bodies.

C. Develop any appropriate mitigation.

6. Cultural Resources

The SEIS will:

A. Evaluate potential impacts to cultural and paleontological resources.

B. Include the final terms of the Programmatic Agreement between the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, BLM, MT DNRC, the Corps, the Board, and TRRC. The Programmatic Agreement will provide a means for identifying and addressing impacts on cultural resources, including Native American resources.

C. Discuss the results of consultation with Native American tribal governments, specifically the Northern Cheyenne and the Crow, taking into consideration the following regulatory provisions and directives: The National Historic Preservation Act (as amended

in 1992); The American Indian Religious Freedom Act (as amended in 1993); The Religious Freedom Restoration Act (enacted in 1993); The Sacred Sites Executive Order (released in 1996).

D. Provide the results of consultation with representatives from the Northern Cheyenne and Crow tribes to solicit information about known properties, burials, or traditional use areas on or adjacent to *Tongue River III*.

E. Discuss the eligibility of the Spring Creek Archeological District for the National Register of Historic Places, and potential impacts to this resource resulting from construction and operation of *Tongue River III*.

7. Energy

The SEIS will evaluate potential impacts to energy resources, and develop any appropriate mitigation.

8. Air Quality

The SEIS will:

A. Evaluate construction-period dust emissions from project construction.

B. Evaluate the effect of dust emissions from the long-term operation of the railroad on local recreation areas, farms, and homes.

C. Evaluate particulate emission from locomotive operation, and potential air quality impacts on the Class I Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation.

D. Develop any appropriate mitigation.

9. Noise and Vibration Effects

The SEIS will:

A. Evaluate the project's effect on local property owners, residences, and ranch operations.

B. Evaluate the project's effect on local recreational activities.

C. Evaluate the project's effect on livestock and wildlife.

D. If blasting is necessary for construction, evaluate the effect of such blasting and vibration for the project on the Tongue River Reservoir dam.

E. Develop any appropriate mitigation.

10. Socioeconomics

The SEIS will:

A. Using Census 2000 data, evaluate potential impacts of *Tongue River III* on local social and economic patterns derived from physical changes. More detailed analysis of socioeconomics can be addressed by the cooperating agencies in their own review process. This could include, as appropriate, potential impacts of the project on local population changes in terms of short-term and long-term employment; impacts of new students generated as a