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**Check out the  
Study Website at:**  
[www.mdt.mt.gov/  
pubinvolve/tongueriver](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/tongueriver)

**Public Involvement Opportunities**

Public involvement is important to any successful corridor study process. The purpose is to ensure a proactive process that provides opportunities for the public to be involved in all phases of the corridor study. The public is invited to participate in the process through community informational meetings and ongoing study information review and input.

A study website has been developed to provide online opportunities to comment on the *Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study* effort. Dates, times, and locations for all community outreach events will be announced prior to the events through local media and the study mailing list.

The study team will collect and consider all community comments received to better understand the community view of potential issues. Those with a specific interest in the study are encouraged to join the study mailing list. They can do so by submitting their name and contact information to Jeff Key at [jeff.key@rpa-hln.com](mailto:jeff.key@rpa-hln.com).

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program, or activity associated with this study. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request. For further information, call (406) 447-5000 or TTY (800) 335-7592, or call Montana Relay at 711. Accommodation requests must be made at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled activity and / or meeting.

# TONGUE RIVER ROAD (S-332)

## Corridor Planning Study

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**Study Description**

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), in partnership with Custer and Rosebud Counties, is conducting a *Corridor Planning Study* of Secondary Route 332 (S-332), known locally as “Tongue River Road”. S-332 is functionally classified as a rural major collector on the Secondary Highway System. S-332 serves as a north-south corridor between Miles City and Ashland that roughly parallels the Tongue River, passing through rolling terrain that consists of farm and ranch land.

The purpose of the study is to determine financially feasible improvement options to address safety and geometrical concerns within the transportation corridor based on needs presented by the community, the study partners, and resource agencies. Due to possible coal mining development southeast of Ashland, the potential exists for an increase in passenger and truck traffic on S-332.

The study will include a comprehensive package of short- and long-term recommendations intended to address the transportation needs of the corridor over the planning horizon (year 2032), with particular attention given to the next 5 to 10 years. These recommendations will assist the study partners in targeting the most critical needs and appropriate allocation of resources.

**What is a Corridor Planning Study?**

A *Corridor Planning Study* is a planning-level assessment of the study area occurring before conducting project-level environmental compliance activities under the National and Montana Environmental Policy Acts (NEPA / MEPA). The study involves early communication with interested parties to help identify needs, constraints, and opportunities for a corridor and to help determine if there are implementable improvements given available resources and local support.

The *Corridor Planning Study* is developed strictly as a planning project and not a design or construction project. The study is designed to help facilitate a smooth and efficient transition from transportation planning to project development/ environmental review if a project is forwarded from the study.

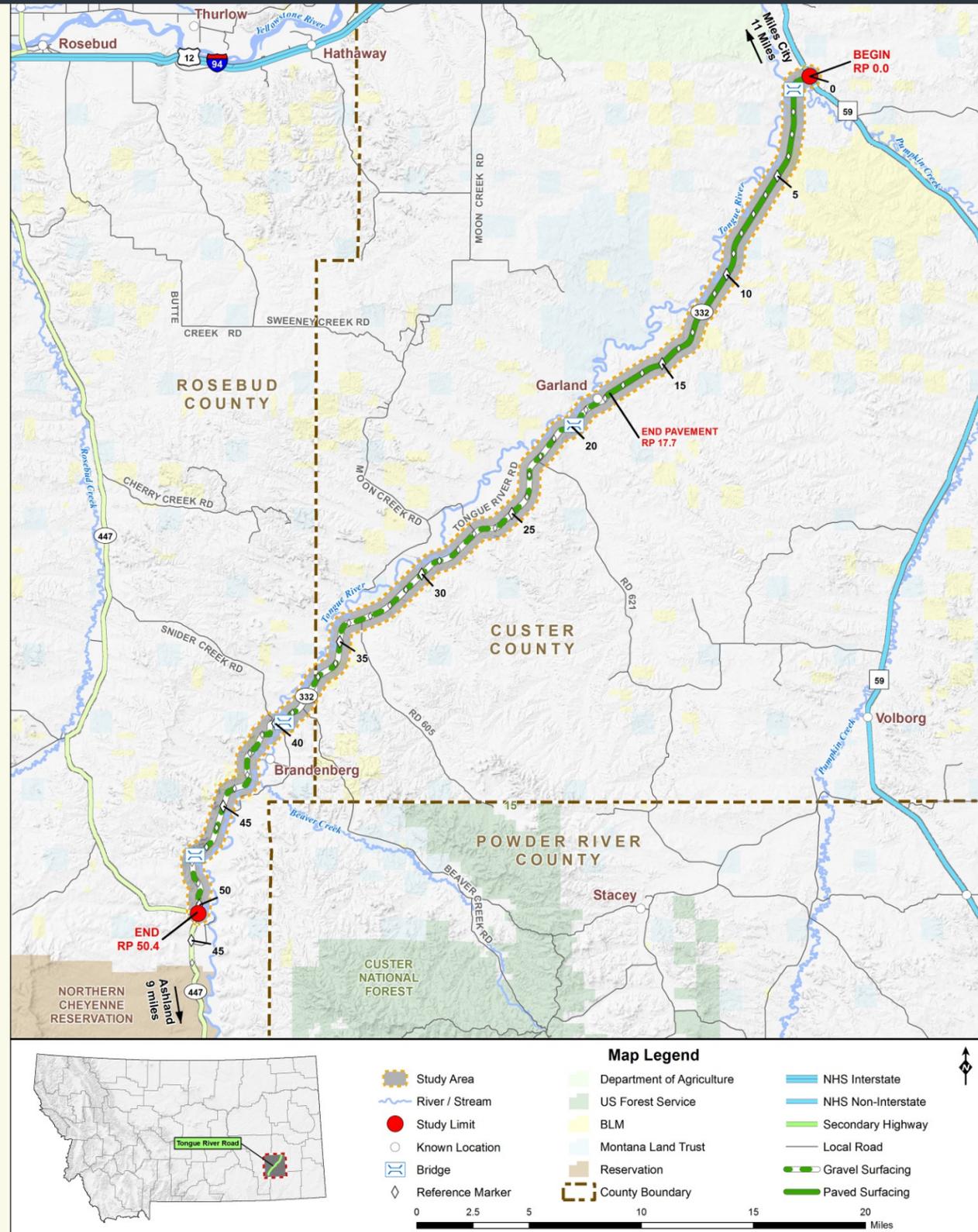
**Informational Meeting #1**  
**Thursday, May 31, 2012**  
**6:00 PM**  
**Miles Community College**  
**2715 Dickinson Street**  
**Room #106**  
**Miles City, MT**

**The public is welcome and encouraged to attend. We hope to see you there!**



**Study Area**

The study area for the Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study includes a half-mile buffer on each side of S-332. The study area begins at the junction of MT-59 (RP 0.0), approximately 11 miles south of Miles City, and ends at the junction of S-447 (RP 50.4), approximately nine miles north of Ashland.



**Existing Conditions—Key Findings**

**Transportation System**

**Surfacing**

- Longitudinal and transverse cracking in the asphalt surfacing (RP 0.0 to RP 17.7).
- Evidence of asphalt failure due to recent slides at intermittent locations.
- Gravel surfacing from RP 17.7 to RP 50.4. in fair condition.

**Drainage**

- Nine locations with evidence of recent slides indicating potential drainage issues.
- Four existing bridges with no drainage issues noted.

**Horizontal Alignment**

- Seven horizontal curves do not meet current standards.

**Vertical Alignment**

- 46 vertical curves were estimated to not meet current standards.
- Nine locations have grades that were estimated to not meet current standards.

**Roadside Clear Zones (i.e. horizontal clearance)**

- 22 locations were estimated to have clear zones that do not meet current standards based on field review.

**Access Points**

- Three public approaches do not meet current standards based on intersection angles.
- Nine private approaches do not meet current standards based on intersection angles.

**Environmental Considerations**

**Prime Farmland**

- Approximately 28% of the study area is designated as farmland of statewide importance.
- Approximately 15% of the study area is designated as prime farmland if irrigated.

**Water Resources**

- Tongue River is located within the study area.
- Numerous tributaries to the Tongue River exist within the study area.

**Wetlands**

- Wetlands associated with the Tongue River and associated drainages are located intermittently within the study area.

**Hazardous Substances**

- There are five abandoned mine sites within the study area.

**Fish and Wildlife**

- Seven endangered, threatened, proposed, or candidate species are listed for Custer and Rosebud Counties.
- 39 species of concern for Custer County and 47 species of concern for Rosebud County were listed.

**Vegetation**

- No endangered, threatened, proposed, or candidate plant species are expected to occur within the study area.
- Nine plant species of concern for Custer County and eleven for Rosebud County were listed.

**Cultural and Archaeological Resources**

- 97 separate cultural resources are known to exist within the study area.
- Three 4(f) and one 6(f) resources are located within the study area.

**Study Schedule**

The Tongue River Road Corridor Planning Study began in January 2012 and is expected to be completed by the end of November 2012.

