



## ROAD AND BRIDGE DEPARTMENT

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**NEWS RELEASE                      FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 2012**

### **RYE CREEK ROAD PROJECT MOVES FORWARD**

#### **\$5.5 MILLION PROJECT WILL PAVE POPULAR FOREST ACCESS ROUTE**

Rye Creek Road, south of Darby, which provides a primary access route to the vast public lands on the east side of the southern Bitter Root Valley and supports a diverse group of recreationists, hunters, firewood collectors and residents, along with forest and ranch traffic, is another big step closer to getting a major facelift.

Last April, the Ravalli County Road & Bridge Department, along with the Bitter Root National Forest, submitted a proposal to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to designate Rye Creek Road as a National Forest Highway, and another proposal to reconstruct and pave the road between U.S. Highway 93 and the North Fork Rye Creek Road, 5.4 miles in length. Over the summer, County Road Supervisor David Ohnstad and local Forest Service representatives participated in comprehensive review of the proposals with officials from the FHWA, the Montana Department of Transportation and the Forest Service Northern Region Office.

The Road & Bridge Department has been notified that the designation of Rye Creek Road as a Montana Public Forest Highway (MT PFH 102) has been approved, making it eligible for funding under the FHWA National Forest Highway program.

The Rye Creek Road improvement project, currently estimated at \$5,547,055.00, has also been recommended for final approval and is currently programmed for construction in 2015. The Western Federal Lands Highway Division of the FHWA, which will administer the project, has developed a Project Identification Report which outlines the general scope of the improvements. The report is available for review at the Road & Bridge Department, 244 Fairgrounds Road in Hamilton.

An informational meeting on the project will be scheduled for later this spring.

For further information on this project, please contact the Ravalli County Road & Bridge Department at 244 Fairgrounds Road in Hamilton or at 363 - 2733.

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## Glenda Wiles

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**From:** David Ohnstad  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 12, 2012 11:14 AM  
**To:** Commissioners Department  
**Cc:** Klarryse Murphy; Jana Exner  
**Subject:** rye creek road  
**Attachments:** 2012\_01\_12\_10\_23\_02.pdf

Good Morning -

Relative to previous discussion, please note the attached release. As noted, designation as a National Forest Highway (Montana Public Forest Highway) has been approved. The tri-agency has also recommended, to FHWA, approval of the construction project for inclusion in the forest highway plan, the project is currently programmed for 2015.

We expect to meet again this spring with the group that had been involved in our sediment reduction projects of a few years ago, working with them and others in the area to further define the design and scope of the project.

David