

1 Traffic will increase and present the risk of accidents, including spills into adjoining soils, canals,  
2 and possibly groundwater. The Build alternatives present a modern roadway (the Proposed  
3 Action) constructed to the latest highway design standards; the No Action Alternative reflects no  
4 new Idaho 16. IDWR classifies groundwater in the study area as “vulnerable” because  
5 groundwater is unconfined and shallow. Therefore, shallow groundwater in this area, is highly  
6 vulnerable to impacts from large spills of hazardous materials.

7 Similarly, the Build alternatives will increase stormwater runoff. Contaminants likely to be  
8 associated with stormwater runoff from the pavement include fuel, lubricants, heavy  
9 metals, and automobile engine coolants, such as ethylene glycol. Runoff containing these  
10 materials can infiltrate and impact local soil and groundwater quality.

11 **Construction Impacts.** The construction impacts to potential hazardous material sites in the  
12 study area are described in Table 5-36. Additional details can be found in the “Hazardous  
13 Materials” Discipline Report available on the CD-ROM that accompanies this document  
14 (CH2M HILL, 2008e).

## 15 5.16 Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of the 16 Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of 17 Long-Term Productivity

18 NEPA regulations (40CFR1502.16) require discussion of the “relationship between short-  
19 term uses of the environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term  
20 productivity” as part of an EIS. The Proposed Action is to be evaluated to determine  
21 whether long-term benefits are worth the short-term effects.

22 Short-term effects are anticipated with the construction of any Build alternative. These  
23 include, but are not limited to, travel delays; traffic congestion; restricted access to  
24 residences and the few commercial establishments in the study area; visual intrusions to  
25 residents and motorists; noise to residents; and other effects.

26 The need for short-term and long-term transportation improvements is analyzed in an  
27 iterative, on-going planning effort at all levels of government. The Proposed Action is listed  
28 in at least five key transportation planning documents:

- 29 1. *CIM, COMPASS, 2006*
- 30 2. *FY2008-2012 Northern Ada County Transportation Improvement Program, COMPASS, 2007*
- 31 3. *Idaho’s FY2008-2012 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, ITD, 2007*
- 32 4. *Idaho’s FY2009-2013 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, ITD, 2008*
- 33 5. *Idaho’s FY2008 Horizons in Transportation, ITD, 2007*

34 The presence of the Proposed Action in these five documents reflects widespread acceptance  
35 of the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action (see Chapter 2, “Purpose and Need”).  
36 Accommodating the Treasure Valley’s dynamic growth, improving regional mobility and  
37 circulation by adding an additional north-south route connecting I-84 to Idaho 44 (State  
38 Street), and reducing congestion on existing regional north-south arterials is viewed by public  
39 policy-makers as maintaining and enhancing the long-term productivity and viability of the  
40 Treasure Valley without burdening or overtaxing the environment in the short or long term.

1 ITD is committed to mitigating both short- and long-term impacts to the environment;  
2 therefore, the benefits to long-term productivity are deemed to outweigh the short-term  
3 uses and effects related to construction.

## 4 5.17 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

5 NEPA requires discussion of any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources in  
6 implementing a federally funded project (40CFR1502.16). This applies primarily to use of  
7 nonrenewable resources, such as minerals or cultural resources, or to those factors, such as  
8 soil productivity, that are renewable only over long periods of time. The irretrievability of  
9 those resources applies to the loss of production, harvest, or use of natural resources.

10 The implementation of any of the Build alternatives would require a commitment of a range  
11 of natural, physical, human, and fiscal resources. The conversion of private land from  
12 existing residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial uses to public highway is  
13 considered an irreversible commitment of resources. Despite that, if at some future time a  
14 greater need arises for use of the land or if the proposed public highway is no longer  
15 needed, the land could be converted to another use with an additional commitment of  
16 financial and natural resources.

17 To the greatest extent possible, the Build alternatives would use existing ROW, requiring an  
18 additional 661 acres (fewest) in Alternative 2 and an additional 686 acres (most) in  
19 Alternative 1B (see Table 5-38). Use of existing ROW ranges from 43 acres (6.1 percent of  
20 total ROW) in Alternative 2 to 65 acres (8.8 percent of total) in Alternative 1.

TABLE 5-38  
ROW Required by Alternative

	Alt 1	Alt 1B	Alt 2	Alt 2D	Alt 3A	Alt 3C
Existing ROW in Alternative (Acres)	65	56	43	47	60	58
Total New ROW to be Acquired (Acres)	673	686	661	667	669	670
Total ROW in Alternative (Acres)	738	742	704	714	729	728
Existing ROW in Total ROW, Percent	8.8	7.5	6.1	6.6	8.2	8.0

21 Regarding fiscal resources, the Build alternatives would require the commitment of funds  
22 for constructing, operating, and maintaining the proposed roadway. Funds would be  
23 required for ROW acquisition and for construction, mitigation, and long-term maintenance  
24 of the new facilities. The use of public funds for the Proposed Action would be irreversible  
25 and irretrievable.<sup>11</sup>

26 Considerable amounts of labor, fossil fuels, and highway construction materials would be  
27 expended and would not be retrievable. Concrete, aggregate materials used in concrete and  
28 asphalt production such as sand and gravel, along with steel, water, and bituminous

<sup>11</sup> It can be argued, however, that the expenditure of public funds is an investment in the regional transportation network, and that "benefits" accrue to the region in the form of ease of access, increased mobility, and cleaner air, to name a few.