

A person wearing a helmet and a brown jacket is riding a bicycle across a wooden trestle bridge. The bridge is supported by wooden posts and has a metal railing. The background shows a valley with green grass and trees under a blue sky with some clouds.

# Greater Yellowstone – Teton Trail

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## Trail Concept Plan

Stakeholder Meeting  
11.21.14

# Project Partners:



## Project Initiation

- City of Victor HUD grant
- Partnership between three state trail advocates
- Alta Planning + Design, a leading trail design and planning firm

## Concept Plan Objectives

- Establish a shared vision for a future trail corridor
- Identify opportunities and challenges
- Identify and engage stakeholders
- Inventory local planning efforts that could contribute to the vision



## Previous Ideas Concerning Development of a Regional Rail Trail



- The ideas regarding development of a regional rail trail has existed for years
- Current website (Charlie Otto) promotes and describes the journey

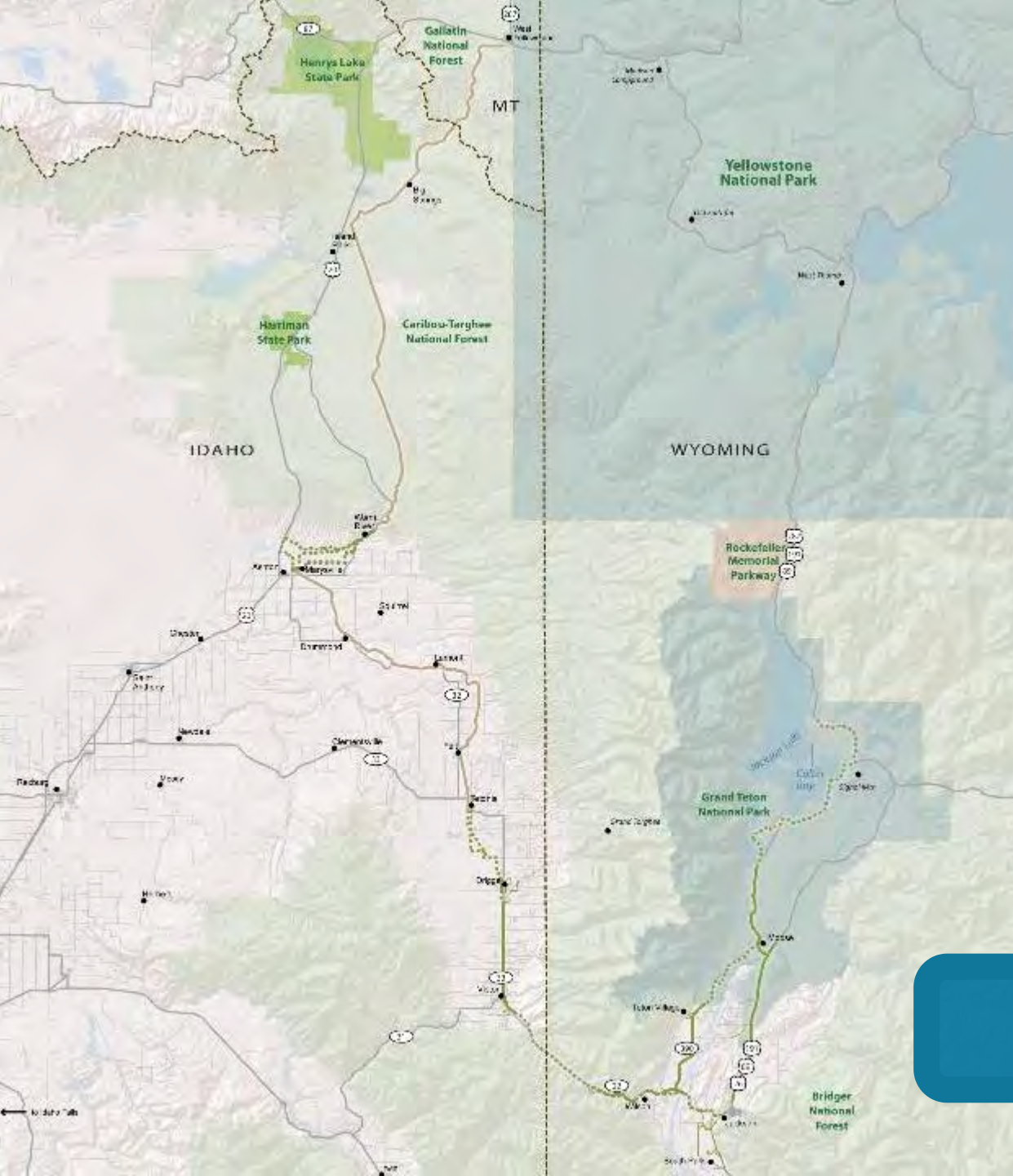


## Trail Corridor Overview



# Trail Corridor Overview

Source: US Department of Interior, US National Park Service, Forest Service, Mountain & Island Interpretation Center, Eugene Idaho, Wyoming State, Mountain & Island Interpretation Center



# Trail Corridor Overview



Colter Bay



## Moose-Wilson Pathway



## Moose-Wilson Pathway



Jackson-Moose Pathway



## Jackson-Moose Pathway



## Jackson- West Broadway Cycle Track



Snake River Bridge



Wilson Millennium Trail



STOP

TRAIL CREEK RD



Wilson Millennium Trail



## Teton Pass Trail



West side of Teton Pass



NO  
MOTOR  
VEHICLES

TETON PASS TRAIL  
4 MILES (ONE WAY)

Moose Creek



Old Jackson Highway



## Victor-Driggs Rail Trail



Victor-Driggs Rail Trail



Huntsman Springs- Driggs



## North Driggs County Roads



Historic Rail grade



Historic Rail grade





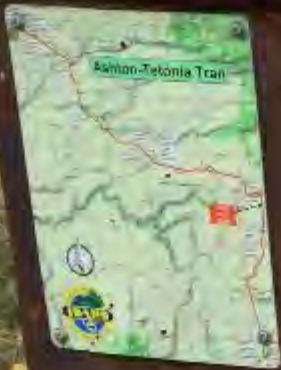
Ashton – Tetonia Rail Trail



Ashton – Tetonian Rail Trail



Ashton – Tetonian Rail Trail



## Bitch Creek, Bridges and Beyond

Welcome to the Bitch Creek bridge along the old grade of the Oregon Shortline Railroad built in 1923. The bridge spans the grade 735 feet above the creek. Transverse blocking and curbside were added in 2009 by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR). Take note that the creek separates Teton and Fremont Counties.

The original bridge was built by the Oregon Shortline Railroad. It was one of the first bridges in the area. The bridge was built by the Oregon Shortline Railroad. It was one of the first bridges in the area. The bridge was built by the Oregon Shortline Railroad. It was one of the first bridges in the area.



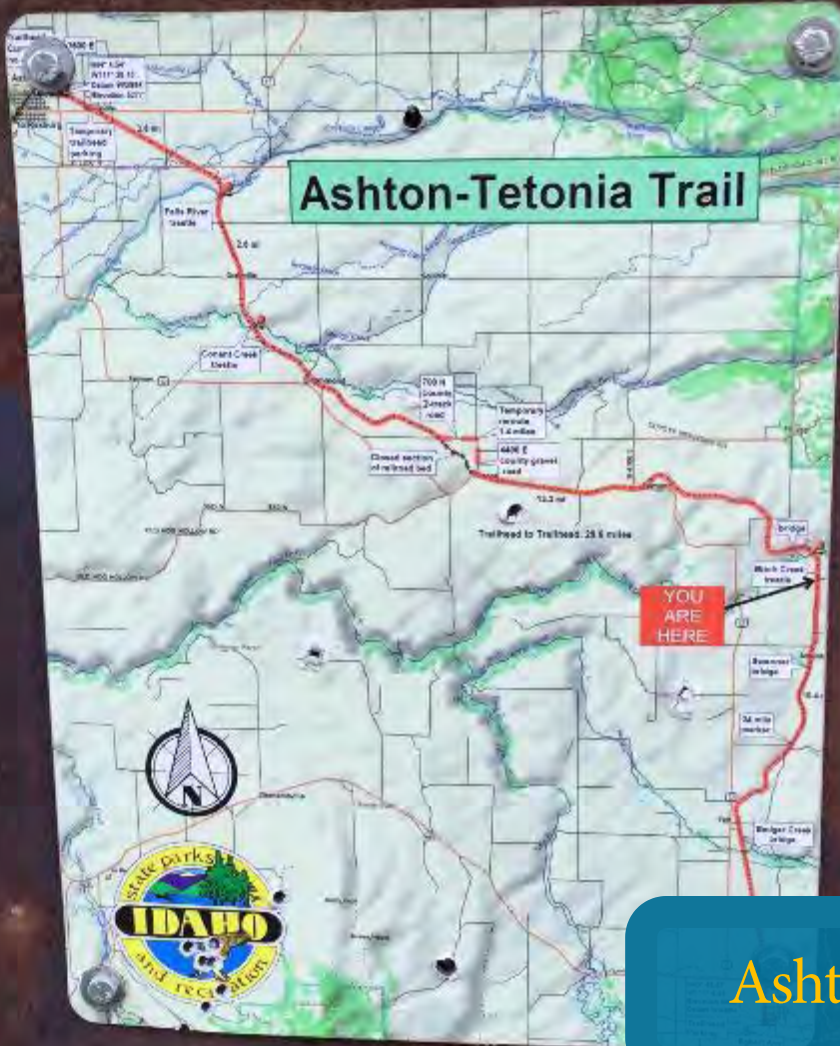
The bridge is a steel truss structure. It was built in 1923. The bridge is a steel truss structure. It was built in 1923. The bridge is a steel truss structure. It was built in 1923. The bridge is a steel truss structure. It was built in 1923.



**Civil Engineer George H. Meadors**  
 Meadors was a prominent engineer and architect. He designed the bridge. He was a prominent engineer and architect. He designed the bridge. He was a prominent engineer and architect. He designed the bridge.



Ashton – Tetonia Rail Trail



Ashton – Tetonia Rail Trail



Ashton – Tetonia Rail Trail



Ashton – Tetonian Rail Trail



## Ashton – Tetonian Rail Trail



## Warm River Campground



## Warm River Campground



Bear Gulch Trailhead



Warm River



## Historic Railroad Tunnel



CTNF  
Railroad Grade



CTNF  
Railroad Grade



CTNF  
Railroad Grade



CTNF  
Railroad Grade



CTNF  
Railroad Grade



CTNF  
Railroad Grade



Historic railroad grade at MT / ID state line



Wetlands near West Yellowstone



Historic railroad grade near West Yellowstone



# Existing Trail Access

- Major portions of the corridor are already accessible to the public

104

Miles accessible today

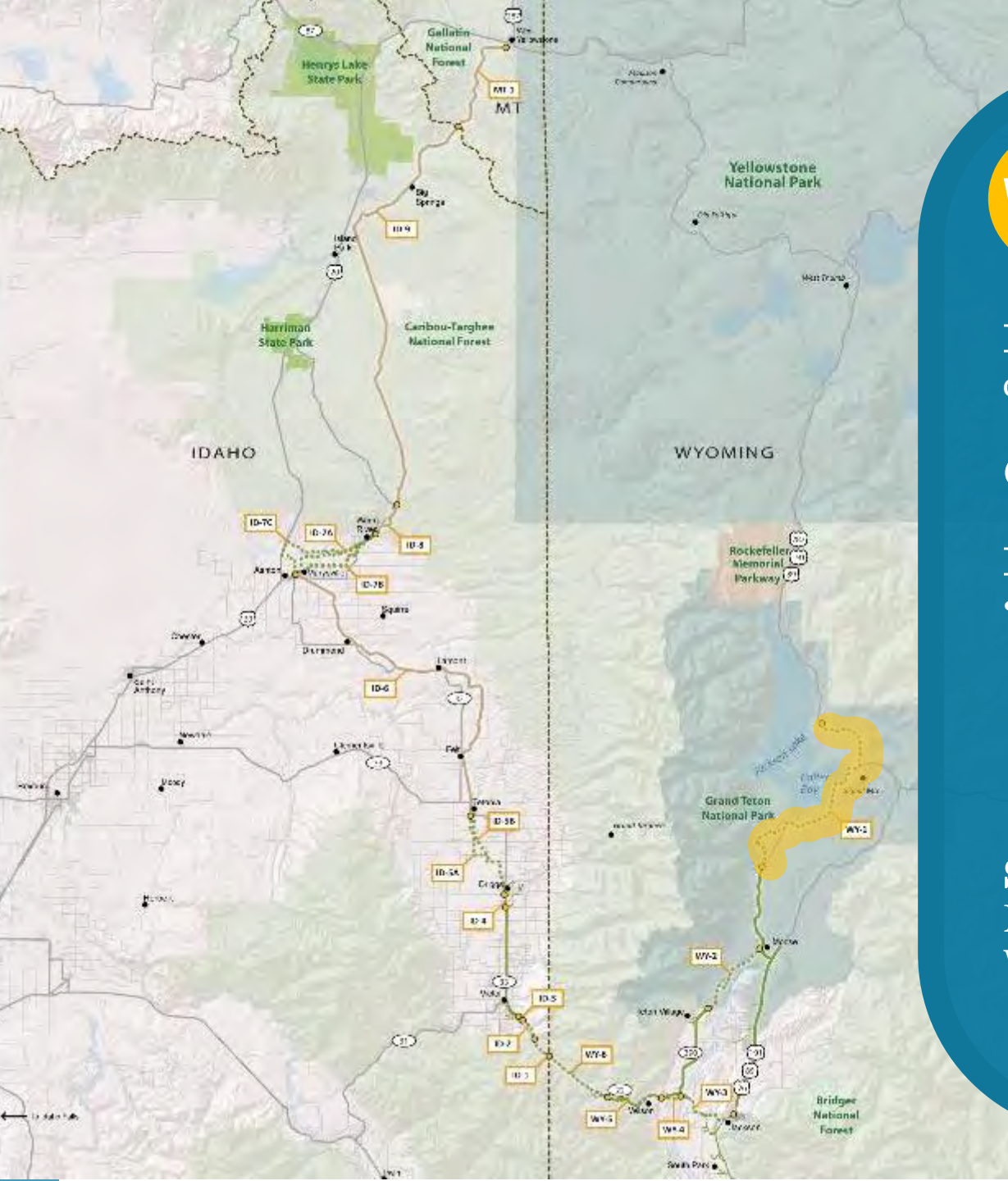
67

Proposed miles of trail

# Project Identification

- 16 Projects across 3 states to complete the vision
- Wyoming 6 Projects
- Idaho- 9 Projects
- Montana- 1 Project





# WY-1

## Colter Bay to Jenny Lake Pathway

**Project Status:** NEPA decision completed 2007 / unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 20 miles

### Project Description:

- Proposed shared use path from the Jenny Lake Visitor's Center to Colter Bay through Grand Teton National Park.

**Stakeholders:** Grand Teton National Park , Teton County Wyoming, Wyoming Pathways

A wide-angle landscape photograph showing a vast valley with a lake in the distance. The foreground is filled with low-lying, scrubby vegetation in shades of green and brown. The middle ground features a calm lake reflecting the sky. In the background, a range of rugged, snow-capped mountains stretches across the horizon under a sky filled with large, white, fluffy clouds. A blue banner with a yellow circle containing the text 'WY-1' is overlaid in the top right corner.

WY-1

## Colter Bay to Jenny Lake Pathway



**WY-2**

## Moose to Teton Village Pathway

**Project Status:** EIS Management Plan underway / unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 7.3 Miles

### Project Description:

- Proposed shared use path from Moose to the south border of Grand Teton National Park, would connect to the Teton County Pathway System near Teton Village.

**Stakeholders:** Grand Teton National Park, Teton County Wyoming, Teton Village Association, Friends of Pathways, Wyoming Pathways

WY-2

# Moose to Teton Village Pathway





**WY-3**

## Path 22 – Jackson to Wilson

**Project Status:** In Construction and fully funded, Completion summer 2015

**Corridor Length:** 5 miles

### Project Description:

- A one mile Cycle Track on West Broadway/US26/89, and 4 mile shared use Pathway along WY-22 and Snake River Pathway Bridge connecting Jackson to existing Wilson Centennial Pathway and Moose-Wilson Pathway.

**Stakeholders:** Wyoming Pathways, Teton County Wyoming



**WY-4**

## Wilson Millennium Trail

**Project Status:** Planned, Land secured, unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 1.3 Miles

### Project Description:

- Proposed shared use path connection from existing Teton Pass Trail in Wilson along the south side of Hwy 22 connecting to the new Snake River Pathway Bridge. Improves existing gravel trail, would include pathway bridge over Fish Creek.

**Stakeholders:** Wyoming Pathways, Teton County Wyoming



## WY-5

## Wilson Millennium Trail & Teton Pass Old Pass Road

**Project Status:** Completed/ Partial funding for ongoing maintenance

**Corridor Length:** 5.7 Miles

### Project Description:

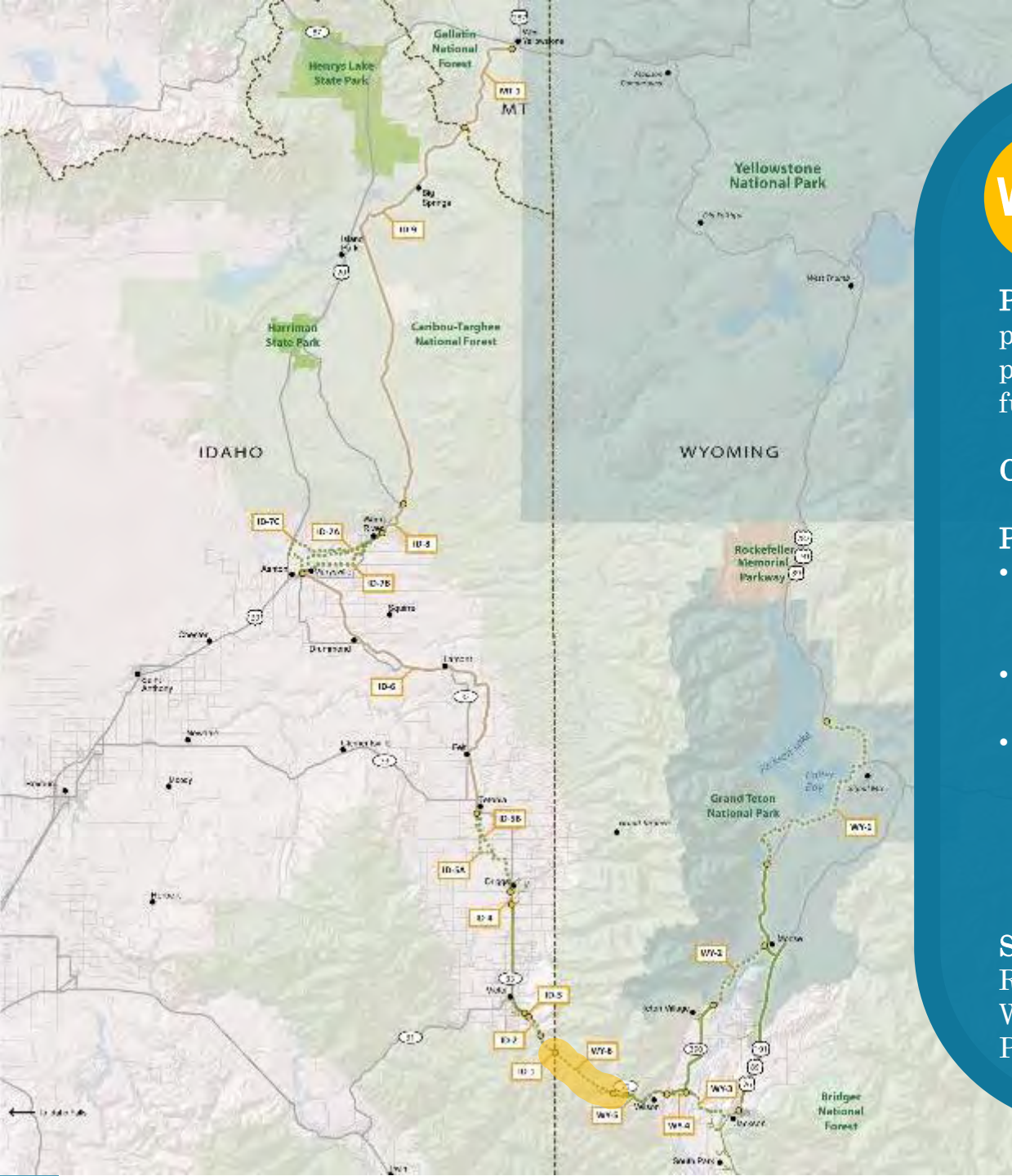
- Routine maintenance on existing 1-mile pathway Wilson to Trail Creek Road
- Additional asphalt repairs and drainage work on Old Pass Road.
- Reinforce shared roadway environment on 1-mile long Trail Creek Road
- Implement shared roadway markings and wayfinding signage.

**Stakeholders:** Teton County Wyoming, Friends of Pathways, Jim Verdone/friends of Teton Pass; Wyoming Pathways



**WY-5**

Wilson Millennium Trail  
& Teton Pass Old Pass Road



# WY-6 Teton Pass Summit to Idaho Stateline

**Project Status:** Environmental, planning, preliminary engineering, phase one construction / Partially funded

**Corridor Length:** 6.5 Miles

### Project Description:

- Connects from the existing pathway at the top of Teton Pass west towards the Wyoming/Idaho state line.
- Partially funded through \$500,000 FLAP grant
- The preferred alignment would provide maximum relief from high-speed vehicular traffic along the road while balancing environmental concerns.

**Stakeholders:** CTNF Teton Basin Ranger District, Teton County Wyoming, WYDOT, Wyoming Pathways, Friends of Pathways



WY-6

Teton Pass Summit to  
Idaho State Line



**ID-1**

## Stateline to Moose Creek

**Project Status:** Funded / Under design,  
Construction 2016

**Corridor Length:** 1.9 Miles

### Project Description:

- Develop a shared use path from Moose Creek up Teton Pass on the north side of ID-33 to the state line.
- Idaho FLAP grant secured. Project is currently scheduled for construction in 2016. NEPA permitting is complete, and design is scheduled to start in 2015.

**Stakeholders:** CTNF Teton Basin Ranger District, City of Victor, Idaho, Teton County Idaho, Teton Valley Trails and Pathways (TVTAP), Idaho Walk Bike Alliance, Teton Valley Business Development Center

ID-1

## State Line to Moose Creek

NO  
MOTOR  
VEHICLES

### TETON PASS TRAIL

4 Miles (one-way)





ID-2

Moose Creek to  
Mountainside Village Park





**ID-3**

## Reconstruct Mountainside Village Sidepath

**Project Status:** Undefined /Unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 0.5 Miles

- **Project Description:** Reconstruct the failing Mountainside Village sidepath from the Mountainside Village Park to Baseline Rd.
- Upgrade trail to 8'-0" minimum facility.

**Stakeholders:** Mountainside Village, City of Victor, TVTAP, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance



**ID-4**

## Victor Driggs Rail-Trail Extension- Teton Creek to Driggs

**Project Status:** Preliminary  
planning completed /Unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 1.1 Miles

### Project Description:

- Connect from the existing rail-trail end at Teton Creek south of Driggs to the newly constructed shared use path in the Huntsman Springs development at Bates Road.
- Property acquisition may be necessary

**Stakeholders:** City of Driggs,  
TVTAP, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance



**ID-5A**

## Huntsman Springs to Teton County Road Alignment

**Project Status:** ROW research,  
preliminary planning completed  
/Unfunded

**Project Status:** Preliminary  
planning completed /Unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 7.7 Miles

**Project Description:**

**Stakeholders:** City of Driggs,  
TVTAP, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance



**ID-5A**

Huntsman Springs to Teton  
County Road Alignment



## **ID-5B** Huntsman Springs to Teton Rail Trail Alignment

**Project Status:** ROW research, preliminary planning completed /Unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 6.5 Miles

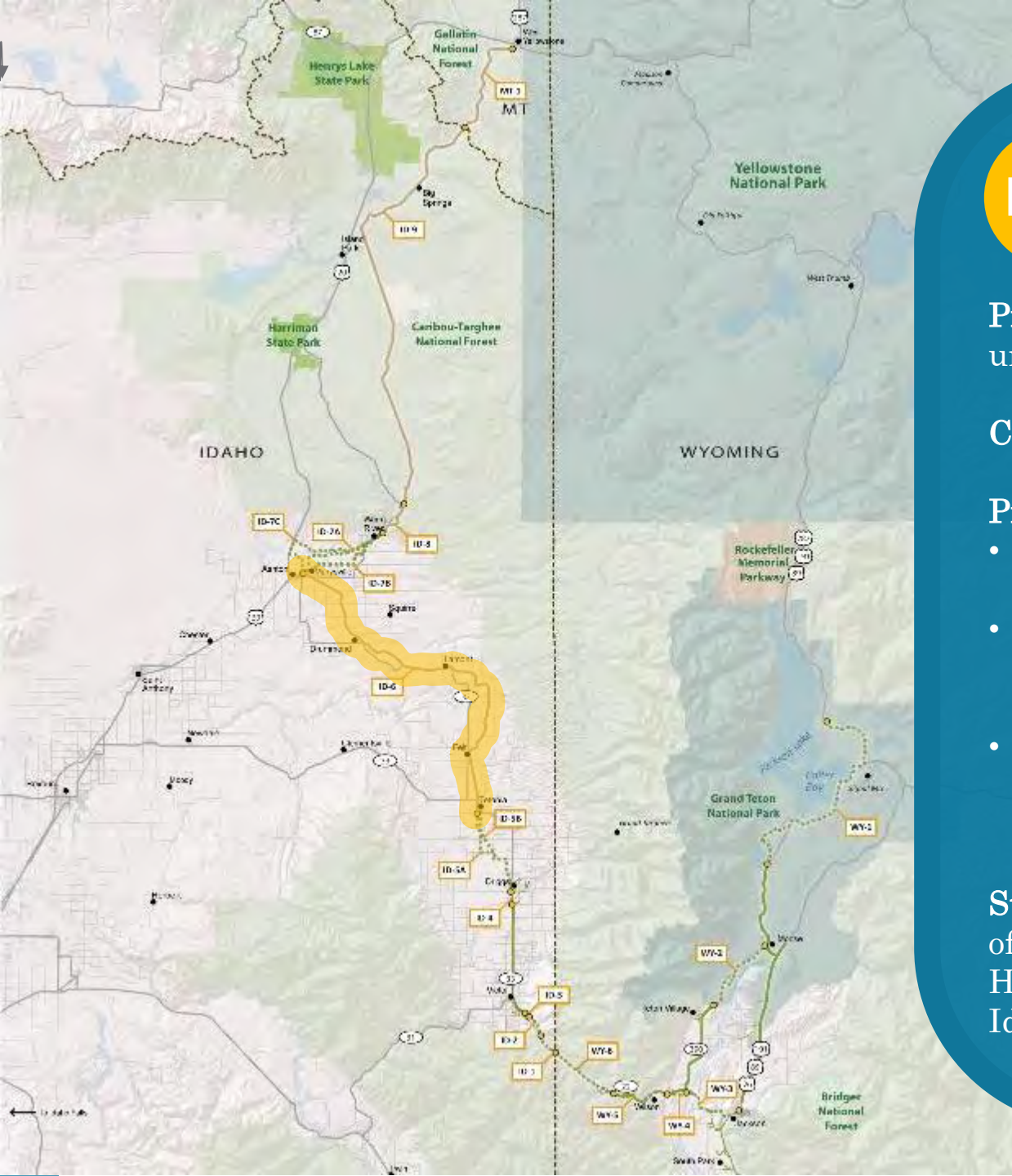
**Project Description:** Redevelop the historic railroad grade as a rail-trail. Easements or property acquisition would need to be secured for segments that had reverted to adjacent owners. Special considerations should account for agricultural machinery access and heavy equipment crossing of the rail trail.

**Stakeholders:** City of Driggs, City of Teton, Teton County Idaho, TVTAP, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance, private property owners, agricultural interests

**ID-5B**

## Huntsman Springs to Teton Rail Trail Alignment





# ID-6

## Ashton to Tetonias Rail Trail Renovations

**Project Status:** Undefined / unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 29.6 Miles

### Project Description:

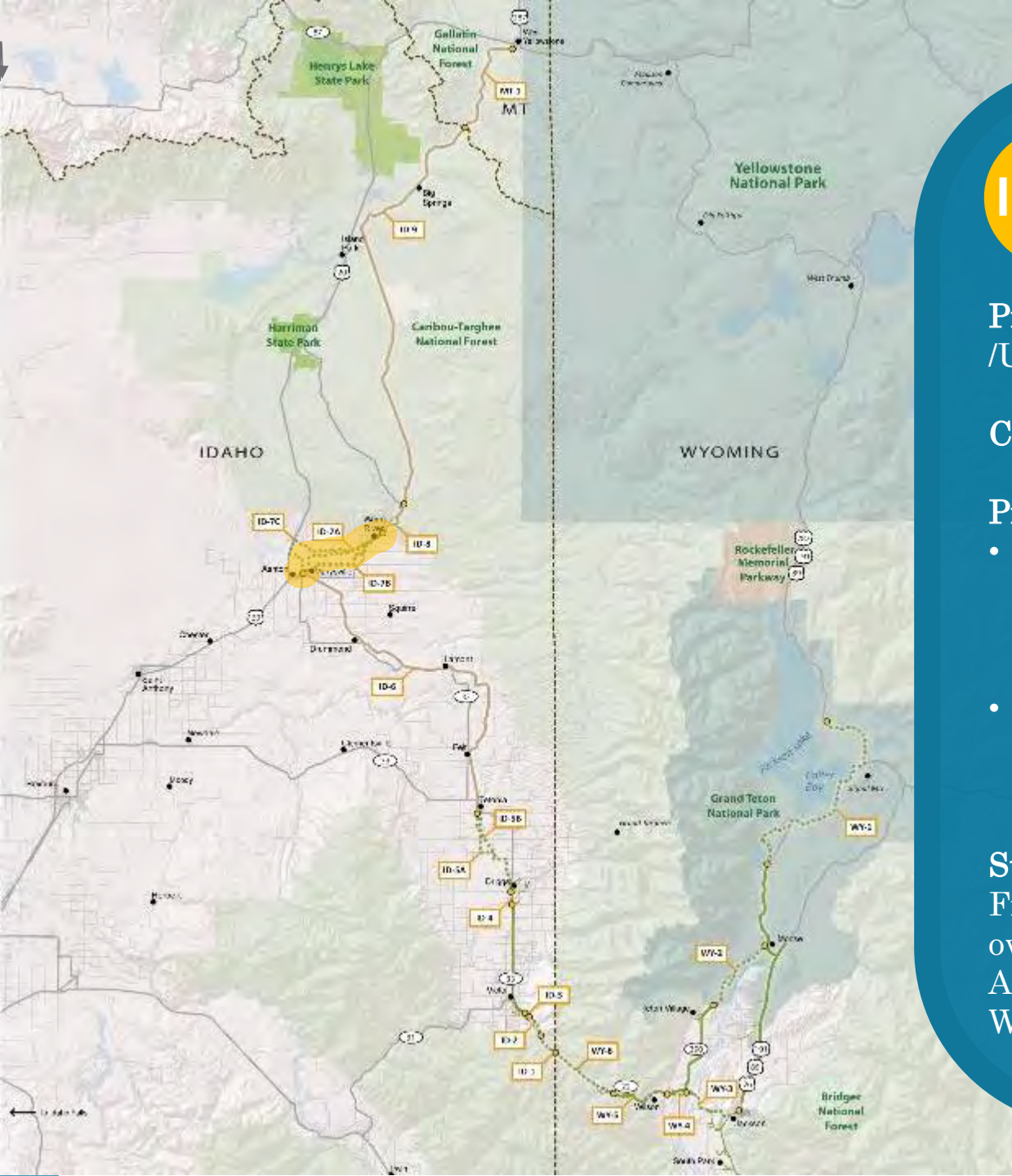
- Grade the trail to provide a more consistent surface.
- Evaluate potential trail paving and selective trail widening projects.
- Implement branding and wayfinding signage along the corridor.

**Stakeholders:** City of Tetonias, City of Ashton, Fremont County Idaho, Harriman State Parks, TVTAP, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance

**ID-6**

## Ashton to Teton Rail Trail Renovations





**ID-7A**

## Ashton to Warm River Campground- Rail Trail Alignment

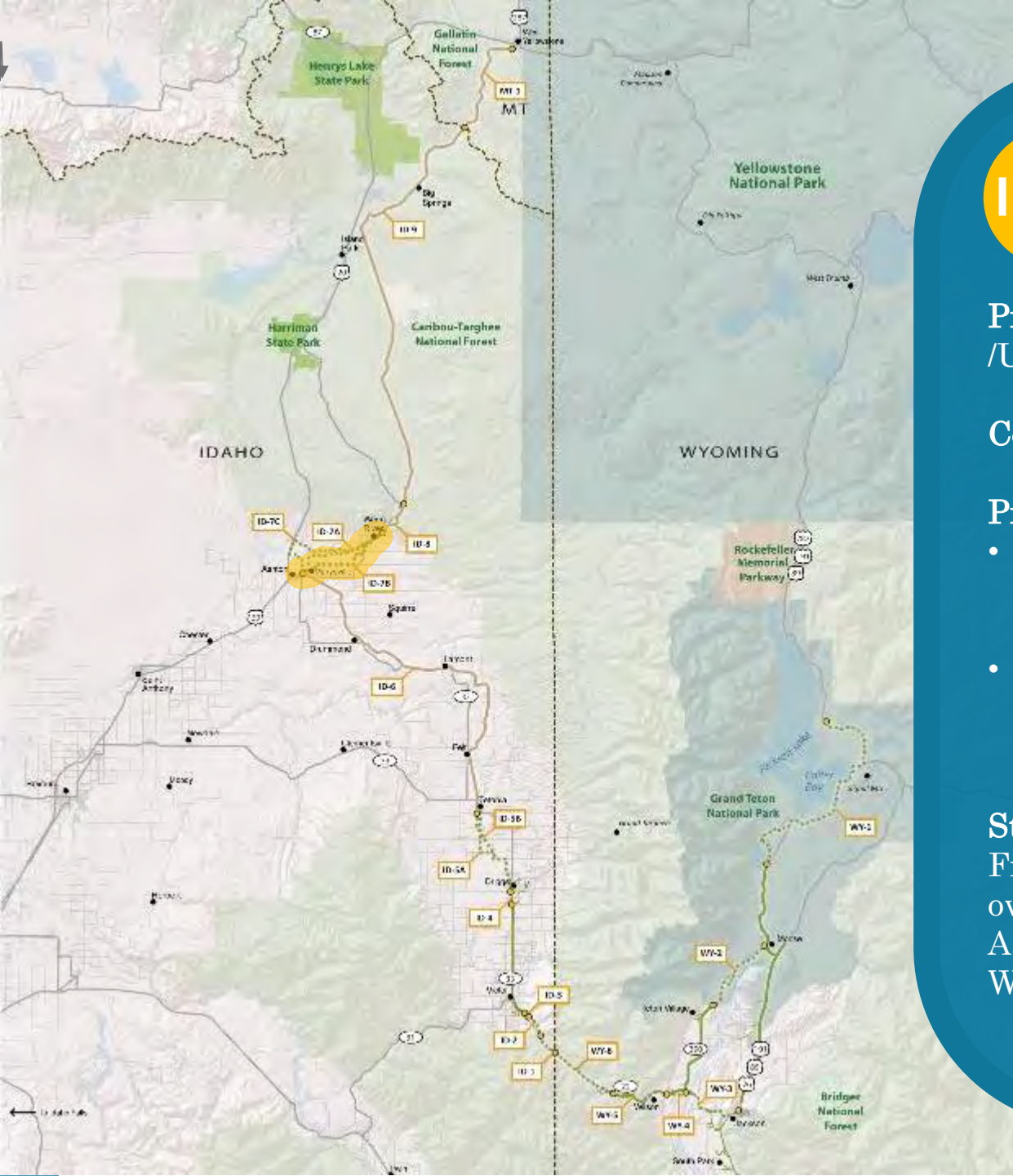
**Project Status:** Undefined  
/Unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 8.0 Miles

### Project Description:

- Connect Ashton to Warm River via the historic railroad grade. Potential acquisition or easements may be necessary.
- Implement branding and wayfinding signage along the route.

**Stakeholders:** City of Ashton, Fremont County, private property owners, Ashton Ranger District, Ashton Cycling Committee, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance



**ID-7B**

## Ashton to Warm River Campground- County Rds. / SR 47

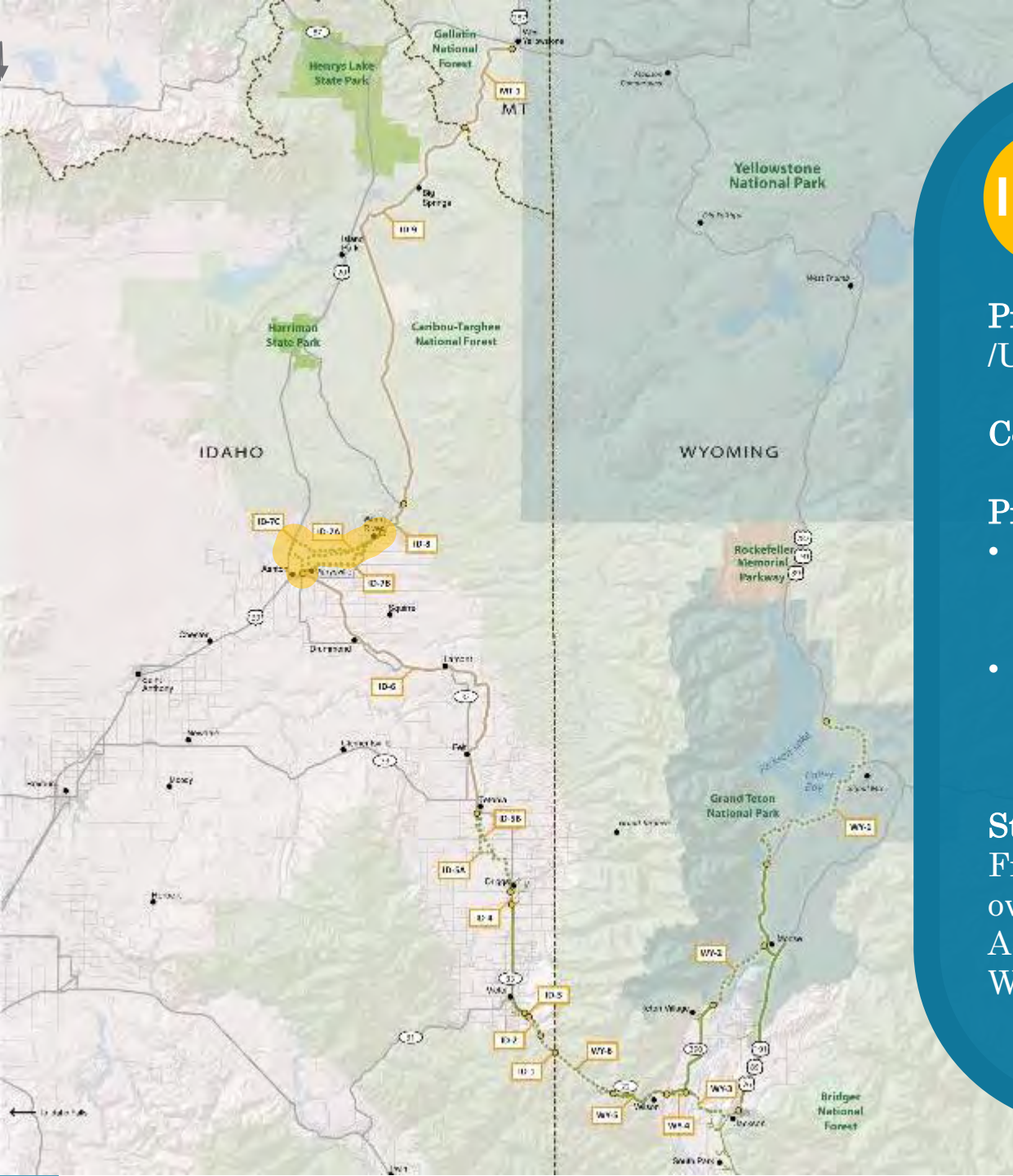
**Project Status:** Undefined  
/Unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 8.7 Miles

### Project Description:

- Connect Ashton to Warm River via low-volume county roads and SR 47.
- Implement branding and wayfinding signage along the route.

**Stakeholders:** City of Ashton, Fremont County, private property owners, Ashton Ranger District, Ashton Cycling Committee, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance



**ID-7C**

## Ashton to Warm River Campground- US 20 / Fisherman Dr.

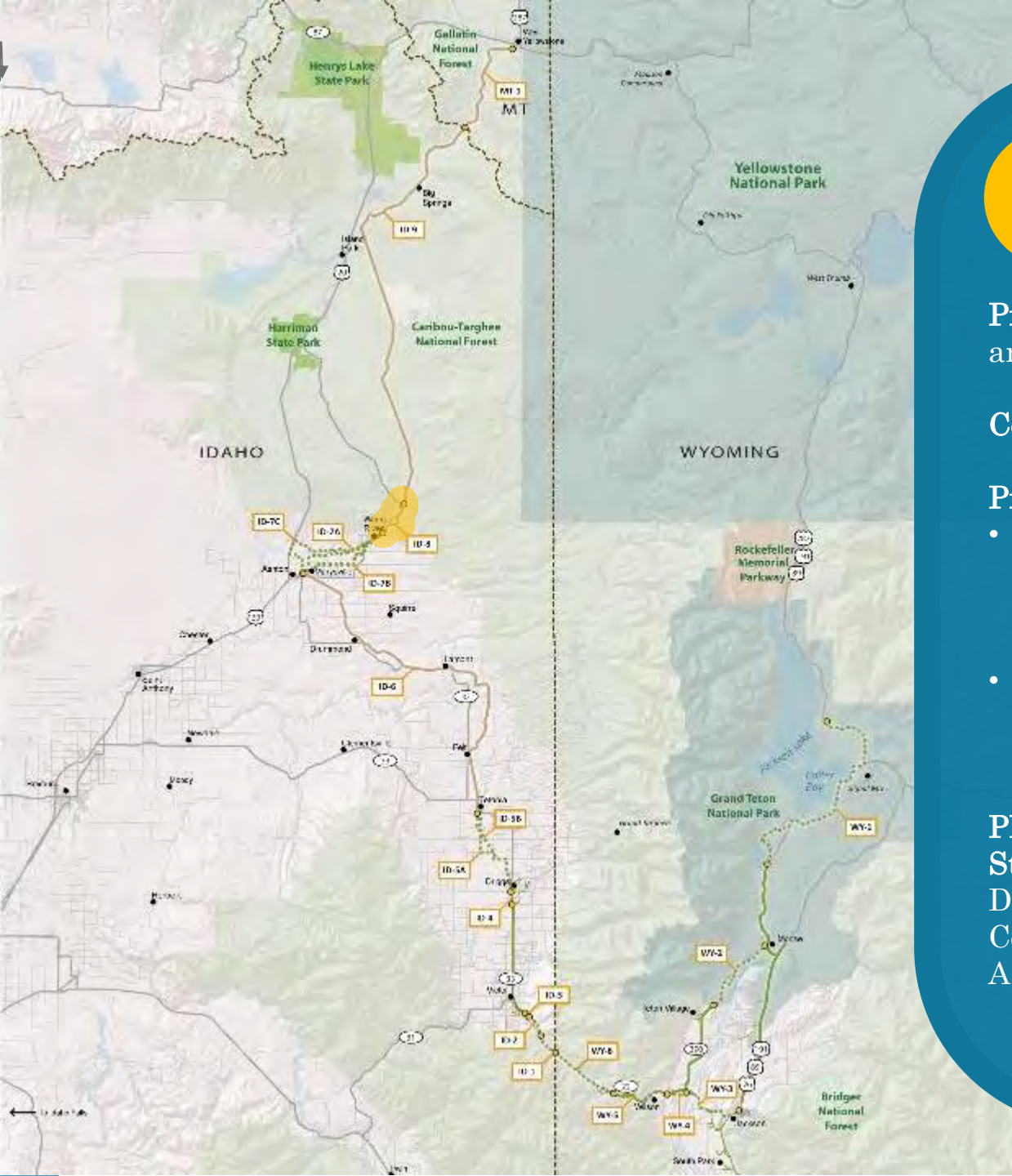
**Project Status:** Undefined  
/Unfunded

**Corridor Length:** 11.7 Miles

### Project Description:

- Connect Ashton to Warm River via US 20 and Fisherman Dr. along the Warm River.
- Implement branding and wayfinding signage along the route.

**Stakeholders:** City of Ashton, Fremont County, private property owners, Ashton Ranger District, Ashton Cycling Committee, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance



## ID-8 Warm River Campground to Bear Gulch

**Project Status:** Existing / Renovation and reconstruction

**Corridor Length:** 3.0 Miles

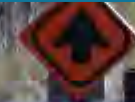
### Project Description:

- Utilize the existing non-motorized portion of the railroad grade north from Warm River campground to the Bear Gulch Trailhead.
- Implement branding and wayfinding signage along the route.

### Planning Level Cost Estimate:

**Stakeholders:** CTNF Ashton Ranger District, Idaho State Parks, Fremont County, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance, Ashton Cycling Committee

**ID-8** Warm River Campground  
To Bear Gulch



**BEAR GULCH  
MESA FALLS  
ISLAND PARK**



# ID-9

## Bear Gulch Trailhead to Montana State Line

**Project Status:** Existing gravel trail /  
Renovation or Reconstruction

**Corridor Length:** 35.2 Miles

- Project Description:**
- Redevelop the historic railroad grade into dual or shared facilities for OHV and non-motorized users.
  - Implement branding and wayfinding signage along the route.

**Stakeholders:** Ashton Ranger District, Fremont County, Harriman State Park, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance, OHV interests, City of Island Park

**ID-9A**

# Bear Gulch Trailhead To Montana State Line Dual Facility Option



**ID-9B**

# Bear Gulch Trailhead To Montana State Line Shared Facility Option





**ID-9** Bear Gulch Trailhead  
To Montana State Line

**ID-9**

**Bear Gulch Trailhead  
To Montana State Line**





**MT-1**

## State Line to West Yellowstone

**Project Status:** Abandoned old Rail line / Reconstruction and reuse

**Corridor Length:** 8.3 Miles

### Project Description:

- Utilize the historic railroad grade to connect to West Yellowstone.
- Install five bridges along the corridor that have been removed.
- Address environmental concerns in the area.

**Stakeholders:** CGNF Hebgen Lake Ranger District, City of West Yellowstone, West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce, Bike Walk Montana, Free Heel and Wheel, local supporters.



MT-1

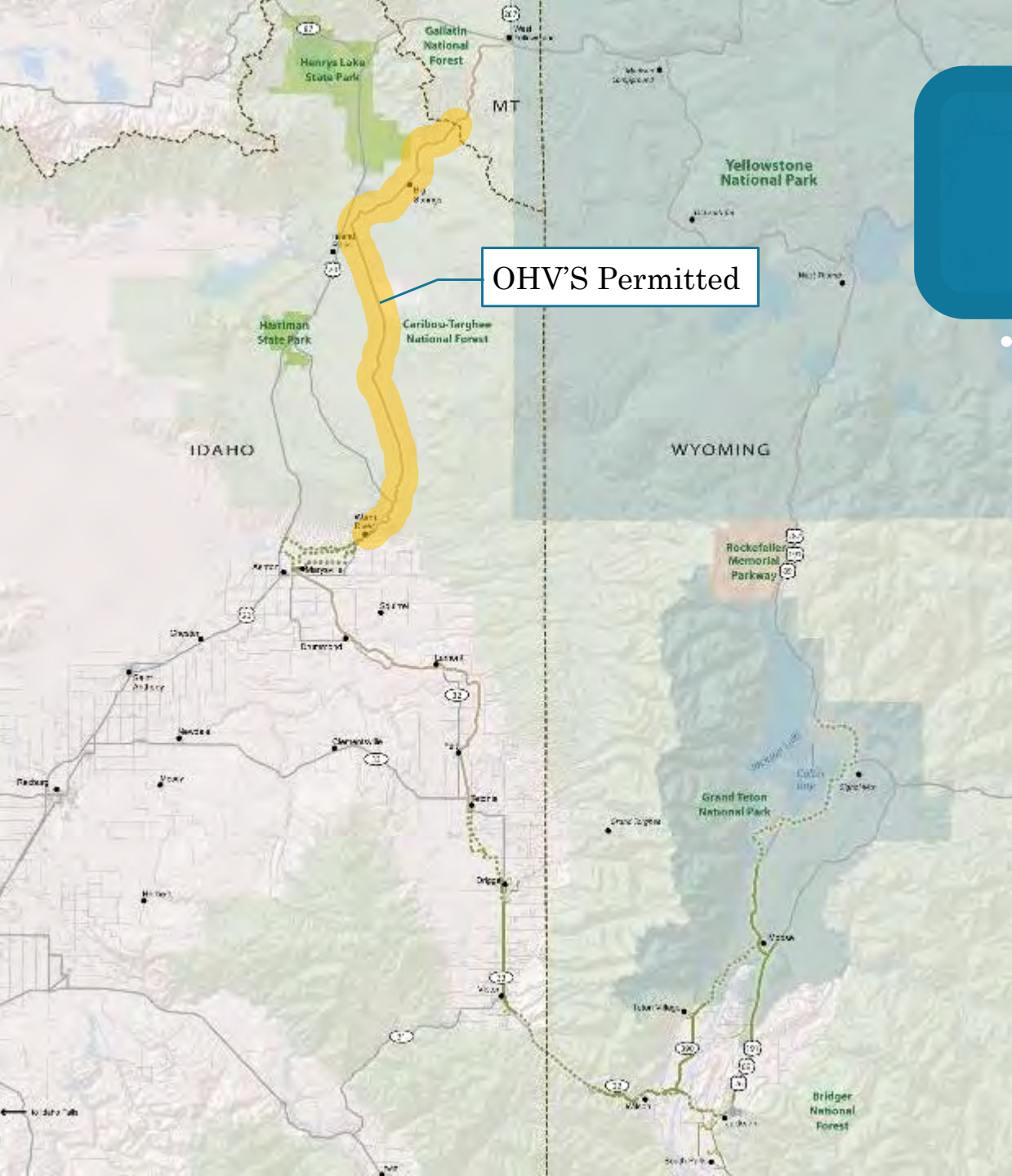
State Line to  
West Yellowstone

## Existing OHV Use

- OHV's (under 50") are permitted along major portions of the railroad grade through the Caribou-Targhee National Forest
- No intentions of restricting access to motorized users along the corridor



# Existing OHV Access



## Regional / National Trail Connections

- Nez Perce National Historic Trail (1,170 miles)
- Continental Divide Trail (3,100 miles)
- Great Western Trail (4,455 Miles)



# Trail Paving Options



## Advantages:

- Low Cost
- Pervious / more environmentally-friendly than asphalt
- Natural feel
- Preferred by OHV's
- Simple maintenance (grading, weed control, etc...)

## Disadvantages:

- Not as accessible to all users
- Users can cover less distance
- Prone to rutting and erosion
- More frequent maintenance needs



## Advantages:

- Accessible to all users
- Allows trail users to cover more distance
- Brings a sense of civilization to remote areas
- Less frequent maintenance needed
- Could be plowed to extend the season

## Disadvantages:

- High costs
- More complex maintenance (seal coating, crack filling, etc...)

## Maintenance & Management Concerns

- Typical paved pathway maintenance costs of \$1500-\$7000/mile = \$200k to \$1M /year for the complete trail system
- Typical unpaved pathway maintenance costs of \$500-3000/mile = \$70k - \$400k/year for the complete trail system



## Maintenance & Management Concerns

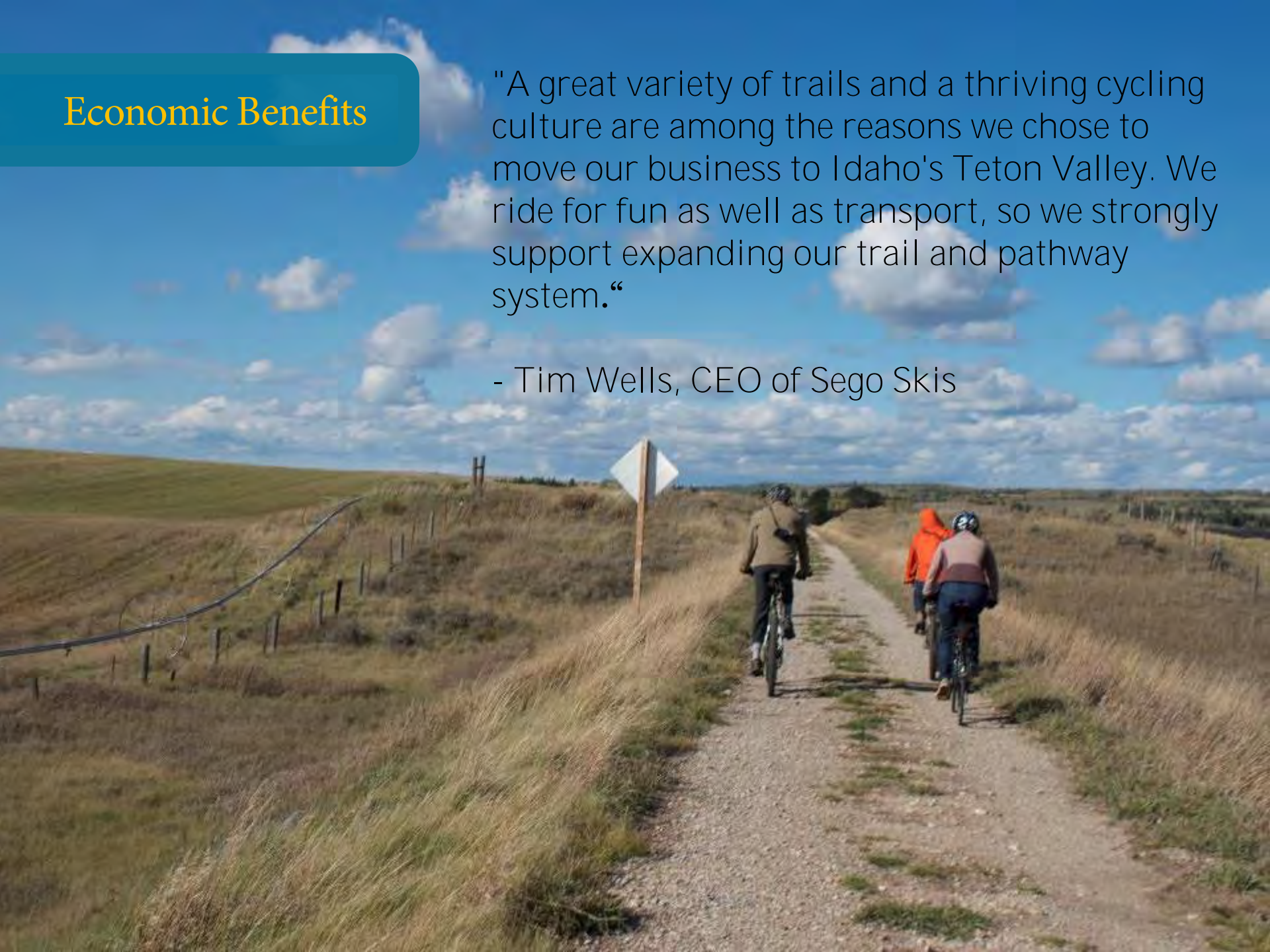
- Develop creative strategies for long-term maintenance
- Concessionaires
- Public / private partnerships
- Need all stakeholders working together: Advocates, Cities, Counties, State Parks, NPS, USFS



## Economic Benefits

"A great variety of trails and a thriving cycling culture are among the reasons we chose to move our business to Idaho's Teton Valley. We ride for fun as well as transport, so we strongly support expanding our trail and pathway system."

- Tim Wells, CEO of Segoe Skis



Potential for multi-day bike tourism in Montana to bring in \$377 million

## Economic Benefits

- Touring cyclists in Montana spend on average \$75.75/person/day and stay 8 nights or more in the state on average.
- Average tourist spends \$58/day

*Analysis Of Touring Cyclists: Impacts, Needs, And Opportunities For Montana, Institute For Tourism And Recreation Research, Univ. Of Mt*

- By contrast, OHV-related spending for Montana residents was calculated at \$37/per person/day

*Montana Recreational Off-Highway Vehicles: Fuel-Use and Spending Patterns 2013, Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of Montana*



## Economic Benefits

- Touring cyclists reported other activities participated in during their Montana multi-day cycling trip included visiting **historical sites (40%)**, visiting Lewis & Clark sites (38%), **wildlife watching (37%)**, **day hiking (33%)**, and **experiencing local breweries (29%)**.



*From Collection of Great Pacific Railroad Museum*

### Tunnel Near Warm River

The first passenger train on this line left Ashton, Idaho for West Yellowstone, Montana in June of 1908. It was delayed for a day due to a slide near this point.

This 557 foot tunnel was constructed in 1915 to avoid the frequent rock slides from the cliffs above the original tracks.



BNA Eagle Scout Project

## Route of the Hiawatha Trail Case Study

- The Route of the Hiawatha is operated in the Idaho Panhandle National Forest by a concessionaire under a U.S. Forest Service Special-Use Permit.
- 15 mile trail
- Concessionaire also offers bike rentals and bike shuttles



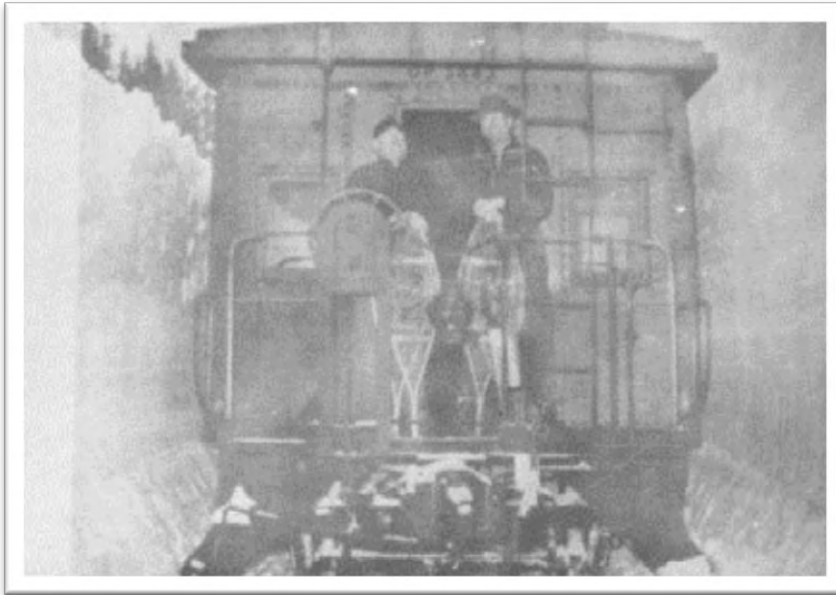


## Route of the Hiawatha

- Family Friendly Attraction
- Nationwide Draw
- Appropriate for all ages and abilities
- (2% max grade)
- 37,500 paying annual visitors  
~300/day avg

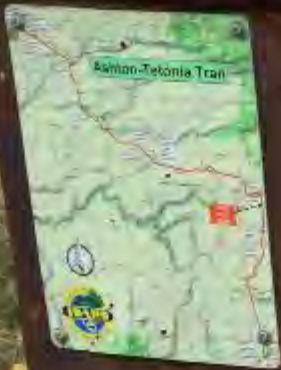
## Historic Resources

- Historic railroad grades and trestles for the Oregon Shortline, Union Pacific and Yellowstone Branch railroads
- Nez Perce National Historic Trail
- Historic agricultural structures





Historic agricultural  
structures



## Bitch Creek, Bridges and Beyond

Welcome to the Bitch Creek bridge along the old grade of the Oregon Shortline Railroad built in 1923. The bridge crosses the grade 735 feet above the creek. Transverse blocking and curbside were added in 2009 by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR). Take note that the creek separates Teton and Fremont Counties.

Stop at Bitch Creek and imagine the early bridge builders. An article in an Oregonian from 1923 says that the bridge was built by the State Road, but it is not clear how the State Road was built in the vicinity. When all things are considered, it is likely that the bridge was built by the State Road, but it is not clear how the State Road was built in the vicinity. When all things are considered, it is likely that the bridge was built by the State Road, but it is not clear how the State Road was built in the vicinity.



Ashton-Tetonia Trail, a scenic route that crosses the bridge, is a popular destination for hikers and cyclists. The trail is well-maintained and offers stunning views of the surrounding landscape. The bridge is a historic landmark and is a must-see for anyone visiting the area.



**Civil Engineer George H. Parsons**  
 Parsons was a prominent American engineer and architect. He was born in 1859 and died in 1926. He was a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the American Institute of Architects. He was also a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He was a pioneer in the field of structural engineering and was instrumental in the development of the steel truss bridge.



History / Interpretation

# GALLATIN National Fo



## Deep Snow

With deep snow, the trail was often impassable and the pack animals were often left to starve.

## Map

Map of the trail route from the river to the mountain.

Map of the trail route from the river to the mountain.

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Map of the trail route from the river to the mountain.



History / Interpretation

## Next Steps

- Complete the vision for the Greater Yellowstone – Teton Trail
- Promote and bring awareness to the trail concept through events and races
- Educate local residents and businesses about the potential economic impacts of the trail concept
- Identify and pursue potential funding sources

