

Link 8 would cross canals or ditches six times. This route would cross the Pipestone Ditch and two unnamed canals within 4.2 miles after the Interstate 90 crossing; the Larson-Narangich Ditch and Cocanougher Ditch next to the Big Hole River crossing; and one unnamed canal 11.7 miles south of the river crossing.

Link 8 would cross 1.0 miles of wetlands (0.0 NWI, 1.0 interpreted). These interpreted wetlands are associated with the Big Pipestone Creek, Little Pipestone Creek, Fish Creek, Cherry Creek, and the Big Hole River. These four creeks are located between mile 1.0 and mile 14.8 after the line crosses Interstate 90.

Link 8 would cross no FEMA designated flood zones.

3.3.4 SUBSTATIONS

3.3.4.1 New Townsend Substation

The new 500kV Townsend Substation would be located in southwestern Montana, five miles south of Townsend, Montana, east of State Highway 287 in Broadwater County. More specifically, the new Townsend substation would be located approximately 3,000 feet west of Flynn Lane and 1,500 feet north of Dry Creek Road. The current land use of the site is center-pivot irrigation. There are agricultural outbuildings and a residence, located approximately 1,030 feet south of the substation site. Access to the site would be from Dry Creek Road, and the substation would require additional access road construction. The total size would be approximately 80 acres and possibly as much as 100 acres.

The proposed site is located on the east side of the Missouri River, which is approximately 2,125 feet or 0.4 miles away. State Highway 287 runs between the proposed substation and the Missouri River and it is approximately 1,000 feet or 0.19 miles from the substation, blocking surface flow between the site and the river. The proposed site is outside the areas identified as containing potential wetlands *and outside the Missouri River floodplain*.

3.3.4.2 Mill Creek Substation Additions

The existing Mill Creek Substation site is located in an arid landscape. There are partially hydric soils and a small drainage system west of the site; otherwise there are no major water resources, *including wetlands and floodplains*, associated with this site.

3.3.5 COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

As discussed in Section 2.3.2.1, preliminary locations for microwave facilities along the Preferred Route (Alternatives A1 and B1) have been identified (see Figure 2-4). The microwave site locations in Montana include Mill Creek, Fleecer, Beef Trail, East Ridge, Cardwell Hill, Townsend Substation, and Mauer Mountain. All seven microwave site locations in the state are either existing or designated communication sites.

publicly owned lands as a result of MFWP actions, such as through the block management program and conservation easements. A block management area is either a privately or publicly owned land area that is managed by the MFWP, private landowners, or public land management agencies to provide free public hunting access.

Special Management Area Designations

These designations are intended to enhance or protect specific qualities over time, and to feature recreation opportunities, ecosystem protection, or historic preservation. *The provisions of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131-1136) state that buffer areas are not permitted.*

Wilderness Area

No wilderness areas are located in the study area. The closest wilderness area (Anaconda Pintler Wilderness) is located approximately seventeen miles to the west of the study area. Created by an act of Congress in 1964, the Anaconda Pintler Wilderness Area straddles the Continental Divide in the Anaconda mountain range and is managed by the BDNF. The Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Wilderness is also located approximately eighteen miles to the east of the study area. The Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Wilderness is managed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

Recommended Wilderness

Two areas (Italian Peak and Garfield Mountain) have been recommended for wilderness designation within the study area. Both of these areas are located in the BDNF. These areas provide semi-primitive non-motorized settings and offer opportunities for foot, stock, ski, and snowshoe travel; dispersed camping; and other activities.

National Historic Trail

The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (LCNHT) was identified in the study area. The LCNHT and its related sites are managed according to the 1979 LCNHT Comprehensive Plan. The LCNHT has begun the process to update and revise its Comprehensive Management Plan.

National Scenic Trail

The CDNST was identified in the study area. The CDNST is managed according to the National Trails Act and CDNST Comprehensive Plan. Recreational activities associated with the CDNST include hiking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, and photography.

National Wild and Scenic River

There are currently no Wild and Scenic Rivers or congressionally designated study rivers within the study area. Under Preferred Alternative B of the Butte BLM Field Office RMP revision, Muskrat Creek (2.6 miles) has been recommended as suitable for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic River System. The creek contains outstanding remarkable values of recreational and scenic with a tentative classification of scenic. A segment of Deadman Creek within the study area has been classified by the BDNF as an eligible Wild and Scenic River. The stream contains outstandingly remarkable recreation, wildlife, and historic values.