

Based on historical data on the regions employment and population, the ratio of population to employment has declined over the past 40 years, largely due to increasing labor force participation rates. Since 2001 the ratio has been approximately 1.5 (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis 2008). Operational employment may also indirectly cause some of these indirect population increases. However, the level of employment and expenditures for operations would be so minimal that population increases would be extremely minimal (no more than a handful of persons), if they occur at all.

HOUSING

Workers on the MSTI project who relocate to the study area are most likely to choose transient accommodations such as hotel/motel rooms or RV parks, rather than to rent or buy homes. This might be regarded as a cost in the sense that they might overload available space or displace customary users of motels and RV parks nearest the project work sites.

Non-local workers are expected to move to hotels, motels, and RV parks that are nearest available to their project work locations; a small proportion, whose work extends past a few months, are likely to seek rental housing.

For work locations within a reasonable commuting distance of Butte, substantial hotel/motel space is available. Very limited space may be available in other locations.

After completion of construction, personnel requirements would be negligible, and would place no extra burden on the housing market.

FISCAL CONDITIONS

Impacts on local fiscal conditions would take the form of increased property tax payments to taxing jurisdictions in which project facilities are located. The amount of these payments depends on the extent to which project facilities are located *within each taxing jurisdiction*, and the *mil levy* rate at which each jurisdiction taxes improvements to that land. *In Montana, mil levy rates are assessed for various county and state assessments within each school district by county.*

PROPERTY VALUE

Proposed transmission line projects often raise concerns about their potential effects on property values. In general, there are two types of property value impacts that may be experienced by property owners affected by a new transmission line. The first is a potential economic impact associated with the amount paid by a utility for a right-of-way easement. The second is the potential economic impact involving the future marketability of the property. Although somewhat interrelated, these two effects are discussed below.

Just compensation for a transmission line easement has been typically interpreted as the difference between the fair market price of the land with and without the encumbrance of the line. Economic impacts to landowners may occur if they are not compensated for the “highest and best use” of the affected parcel or if the effective “taking” is larger than the actual easement.