

# **Sand Creek bypass: The 100 year mistake**

May 11, 2004

I am very glad to see that the community has taken notice of the Sand Creek bypass.

Regardless of what you think about the proposed Sand Creek bypass and what it will do to our community and its connection to the water, the project is a short-sighted plan that this community should not allow.

If you look at the facts of this proposed route, along with the long range growth patterns that, this area will inevitably have you will see that this is a flawed design. This proposed route will only cause more problems with bottle necks and disconnected traffic patterns. The Idaho Transportation Department does not have the local community's best interest in mind and if they did they would not be forcing a flawed design in a location that will have a negative impact on our economy, quality of life, and community identity.

Please take a look at a map of our area and you will see that Sagle, Sandpoint, Dover, Ponderay, and Kootenai will soon be one city. What these communities need are two types of transportation systems to solve their traffic problems. One is a transportation/road system that connects the communities with an efficient road system for local traffic and commerce. The second type of transportation system that is needed is a true bypass. A true bypass system would funnel traffic not destined for our communities away from our local traffic patterns. The bypass is not just necessary for the north-south direction but also east and west. The traffic that is coming from four directions and is not destined for our communities needs to be diverted before it reaches our local arterials. ITD should be responsible for solving the state highway problem, a real bypass!

The local communities should be responsible for solving their local traffic problems together. The two problems cannot be solved with the same solution. The Sand Creek bypass does not help the local community's local traffic problems and will not help solve ITDs highway problem.

The Sand Creek bypass is a big mistake!

There are so many better solutions to our traffic problems. I plan to join NICAN (263-5281) and give more power to my voice; I encourage others to come to the Open House at the City Forum on Wed. May 12 and get involved.

I would like to see better leadership from our elected officials (county and city) to form a coalition to solve the traffic problems. Unfortunately most elected officials only look to their elected term (2-4 years) instead of what is good for 10-20-50-100 years in the future. True leadership is having the vision and strength of commitment and communication to plan for what is best for a community's future. In this upcoming election season, I encourage the voting public to ask their elected officials to:

1. Commit to Sandcreek Bypass or an Alternative
2. Commitment to work on local traffic problems separate from Highway problems as two issues with other elected officials (county-city, city-city).

I for one will be making this part of my decision process for my vote (along with where they stand on the Rock Creek Mine).

The bypass/ traffic issues that this area is facing are some of the most important since its incorporation, and the decisions we reach will effect the community for the next 100 years. We need to have the leadership and vision to make decisions that will not only solve problems now but will work with future growth. To the reader and public your consideration to this subject is greatly appreciated.

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Bonner County