Appendix C – Air Quality

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established National Air Quality Standards for criteria air pollutants. The proposed project is located in an area that is currently in attainment for ozone (O3), sulfur dioxide (SO2), and nitrogen dioxide (NO2). Approximately 0.5 mile of the western end of Bigelow Gulch Road and 0.2 mile of the eastern end of the project area are within the maintenance area for CO. Due to maintenance area designation, those project segments are subject to transportation conformity requirements. The maintenance area boundaries within the project vicinity are shown in EA.

A review of the updated traffic forecasts and the existing conditions indicates that CO conditions resulting from the implementation of the proposed project would not substantially differ from those modeled in the EA. Traffic volumes for the 2040 design year within the CO maintenance area would decrease below the traffic volumes modeled in the EA for design year 2025. Therefore projected air quality within the CO maintenance areas will be better than what was modeled in the 2007 EA. Furthermore, EPA’s air quality regulations state that intersections which would operate at LOS C or better do not require modeling because they are not anticipated to cause a violation of CO standards. The intersections in the proposed project area are anticipated to function at a LOS C or better per recent traffic modeling by the Spokane Regional Transportation Council.

A qualitative analysis of air quality impacts originally performed in the EA indicates that CO concentrations from the project would remain below the NAAQS limits and EPA’s MSAT regulations and nationwide programs would reduce future air toxics impacts. Therefore, no mitigation measures would be necessary for operation of the proposed project.

As a component of the EA, the Spokane Regional Transit Council (SRTC) confirmed that regional emissions generated by the proposed project are included in the regional emission budget in the Transportation Improvement Plan and that the proposed project would conform to the State Implementation Plan at the regional level. Therefore, no additional air quality analysis modeling was performed as part of this EA update.

Construction activities associated with the implementation of the proposed project would have the potential to cause short-term impacts to air quality primarily from the generation of fugitive dust and construction equipment exhaust. These short-term impacts would be mitigated with the implementation of BMPs. Spokane County would require the Contractor to implement BMPs as required under the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency’s regulations for fugitive dust. Spokane County would also require the Contractor to implement BMPs to minimize MSAT impacts during construction.