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## CONSTRUCTION BEGINS FEB. 18 ON BROADWAY ISLAND Improvements to include new bridge

Construction begins Monday on improvements to access to the City-owned conservation lands known as the West Broadway Island. The project includes a new pedestrian bridge to the island, improvements to the utility bridge at the south end of Burton Street, extension of a pedestrian trail between the two bridges and access improvements at the river's edge, including a small paved parking area and better access to the bridges and new trail. The bridges will span the irrigation ditch that separates the island from the riverbank.

The island conservation area and a small informal parking area off Burton Street will be closed to the public starting Monday. Construction is weather-dependent and could last through the end of May.

The cost of the project is \$500,000, funded by Tax Increment Funding through the Missoula Redevelopment Agency. In addition, Hellgate Valley Irrigation Company is contributing \$10,000 to the project to repair the south bank of the irrigation canal, making it more functional for irrigation and flood protection. The island is in Urban Renewal District II, located off the 1100 block of West Broadway behind Imagine Nation Brewery and Eagle Watch Estates apartments.

The project aims to protect and enhance the recreational value of the island. Its natural setting includes views, river sounds, birds and small wildlife. The trail is designed for access to the native

riparian habitat and its recreational enjoyment by visitors. The City of Missoula acquired the island in 2011. Conservation lands crews and a contract firm hired by MRA have removed the majority of non-native large shrubs and trees to restore the natural habitat. The improvements should also contribute to public safety.

“In the 1980s, the Missoula community decided that after a century of neglect and degradation, the Clark Fork River should be its greatest natural asset in the urban area, providing opportunities to enjoy nature while protecting the water quality of the river and our aquifer,” said Chris Behan, assistant director of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency. “Providing parks, trails and natural areas in the greater downtown area also attracts private investors who change the nearby deteriorating environment.”

The contractor for the project is Frontier West. Its staff members have distributed public notice of the construction throughout the neighborhood. The Missoula Redevelopment Agency is managing the project.

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