

Passenger Rail in Montana



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Montana Department of
Transportation

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Essex, Montana



Passenger Rail in Montana

- **Overview**
 - **Empire Builder**
 - **Southern Route**
 - **Rail Plan & MDT Amtrak Study**
 - **ARRA** (*American Recovery & Reinvestment Act*)

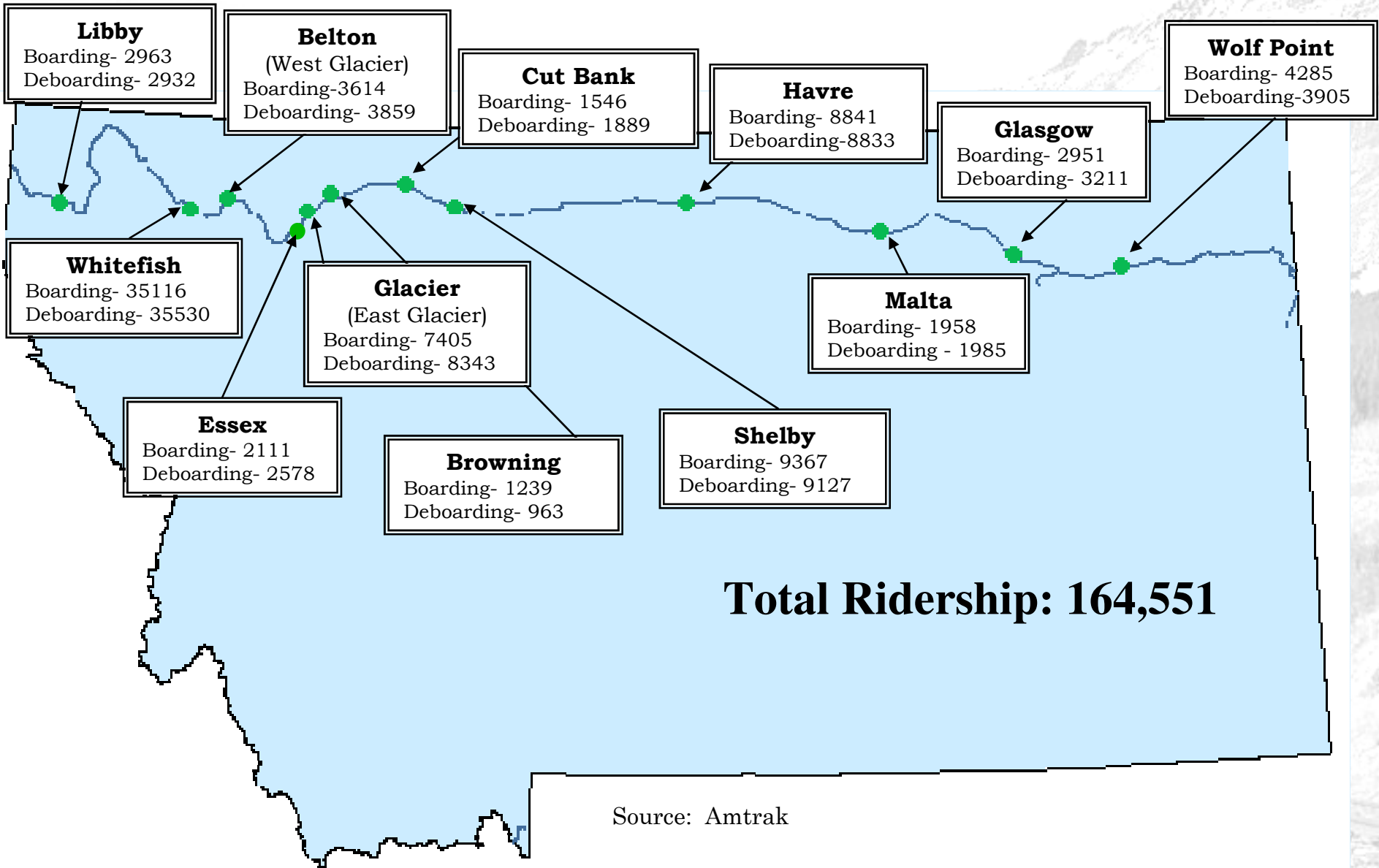


Empire Builder

- **Most Popular Overnight Train**
- **Alternative Transportation**
 - Very important to Hi-Line residents
 - Reduces wear and tear on highways
- **Service Preservation**



Empire Builder

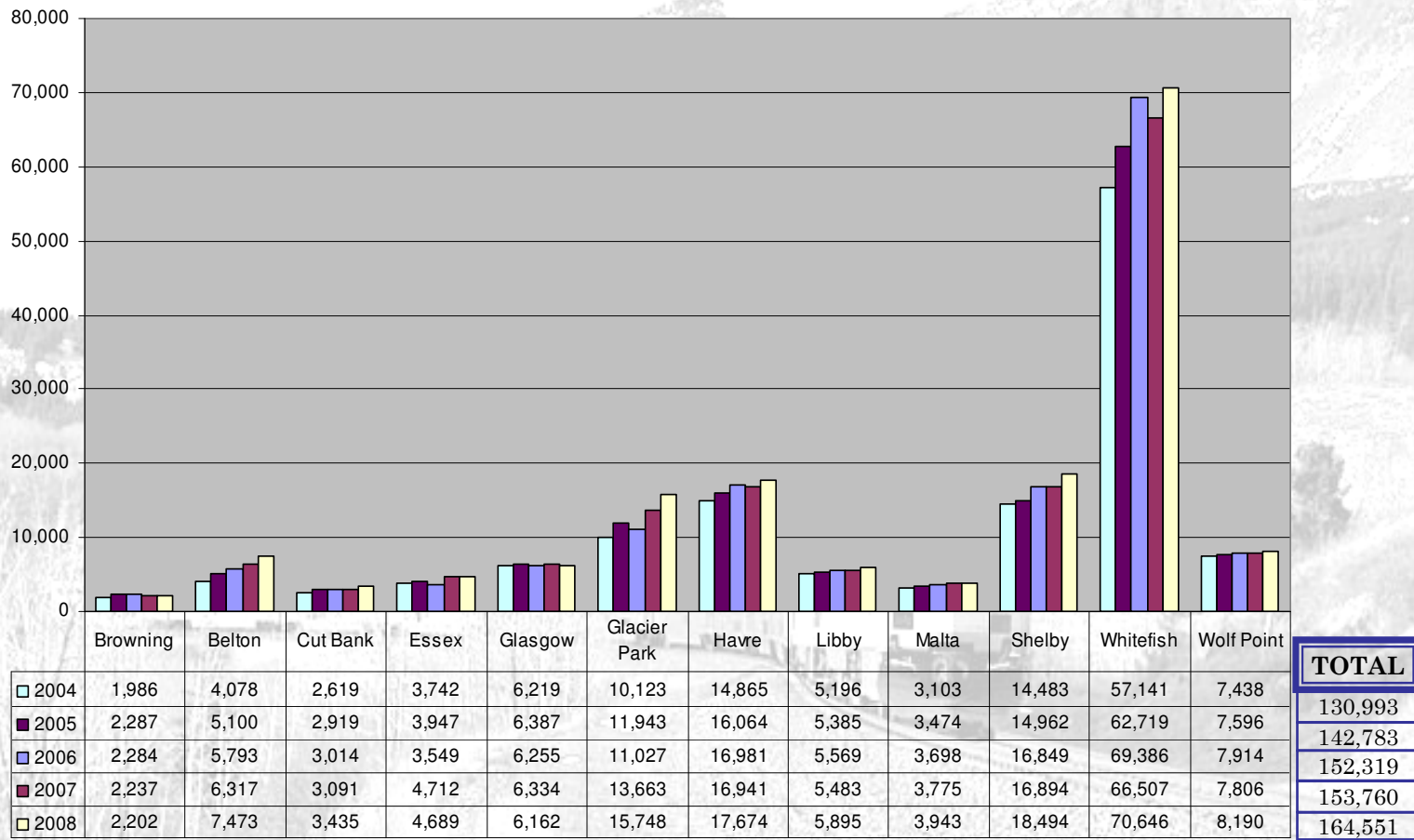


Source: Amtrak

Empire Builder

Station Totals

Calendar Years
2004 – 2008

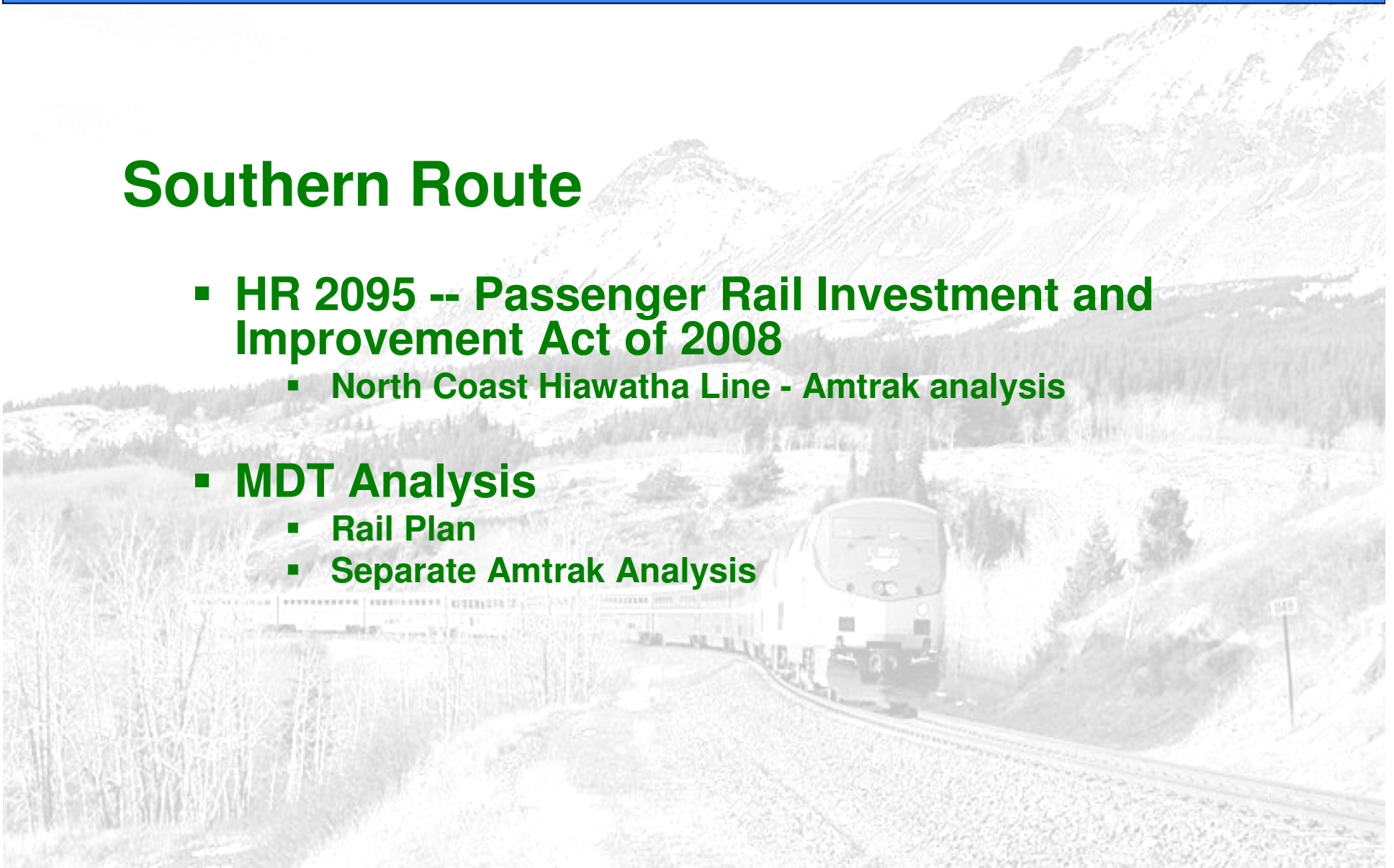


Source: Amtrak

Southern Route

Southern Route

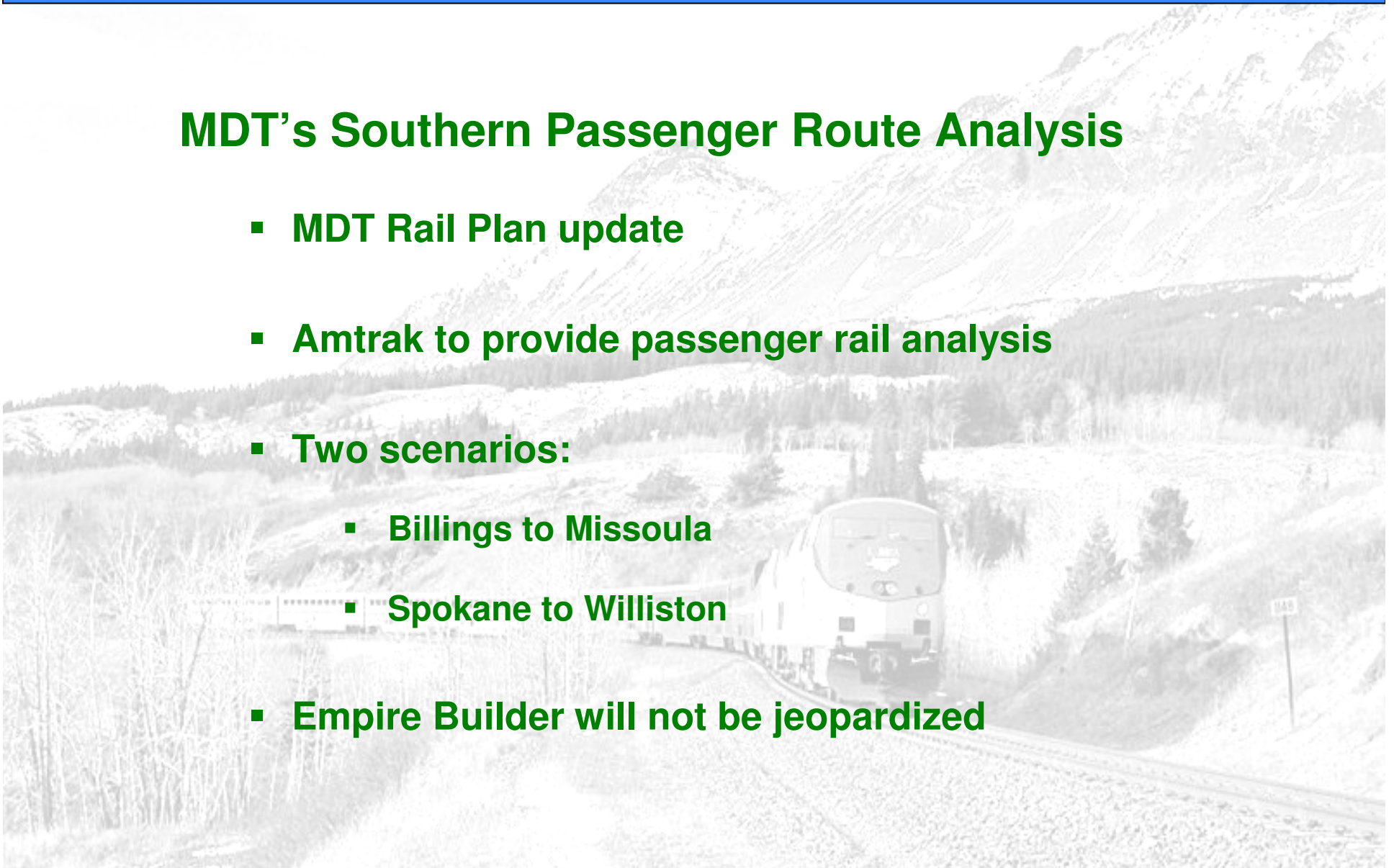
- **HR 2095 -- Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008**
 - North Coast Hiawatha Line - Amtrak analysis
- **MDT Analysis**
 - Rail Plan
 - Separate Amtrak Analysis



Southern Route

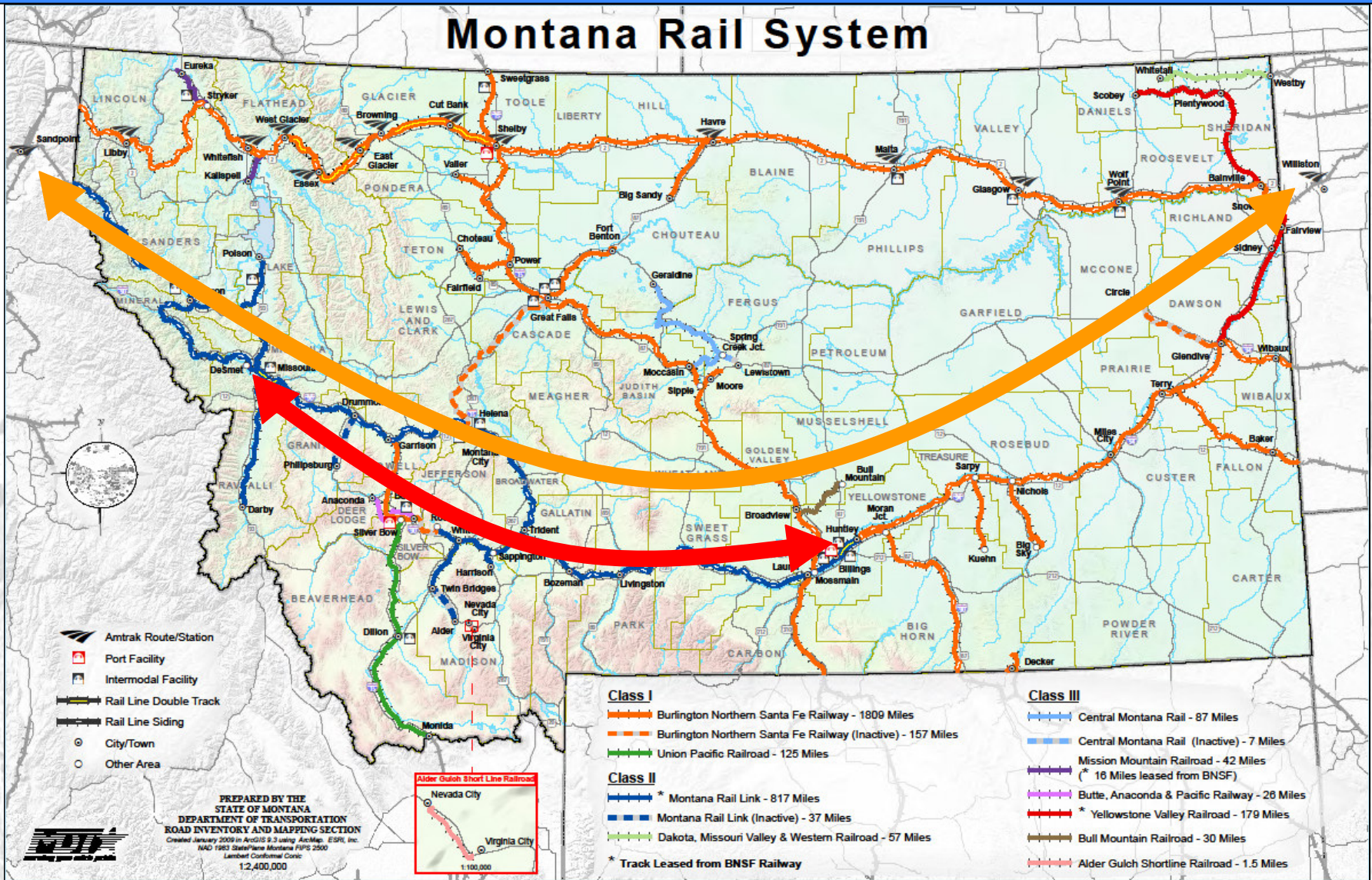
MDT's Southern Passenger Route Analysis

- MDT Rail Plan update
- Amtrak to provide passenger rail analysis
- Two scenarios:
 - Billings to Missoula
 - Spokane to Williston
- Empire Builder will not be jeopardized



Southern Route

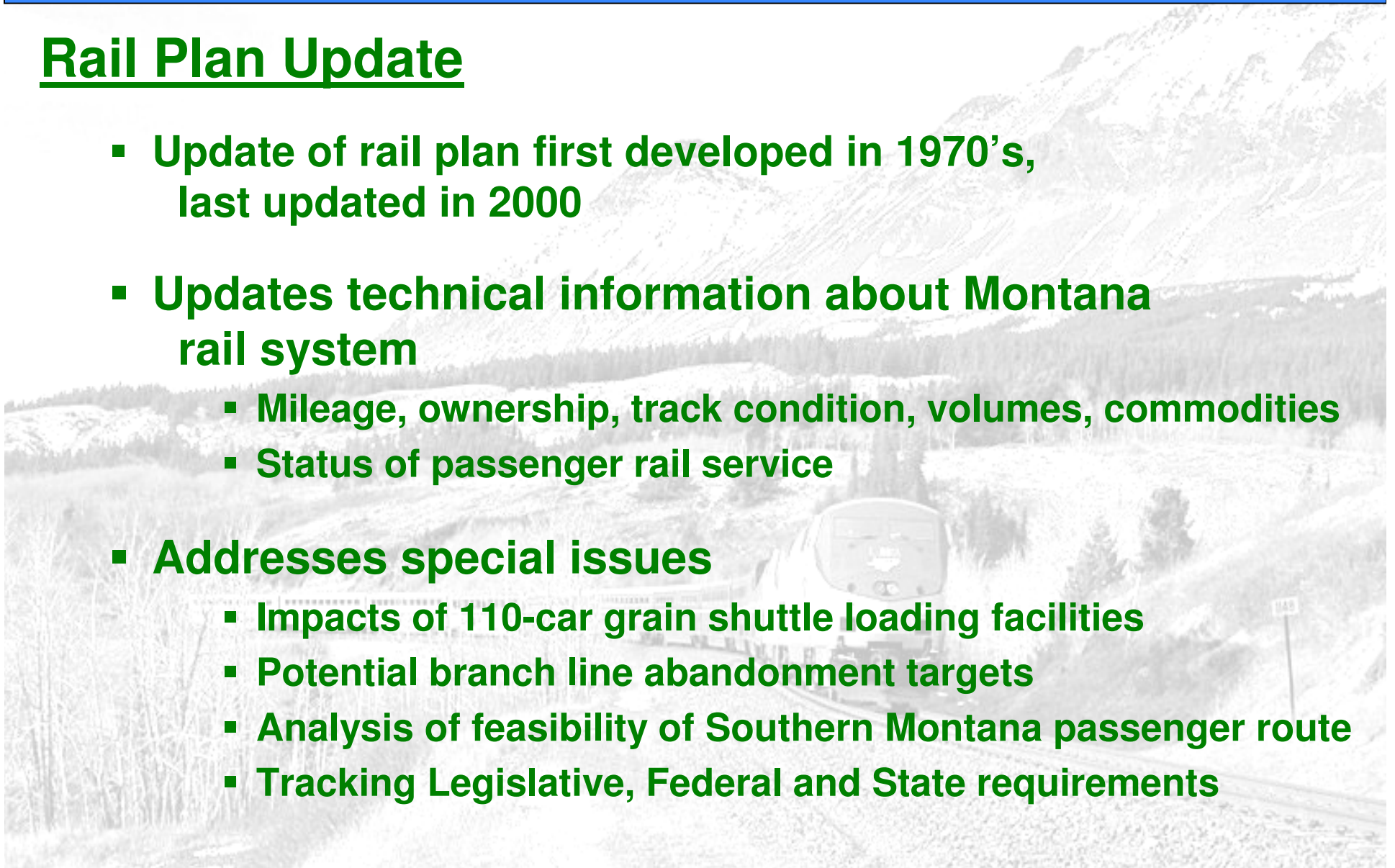
Montana Rail System



Rail Plan & MDT Amtrak Study

Rail Plan Update

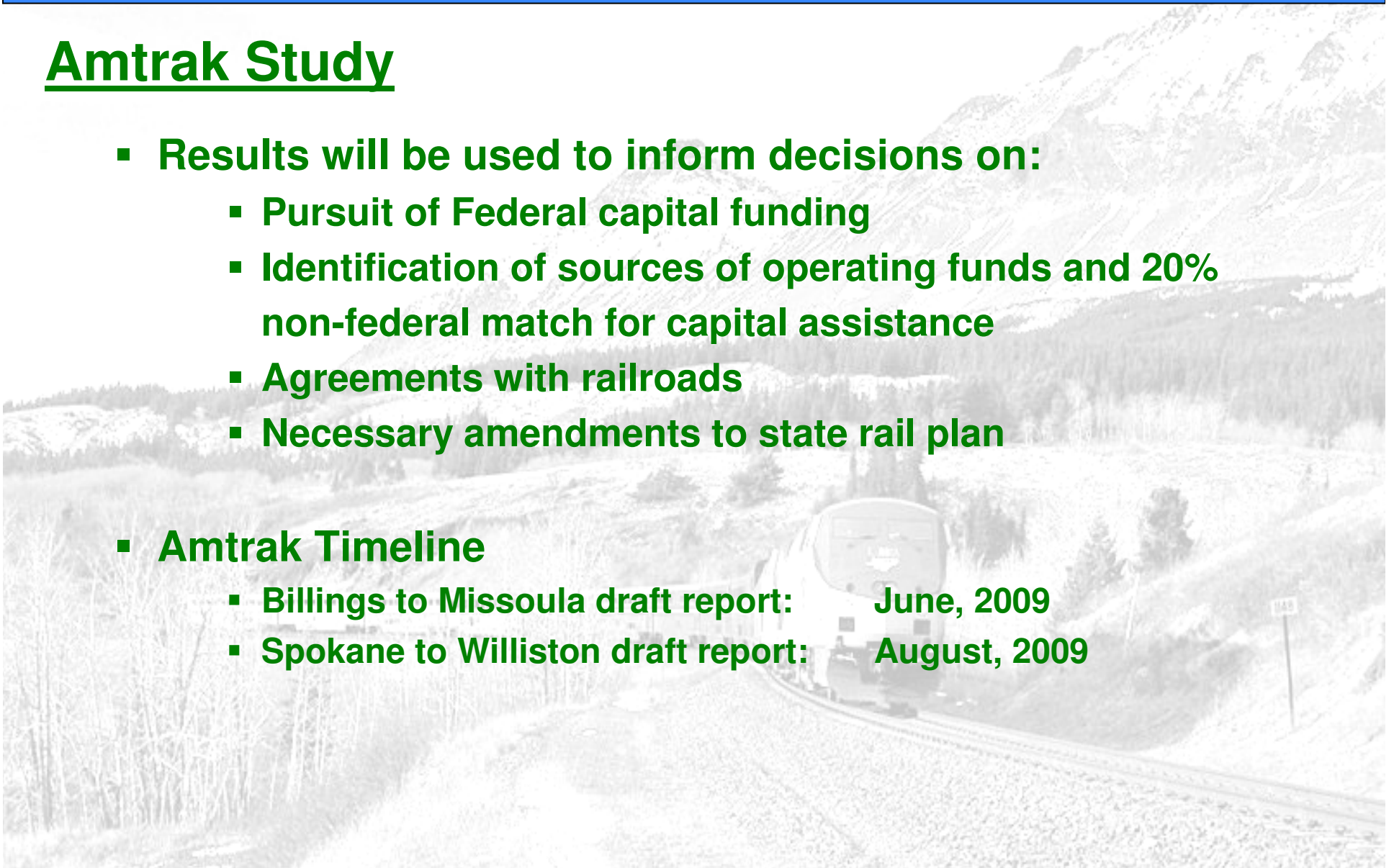
- Update of rail plan first developed in 1970's, last updated in 2000
- Updates technical information about Montana rail system
 - Mileage, ownership, track condition, volumes, commodities
 - Status of passenger rail service
- Addresses special issues
 - Impacts of 110-car grain shuttle loading facilities
 - Potential branch line abandonment targets
 - Analysis of feasibility of Southern Montana passenger route
 - Tracking Legislative, Federal and State requirements



Rail Plan & MDT Amtrak Study

Amtrak Study

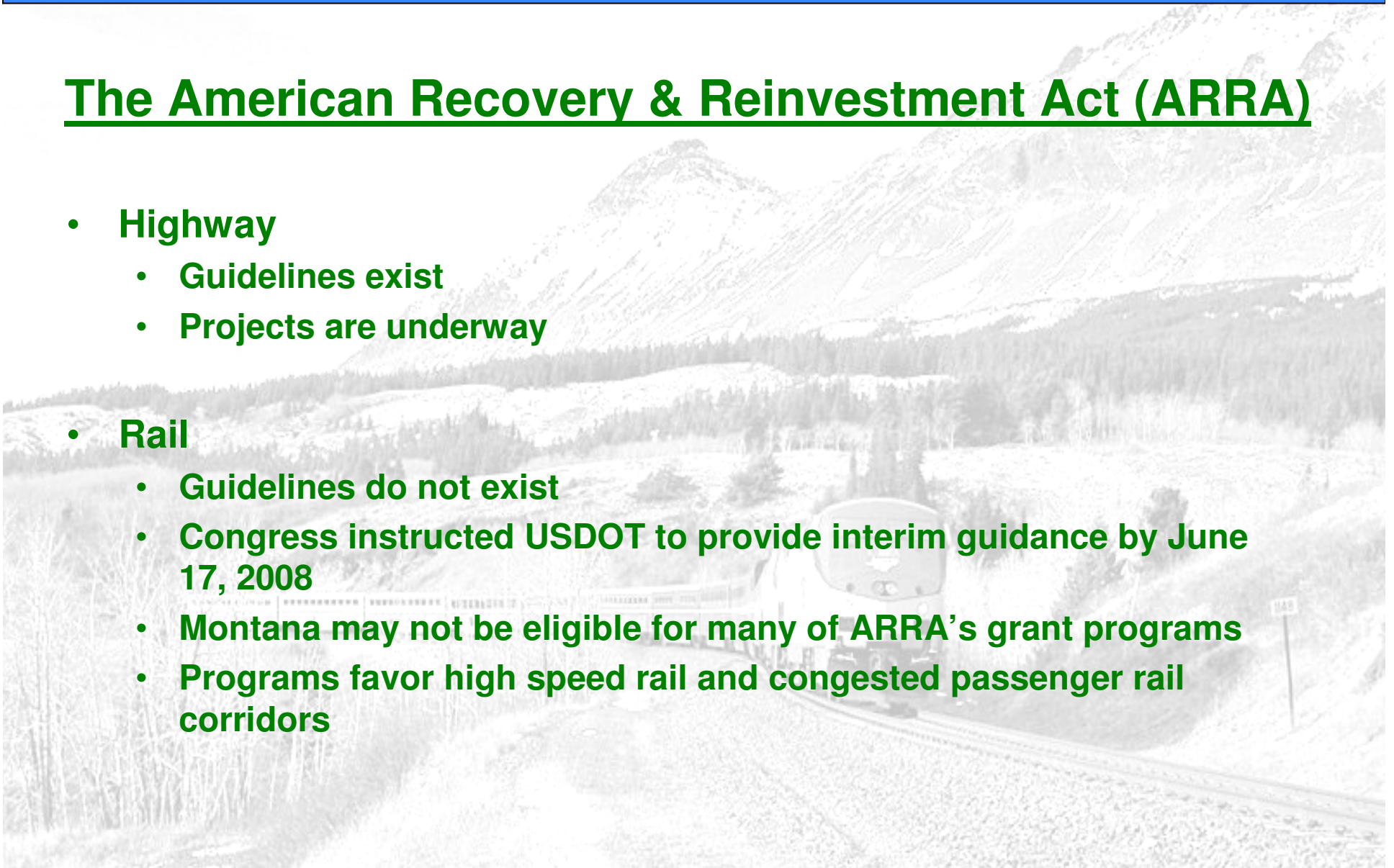
- Results will be used to inform decisions on:
 - Pursuit of Federal capital funding
 - Identification of sources of operating funds and 20% non-federal match for capital assistance
 - Agreements with railroads
 - Necessary amendments to state rail plan
- Amtrak Timeline
 - Billings to Missoula draft report: June, 2009
 - Spokane to Williston draft report: August, 2009



ARRA

The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

- **Highway**
 - Guidelines exist
 - Projects are underway
- **Rail**
 - Guidelines do not exist
 - Congress instructed USDOT to provide interim guidance by June 17, 2008
 - Montana may not be eligible for many of ARRA's grant programs
 - Programs favor high speed rail and congested passenger rail corridors



Passenger Rail in Montana

Questions?

