MDOT Commitments to Environmental Excellence

Project No: FHWA-MS-EIS-04-01-D
NCPD-1069-00(001)
Highway: Interstate 69
County: Coahoma, Sunflower, Bolivar, Tunica
Revision Date: 03/10/2010

***Value Engineering Study Recommended** ☒ Yes ☐ No

Commitments/Requirements	Source of Commitment	Responsible Office	Place on Plans	Requires A Special Provision	Status of Commitment/Requirement
Farmland: Farms that are bisected by the proposed project will be evaluated during the design phase to determine if access between the bisected portions can be provided for livestock and machinery.	FEIS Pages 4-3, 4-4, 4-25	MDOT Environmental, Design, and Right-of-Way Divisions	Yes	No	There will be a continuing interdisciplinary analysis of potentially landlocked parcels by Roadway Design and by Right of Way throughout the design and right of way acquisition phases. Access will be provided where feasible
Traffic: During construction, local and through traffic will be adequately and safely accommodated. Construction operations will be scheduled to minimize traffic delays.	FEIS Page 4-89	MDOT Environmental, Design, Right-of-Way, & Construction Divisions	Yes	No	Will be implemented during construction
Noise: Earthen berms will be considered near the crossing of Verner Road in Tunica County, subject to the feasibility of providing drainage.	FEIS Pages 4-15, 4-24, 4-36	MDOT Environmental, Design, Right-of-Way, & Construction Divisions	Yes	No	Will be implemented during design and construction.
Water Quality: Construction materials will be stored and disposed of such that they are not discharged into or alongside of streams and other water bodies. Through MDOT contact with the MDEQ, construction measures will be determined for minimizing water quality impacts at locations with impaired or monitored water bodies. The TMDL development status for any waterways in the study area will be identified and evaluated to determine the project's potential effect on restoration efforts in these watersheds. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented and maintained by trained personnel in effort to prevent further degradation of the watersheds and to address TMDL concerns.	FEIS Page 4-39, 4-43	MDOT Environmental, Design, & Construction Divisions	Yes	Yes	Will be implemented during design and construction.
Water Quality: Precautions will be taken so that groundwater may not be contaminated. All fuel and chemicals will be contained and properly handled as intended.	FEIS Page 4-46	MDOT Environmental, Design, & Construction Divisions	Yes	No	Will be implemented during and construction

***Value Engineering Study Recommended** ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Commitments/Requirements	Source of Commitment	Responsible Office	Place on Plans	Requires A Special Provision	Status of Commitment/Requirement
Floodplain: Flood studies will be utilized for the design of bridges, pipes, and box culverts in accordance with FHWA floodplain impact requirements.	FEIS Page 4-58	MDOT Environmental, & Design Divisions	Yes	No	Will be implemented during design.
Vegetation and Wildlife: Construction limits will be posted and enforced to minimize impacts to vegetation and wildlife. Exposed surfaces will be promptly re-vegetated during construction.	FEIS Page 4-60	MDOT Environmental, Design, & Construction Divisions	Yes	No	Will be implemented during design and construction.
Vegetation and Wildlife: For existing bridges that require modifications, consideration will be given for eliminating the use of scuppers. Scuppers will not be used in new bridges except where they are the only practical way to safely handle the drainage.	FEIS Page 4-60	MDOT Bridge Design, Division	Yes	No	Will be implemented during design and construction.
Vegetation and Wildlife: Detention/retention ponds for stormwater run-off will be considered for locations where they would achieve a measurable difference in water quality, function without mechanical components, and require reasonable maintenance.	FEIS Page 4-60	MDOT Environmental, Design, Right-of-Way, Construction, & Maintenance Divisions	Yes	No	Will be implemented during design and construction.
Vegetation and Wildlife: To facilitate wildlife movement and migration, installation of culverts will include inverted designs.	FEIS Page 4-65	MDOT Design, Right-of-Way, & Construction Divisions	Yes	No	Will be implemented during design and construction.
Vegetation and Wildlife: Impacted streams will be mitigated as part of the 404/401 permit process.	FEIS Page 4-57	MDOT Environmental, Design, Right-of-Way, & Construction Divisions	Yes	No	Will be implemented during design

Project No: FHWA-MS-EIS-04-01-D NCPD-1069-00(001) **Highway:** Interstate 69 **County:** Coahoma, Sunflower, Bolivar, Tunica **Revision Date:** 03/10/2010

***Value Engineering Study Recommended** ☒ Yes ☐ No

Commitments/Requirements	Source of Commitment	Responsible Office	Place on Plans	Requires A Special Provision	Status of Commitment/Requirement
Threatened and Endangered Species: Pondberry populations have been identified based on surveys conducted for the Preferred Alternative, and the alignment has been shifted to avoid impacts. For the protection of all Federally Listed Species, consultation with the USFWS and the Mississippi Natural Heritage Program will occur prior to construction.	FEIS Page 4-66	MDOT Environmental, Design, Right-of-Way, Construction & Maintenance Divisions	Yes	No	Upon discovery, a continuing interdisciplinary analysis of habitat fragmentation and pondberry populations will be implemented throughout design and construction and maintenance phases of the project.
Archaeology: A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been prepared for the mitigation of adverse affects to eligible archaeological sites. Prior to any construction activity, the terms of the MOA will have been fully completed. Should cultural resources be discovered during construction, all construction activities will cease, and MDOT's Environmental division will be notified so that the site can be evaluated for the proper action.	FEIS Page 4-73	MDOT Environmental, Design, Right-of-Way, & Construction Divisions	No	No	Will be addressed prior to any construction activity in accordance with the MOA and its section 106 commitments

All practical and standard procedures and measures, including Best Management practices will be implemented to avoid or minimize impacts.

- These commitments should be carried throughout each phase of the project development including Design, Right of Way, Construction, and Maintenance.

*Value Engineering (VE) Studies are recommended for projects on the NHS System and/or an Intermodal Connector with an estimated project costs approaching $25 Million

FHWA-MS-FEIS-04-01-F

I-69 FROM BENOIT TO ROBINSONVILLE
SIU-11
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, TUNICA AND SUNFLOWER COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI
NCPD-1069-00(001)

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c)
BY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
AND
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

COOPERATING AGENCIES:

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
U.S. NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (1)
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (2)
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

6/25/2010
Date of Approval

Federal Highway Administration

For additional information contact:

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Sept. 18, 2008

Date of Approval

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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August 26, 2008

Date of Approval

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Mr. Mike McNair
Chief of Regulatory Branch
Vicksburg District, Corps of Engineers
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8/13/08

Date of Approval

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mr. Ray Aycock
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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9/25/08

Date of Approval

Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

Dr. Sam Polles
Executive Director
Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks
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Oct. 22, 2008

Date of Approval

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Mr. H.T. Holmes
Mississippi State Historic Preservation Officer
Mississippi Department of Archives and History
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NOTES:

(1) **Since the selected alternative did not impact any Wetland Reserve Program easements, the USDA – NRCS asked to be removed as a Cooperating Agency at the conclusion of the study.**

(2) **Prior to the study's completion, the Cooperating Agency Contact position was vacated for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The agency asked to be removed as a Cooperating Agency at the conclusion of the study.**

SUMMARY

1. Federal Highway Administration

Administrative Action Environmental Statement

( ) Draft (x) Final

( ) Section 4(f) Statement attached

2. Contacts

The following individuals may be contacted for additional information concerning this Proposal and Statement:

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3. Brief Description of the Proposed Action

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are proposing to construct a multi-lane, interstate highway of approximately 120 miles that travels in a southwest-northeast direction from southwest of Benoit near State Route 1 (SR 1) in Bolivar County to east of Robinsonville near SR 304 in Tunica County, Mississippi. The project, located in several Mississippi Delta counties in the northwest part of the state, is identified as Section of Independent Utility Number 11 (SIU 11) of the national Interstate 69 (I-69) Corridor.

4. Significant Actions Proposed by Others

The I-69 Corridor has been defined by the United States Congress to commence in Port Huron, Michigan/Sarnia, Ontario, Canada and terminate in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) in Texas at the United States/Mexico border, a distance of over 1,600 miles. This I-69 Corridor, which was originally known as Corridor 18, was designated by the United States Congress as a High Priority Corridor of National Significance in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). It was further defined and formalized in the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

Since this study on SIU 11 began, other portions of I-69 have been undergoing work ranging from planning and environmental studies to construction activities. The adjacent sections include SIU 10 to the north and SIU 12 to the south. SR 304 in De Soto County has been relocated and built to interstate standards between I-55 and US 61. SIU 10 includes the portion of relocated SR 304 in De Soto County between I-55 and the first interchange east of SR 3 as well as a spur to the south of that interchange connecting the relocated SR 304 with the old two-lane section of SR 304. From the relocated SR 304 interchange to slightly north of the spur's intersection with old SR 304, the design of the spur meets interstate standards. SIU 10 is open to traffic. SIU 12 begins at SR 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County and proceeds to the southwest across the Mississippi River along the alignment of the Great River Bridge project into Arkansas and ends near McGehee, Arkansas. A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) has been completed for SIU 12 and a Record of Decision (ROD) has been issued.

Significant actions by others that relate to this project include the improvements currently underway to the Tunica Airport, the continued development and promotion of the gaming industry in Tunica County, and the continued improvements to the highway system.

5. Summary of Major Alternatives

The major alternatives in this study are:

- No-Build Alternative

- Transportation System Management (TSM)
- Other Modes
- Build Alternatives

The *No-Build Alternative* would retain the existing roadway network. The No-Build Alternative would avoid the negative impacts that highway construction can cause to residences and businesses, wetlands, streams, forests, cultural resources, and other resources. The No-Build Alternative would not meet the project purpose of providing a safe, efficient, and cost effective transportation facility that would meet design year traffic flow and promote economic development within the Mississippi Delta region. Moreover, the No-Build Alternative would leave a gap in the construction of the national I-69 corridor.

Transportation System Management (TSM) is the application of minor construction, operational, and institutional actions to make productive and cost-effective use of existing transportation facilities and services. None of these strategies fulfill the project's purpose and need of building an Interstate highway.

Other modes of transportation would complement rather than replace the proposed facility. Interchanges for the proposed project would be provided in reasonable proximity to the existing railroads, airports, and water ports. These intermodal connections would further enhance the opportunity for economic development in and near the project area. However, as an alternative other modes of transportation would not address the purpose and need of the project.

Build alternative corridors were investigated and refined in a three-tiered process, beginning with many broad corridors and narrowing the corridors down to reasonable and feasible alternatives. Three alternatives were selected for detailed study: a Western Alternative, a Central Alternative, and an Eastern Alternative (see **Figure S-1**). Due to the length of the project, each alternative is divided into a southern, middle, and northern section that have approximately common termini. These three sections of the project are consistently used through the remainder of the FEIS. The Southern Section begins on SIU 12 near SR 1 in Bolivar County and extends northeast to the New Africa Road Interchange on the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County. The Middle Section begins at the northern terminus of the Southern Section and extends north to end on US 61 approximately four miles south of the Coahoma-Tunica County Line. The Northern Section

begins at the northern terminus of the Middle Section and extends northeast to end east of Robinsonville on the SIU 10 Spur connecting old SR 304 with new SR 304.

The Central Alternative in the Southern Section was developed to use as much of existing US 61 as possible from Benoit to Clarksdale. In places where the Central Alternative in the Southern Section is near US 61 but on new location, the new location is necessary to avoid environmental impacts; cultural resources; and relocation of homes, businesses, churches, cemeteries, or other important community facilities. In the Southern Section, the Western Alternative and Eastern Alternative are on new location. The Middle Section has only one alternative, and that alternative mainly uses US 61. The Northern Section has three alternatives, with the Western Alternative using a portion of US 61 while the Central Alternative and Eastern Alternative are on new location. The right-of-way width for each alternative would be approximately 450 feet on new location. Alternatives using the existing US 61 alignment would utilize the existing right-of-way as well as approximately 200 feet of additional right-of-way.

In addition to these sections and alternatives, SR 8 would be widened to four lanes between Cleveland and Rosedale. New roads, called spurs, would also be provided at some interchanges for connectivity to the existing road system.

Western Alternative

Southern Section

In the southern section, the Western Alternative begins at SIU 12, Great River Bridge-Eutaw Landing, and proceeds east to Lake Bolivar before turning southeast to cross SR 1 south of Benoit and just north of Ray Brooks School. The alternative crosses SR 448 north of the point where the alignment of SR 448 changes from north-south to east-west. From SR 448, the Western Alternative proceeds east before turning to the north several miles northwest of Shaw. The Western Alternative continues north and parallels US 61 to the west. It bypasses Boyle, Cleveland, Merigold, and Shelby on new alignment. It then turns northeast and crosses SR 444. The Western Alternative continues in a northeast direction, past Duncan, Alligator, and Rena Lara. It then proceeds east to cross US 61 and connects to New Africa Road at the Clarksdale Bypass.

Middle Section (Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives)

The Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives are identical for the middle section of the study area. The middle section begins at the south end of the New Africa Road Interchange and ends approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. The alternatives would use the current Clarksdale Bypass south and east of Clarksdale. Near Lyon, the alternatives parallel US 49/US 61 to the east to avoid existing development. They rejoin existing US 61 north of Eagles Nest Road and end approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line, where the three major alternatives split in the northern section.

Northern Section

The Western Alternative continues northeast on existing US 61 from four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line to just south of Crenshaw Road. It then continues to the northeast on new location and crosses Dubbs Road, SR 4, Prichard Road, and Arkabutla Dam Road. The Western Alternative then turns east and crosses Kirby Road and SR 3. It turns north to cross the two-lane SR 304 and end on the SIU 10 Spur (SIU 11 project north terminus; SIU 10 south terminus).

Central Alternative

Southern Section

One of the objectives of the Central Alternative was to use as much of existing US 61 as possible. In places, the Central Alternative is on new location to avoid environmental impacts, cultural resources, and relocation of homes, businesses, church, cemeteries, or other important community facilities. The Central Alternative begins at the SIU 12 terminus and proceeds east to Lake Bolivar before turning southeast to cross SR 1 south of Ray Brooks School. It continues to the southeast and crosses several water bodies, including Lake Vista and Bushy Lake. Because a relatively large quantity of wetlands was identified within this initial segment, another option was developed in this area to minimize wetland impacts, relocations, and costs. The new option proceeds southeast across Lake Bolivar, crosses SR 1 north of Scott at Lake Vista, and then turns east to join the original alignment near SR 448. This second option is also part of the Eastern Alternative. East of SR 448, the Central Alternative parallels SR 448 to the north and parallels the Western Alternative. Several miles northwest of Shaw the Central Alternative turns north, joins the Western Alternative south of SR 446, and separates from it after crossing SR 8. The Central Alternative turns northeast and joins US 61 near Merigold. It continues along US 61 to

the Coahoma County line near Bobo with the exception of the portion between Shelby and Hushpuckena where the Central Alternative is slightly east of US 61. The Central Alternative then proceeds on new location west of existing US 61. South of Clarksdale, the Central Alternative turns east and crosses US 61. It then connects to the New Africa Road at the Clarksdale Bypass (on same alignment as the Western Alternative).

Middle Section

There is only one alternative for the middle section, which extends from the south end of the Clarksdale Bypass to approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. See the Middle Section of the Western Alternative for more detail.

Northern Section

The Central Alternative continues northeast on new location from approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line to just south of Crenshaw Road; it then turns north and joins the Western Alternative prior to crossing Dubbs Road. The alternative remains concurrent with the Western Alternative to the end of the project after crossing the two-lane SR 304 on the SIU 10 Spur (SIU 11 project end; SIU 10 project terminus).

Eastern Alternative

Southern Section

The Eastern Alternative begins at the SIU 12 terminus and proceeds southeast across Lake Bolivar. It crosses SR 1 north of Scott at Lake Vista and then turns east to join the Central Alternative before crossing SR 448. Near the crossing of the Bogue Phalia, the Eastern Alternative and the Central Alternative separate, with the Eastern Alternative continuing east. After crossing US 61, the Eastern Alternative turns north paralleling US 61 to the east. After crossing SR 8 the Eastern Alternative takes a slight northeast turn and crosses into Sunflower County where it continues to the north and passes west of the State Penal Farm at Parchman. It continues north into Coahoma County. East of Bobo, it turns northeast and then connects to the Clarksdale Bypass prior to New Africa Road. The Roundaway–Tutwiler Spur is an important element of this alternative. Since a major purpose of an eastern corridor alternative is to serve the eastern portion of the Delta along US 49 and SR3, this spur is essential to provide a connection to the east.

Middle Section

There is only one alternative for the middle section, which extends from the south end of the Clarksdale Bypass to approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. See the Middle Section of the Western Alternative for more detail.

Northern Section

The Eastern Alternative is concurrent with the Central Alternative from four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica county line to north of Crenshaw Road where the Eastern Alternative turns northeast to cross Dubbs Road, SR 4, Prichard Road, and SR 3. After crossing SR 3, it proceeds in a northerly path and crosses Arkabutla Dam Road. The Eastern Alternatives makes a slight turn to the northeast and crosses the two-lane SR 304 to end on the SIU 10 Spur (SIU 11 project end; SIU 10 project terminus).

This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) addresses the feasibility and potential environmental impacts of each of the alternative studied in detail. In addition, this FEIS addresses the potential for mitigation of adverse impacts associated with the alternatives.

6. Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative is a modified version of the Central Alternative, which uses as much of existing US 61 as possible. The following text describes the Preferred Alternative by section:

Southern Section

The Preferred Alternative begins at the SIU 12 terminus and proceeds southeast across Lake Bolivar. It crosses SR 1 north of Scott at Lake Vista and then turns east before crossing SR 448. As discussed in Section 2.4.3.2, this crossing avoids and minimizes impacts. After crossing SR 448, the Preferred Alternative parallels SR 448 to the north until several miles northwest of Shaw where it turns to the north. This portion of the Preferred Alternative is identical to the Central Alternative, including the revised alignment at Lake Bolivar. After crossing SR 446, the Preferred Alternative generally proceeds northeast and crosses SR 8 on the west side of Cleveland. Northwest of Renova, the Preferred Alternative turns east to join US 61 near Merigold. It follows existing US 61, passing west of Merigold and Mound Bayou, and then passing east of Winstonville and Shelby. From Shelby to Hushpuckena, the Preferred Alternative

is on new location slightly to the east of US 61. At Hushpuckena, it rejoins US 61 and continues north along US 61 to the Coahoma County line near Bobo. It then proceeds on new location west of existing US 61. South of Clarksdale, it turns east and follows the US 61 Clarksdale Bypass.

SR 8 Improvements

The Preferred Alternative would include the widening of SR 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale. SR 8 would have a five-lane section extended west of Cleveland to a point west of the SR 8-Cleveland Interchange, where the roadway would transition to a four-lane divided section and remain this way until the eastern edge of Pace. At that point, the roadway would transition to a five-lane section through the built-up area of Pace. At the western edge of Pace, the roadway would then transition back to a four-lane divided section and remain this way to a point slightly east of Rosedale where it would again transition to a five-lane section and remain this way to the intersection with SR 1.

Middle Section

In the middle section, the Preferred Alternative begins at the south end of the New Africa Road Interchange and ends approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. It would use the current Clarksdale Bypass south and east of Clarksdale. Near Lyon, the Preferred Alternative would proceed east and north to parallel US 49/US 61 on new location to avoid existing development. It rejoins existing US 49/US 61 north of Eagles Nest Road to approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line, where the northern section begins.

Northern Section

The Preferred Alternative continues northeast on new location from approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line to just south of Crenshaw Road; it then turns north prior to crossing Dubbs Road. The alternative turns northeast near Arkabutla Dam Road. The Preferred Alternative proceeds northeast and crosses SR 3. South of the two-lane SR 304, the alternative turns north to cross SR 304 and end on the SIU 10 Spur (SIU 11 project end; SIU 10 project terminus).

The selection of the Preferred Alternative was based on careful analysis of natural, cultural, social, and economic impacts on all alternatives and on public comments received during the study. Appropriate mitigation measures and commitments have been developed for the Preferred

Alternative and are highlighted on the Environmental Commitments sheets that accompany the FEIS. Progress on the Environmental Commitments sheets will be tracked during design and construction.

Subsequent to selection of the Preferred Alternative, the project was reviewed to consider the applicability of recent guidance on major projects receiving federal funding. Construction of the proposed I-69 SUI 11 is envisioned to be phased over the next 19 years. Therefore, the project was determined to consist of five distinct and operationally independent phases. The five phases (sections) are detailed in Appendix G and summarized as follows:

Section 1: 18.465 miles, SR 304 Interchange to South of SR 4 Interchange
Anticipated Letting Date: 2016

Section 2: 31.549 miles, South of SR 4 Interchange to North of SR 6 Interchange
Anticipated Letting Date: 2022

Section 3: 48.160 miles, North of SR 6 Interchange to South of SR 446 Interchange
Anticipated Letting Date: 2019

Section 4: 22.807 miles, South of SR 446 Interchange to Great River Bridge
Anticipated Letting Date: 2026

Section 5: 17.764 miles, SR 1 at Rosedale to Cleveland
Anticipated Letting Date: 2029

7. Summary of Impacts

The project would have some unavoidable impacts, regardless of the build alternative. As summarized in **Table S-1**, the primary impacts would include relocations, wetlands, streams, floodplains, and farmlands. **Table S-2** summarizes the impacts by section and alternative.

In the Southern Section, the Preferred Alternative would minimize impacts to streams, wetlands, and vegetation. In addition, the Preferred Alternative would serve the greatest percentage of the minority and low-income population, addressing a key component of the project's purpose and need. In an effort to reduce potential impacts, this alternative was developed to use as much of existing US 61 as possible. Most of the cities within the project study area are located along US 61, and therefore, the Preferred Alternative would have the greatest number of residential relocations and noise impacts. The Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section would minimize

residential and noise impacts. However, the Eastern and Western Alternatives would have greater impacts to streams. The Western Alternative would have the greatest total impact on wetlands and vegetation. Although the Western Alternative would minimize residential relocations, it would also serve a much lower percentage of the minority and low-income population.

In the Northern Section, the Preferred Alternative would minimize impact to wetlands. The Preferred Alternative and Western Alternative would have similar impacts to streams and hazardous material sites, while the Eastern Alternative would have the least impact in these categories. The Western Alternative would have the least residential relocations and floodplain encroachment.

With regards to the length of time that has elapsed since the original data collection and comparison of alternatives as presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, this document has been reviewed in light of current (2010) conditions. Based on this review, the information presented, including the basis for the selection of the preferred alternative and the impacts of that alternative, remain valid. The impacts resulting from modifications to the preferred alternative have been incorporated into the document.

Table S-1
Summary of Impacts

Impact Category	Southern Section			SR 8			Middle Section	Northern Section			Total for Preferred Alternative[6]	Change in Preferred Alternative Impacts Since Public Hearing[7]
	Western	Central	Eastern	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Common	Western	Central	Eastern		
Human Environment												
Farmland (acres)	4,178	4,133	4,117	478	492	463	1,023	2,603	2,574	2,440	8,193	-29
Residential Relocations	16	25	16	18	13	18	3	7	8	20	54	+1
Business Relocations	1	1	2	3	2	3	1	0	0	0	5	+2
Noise Receptors	2	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	+1
Historic Sites (Adverse Effect)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1
Archaeological Sites (Potential Impact)	4	6	2	1	1	1	2	6	0	4	9	-3
Hazardous Material Sites	0	0	0	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	-10
Minority and Low-Income Population Served by I-69 Within 2 mile radius of Interchange	20,293	24,130	16,573	N/A	N/A	N/A	20,970	370	370	370	45,470	-611
Natural Environment												
Perennial Streams – Number Crossed (Total Feet of Impact)	12 (7,300)	10 (5,165)	14 (9,880)	5 (570)	5 (570)	5 (570)	4 (3,240)	13 (3,775)	13 (3,970)	8 (3,585)	32 (12,945)	None
303 (d) Streams (number) [8]	7	10	11	0	0	0	1	11	11	12	22	See Footnote
Wetlands (acres)[1]	122	18	63	2	1	2	20	61	28	32	(106)[4]	+104
Floodplains (acres)	1,103	1,002	847	25	22	25	88	162	567	334	1,682	+414
Vegetation/Wildlife Habitat[2] (acres)	210	104	118	59	53	49	5	31	17	16	175	-5

Table S-1
Summary of Impacts

Impact Category	Southern Section			SR 8			Middle Section	Northern Section			Total for Preferred Alternative[6]	Change in Preferred Alternative Impacts Since Public Hearing[7]
	Western	Central	Eastern	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Common	Western	Central	Eastern		
Engineering/Utilities												
Transmission Line Impact Number of Crossings (length in feet)	2 (955)	2 (1,470)	6 (3,140)	1 (300)	1 (300)	1 (300)	2 (310)	4 (1,115)	4 (1,130)	4 (1,450)	9 (3,210)	None
Gas Pipeline Impact Number of Crossings (length in feet)	8 (19,030)	8 (13,050)	10 (16,595)	3 (3,330)	3 (3,330)	3 (3,330)	3 (16,860)	12 (38,825)	11 (61,985)	8 (44,090)	25 (95,225)	None
2001 Estimated Construction (millions) [3]	537.9	473.6	528.8	55.3	54.1	54.1	91.9	315.9	336.8	306.7	956.4	2001 Estimated Computed Costs
2010 Estimated Construction (millions) [3]	701.9	618.0	690.0	72.2	70.6	70.6	119.9	412.2	439.5	400.2	1247.9	2001 Costs Updated to 2010 Costs
Conservation Easements[5]	11	6	11	5	5	5	0	4	6	11	17	None

[1] Wetland impacts in Southern Section are based on revised alignment for Central Alternative near Benoit

[2] Vegetation/Wildlife Habitat consists of: Bottomland Hardwood Forest, Upland Scrub/Shrub, and Freshwater Scrub/Shrub communities.

[3] See Appendix G for Preferred Alternative cost estimate computations and the cost factors used for updating the cost estimates for the other DEIS alternatives to year 2010 (construction costs in table include ROW).

[4] In the fall of 2005, an additional field assessment of the wetland impacts within the right of way limits was made. Based on that assessment the 68 acres of impacts (18 + 2 + 20 + 28) was increased to 106 acres for the FEIS to reflect updated information. Similar increases would be anticipated for the other alternatives. See Page 4-47 if additional information is needed on the field assessment conducted on the Preferred Alternative.

[5] Conservation Easements include Wetland Reserve Program Easements, Farm Service Agency Easements, Ducks Unlimited Easements, and Conservation Agreements

[6] Impacts Category Totals are based on adding the impacts for the Southern Section Central, SR 8 - Alt D, the Middle Section, and the Northern Section Central.

[7] Difference in the Preferred Alternative impacts from the impacts presented in Table S-1 of the Draft EIS for the South Section Central Alternative (SSCA) + Middle Section + North Section Central Alternative (NSCA)

[8.] Number of streams shown in table were identified in 2004. Additional TMDL Reports have been compiled since 2004. See Tables 4-14 and 4-15.

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.; Neel-Schaffer, Inc.; 2005-2010

Table S-2
Summary Comparison of Alternative Combinations

Impact Category	SSWA[1] + Middle Section +			SSCA[1] + Middle Section +			SSEA[1] + Middle Section +		
	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA
Farmland (acres)	8,296	8,267	8,133	8,251	8,208	8,088	8,235	8,206	8,072
Residential Relocations	44	45	57	53	54	66	41	42	54
Business Relocations	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6
Noise Receptors	2	2	2	5	5	5	2	2	2
Historic Sites (Adverse Effect)	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Archaeological Sites (Potential Impact)	13	7	11	15	9	13	11	5	9
Hazardous Material Sites	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Minority and Low-Income Population Served by I-69	41,633	41,633	41,633	46,081	45,470	46,081	37,913	37,913	37,913
Perennial Streams (Crossed)	34	34	29	32	32	27	36	36	31
Perennial Streams (Total Feet of Impact)	14,885	15,080	14,695	12,750	12,945	12,560	17,465	17,660	17,275
303 (d) Streams (number) [5]	19	19	20	22	22	23	23	23	24
Wetlands (acres)	205	172	178	101	68 (106)[2]	72	146	113	117
Floodplains (acres)	1,378	1,783	1,550	1,277	1,682	1,449	1,122	1,527	1,294
Vegetation/Wildlife Habitat (acres)	295	281	280	189	175	203	207	189	188

Table S-2
Summary Comparison of Alternative Combinations

Impact Category	SSWA[1] + Middle Section +			SSCA[1] + Middle Section +			SSEA[1] + Middle Section +		
	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA
Transmission Line Impact Number of Crossings (length in feet)	9 (2,680)	9 (2,695)	9 (3,015)	9 (3,195)	9 (3,210)	9 (3,530)	13 (4,865)	13 (4,880)	13 (5,200)
Gas Pipeline Impact Number of Crossings (length in feet)	26 (78,045)	25 (101,205)	22 (83,310)	26 (72,065)	25 (95,225)	22 (77,330)	28 (75,610)	27 (98,770)	24 (80,875)
2001 Estimated Construction (millions) [3]	$999.8	$1,020.7	$990.6	$935.5	$956.4	$926.3	$990.7	$1,011.6	$981.5
2010 Estimated Construction (millions) [3]	$1,304.5	$1,331.8	$1,292.5	$1,220.6	$1,247.9	$1,208.6	$1,292.7	$1,319.9	$1,280.7
Conservation Easements[4]	20	22	27	15	17	22	20	22	27

Key: SSWA = Southern Section, Western Alt.; SSCA = Southern Section, Central Alt.; SSEA = Southern Section, Eastern Alt.
NSWA = Northern Section, Western Alt.; NSCA = Northern Section Central Alt.; NSEA = Northern Section, Eastern Alt.

[1] All impacts and totals in the Southern Section are based on SR 8 Alternative D; SSCA + Middle Section + NSCA is the Preferred Alternative

[2] In the fall of 2005. an additional field assessment of the wetland impacts within the right of way was made. Based on that assessment, the 68 acres of impacts shown in the Draft EIS became 106 acres for the FEIS. If additional field assessments were made on the other alternatives, increases in impacts would also be expected. See page 4-47 for more information.

[3] See Appendix G for additional information on the Preferred Alternative Cost Estimate. Relative to the Draft EIS, the 2001 Cost Estimate for the Preferred Alternative increased by a factor of 1.3048. The 1.3048 factor was used for determining the 2010 cost of the other alternatives. Estimated construction costs in table include ROW.

[4] Conservation Easements include Wetland Reserve Program Easements, Farm Service Agency Easements, Ducks Unlimited Easements, and Conservation Agreements.

[5.] Number of streams shown in table were identified in 2004. Additional TMDL Reports have been compiled since 2004. See Tables 4-14 and 4-15.

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc. and Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2005-2010

8. Areas of Controversy

With meetings held throughout the project as the primary means of achieving input, the public, local elected officials, and state and Federal agencies were actively involved in the development of the alternatives. Controversy has been limited to discussion of specific alignments.

Since this project is primarily in a rural environment containing major farming operations, farmers have expressed concern about losing their farmland and the access they will have to their farmland that is split by an alternative. To address this concern, alternatives were developed along property lines and major streams. When environmentally possible and economically feasible, grade separation bridges were provided at major county roads and frontage roads were provided.

The build alternatives have been developed with considerable input from citizens and local officials. Particular care has been taken to provide I-69 access to small communities that historically have included minority and low-income populations and non-agricultural industries. Access to I-69 would enhance economic opportunities for these small communities, while minimizing impacts to farming operations and farmland. Alternatives located nearest the populated areas also would minimize effects on wildlife habitat.

9. Other Federal Actions Required

A permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is anticipated to be required for this project under provisions of Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972. Section 404 requires the application for and approval of a permit before wetlands or other waters can be dredged or filled. The Clean Water Act requires public notice and review of Section 404 permits as well as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service review. Encroachment into floodways would be coordinated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Involvement with historic properties has been coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). This project will be developed in conformity with provisions of the 1990 Clean Air Act, as amended.

10. Measures to Avoid or Minimize Adverse Impacts

Measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse impacts that could result from the proposed project are described below by category:

Farmland: Mississippi Department of Transportation's (MDOT's) acquisition and relocation policies will be followed and any purchase of land will be based on fair market value. In addition, access will be provided where feasible to farmland parcels that are split by I-69. The alignment for the Preferred Alternative was refined in the Southern Section to further minimize impacts on farming operations.

Environmental Justice: Environmental justice community outreach/meetings will continue for the project.

Relocations: Relocation assistance is in accordance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646) will be followed.

Traffic: During construction, all local and through traffic will be adequately and safely accommodated. All construction operations will be scheduled to minimize delay to traffic.

Utilities: Construction will be coordinated with affected utility companies. Any disruption to utility service during construction would be minimized by phased adjustments to utility lines.

Noise: For the Preferred Alternative, **e**arthen berms will be considered at one location to mitigate noise and visual impacts. The contractor will comply with all state and local sound control ordinances. Each piece of equipment with internal combustion engines shall be equipped with a muffler. Information on location of I-69 will be provided to local officials so that they can inform developers planning projects in the vicinity of the highway.

Air Quality: During construction, all materials cleared will be removed from the project site and burned or otherwise disposed of in compliance with air quality laws and regulations.

Water Quality: Construction materials will be stored and disposed of such that they are not discharged into or alongside of streams and other water bodies. Through MDOT contact with the MDEQ, construction measures will be determined for minimizing water quality impacts at locations with impaired or monitored water bodies. The TMDL development status for any waterways in the study area will be

identified and evaluated to determine the project's potential effect on restoration efforts in these watersheds. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented and maintained by trained personnel in effort to prevent further degradation of the watersheds and to address TMDL concerns.

Wetlands/Waters of the US: In accordance with Section 404(b)(1) guidelines, all practicable measures will be taken to avoid or minimize impacts to wetlands. For the Preferred Alternative, affected wetlands have been delineated and mapped, and copies of the supporting documentation have been provided to the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for field verification. An individual permit from the USACE will be required. Unavoidable wetland/stream impacts will be mitigated by the acquisition and restoration of land within the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and/or the O'Keefe Wildlife Management Area.

Floodplain: Bridges, pipes, and box culverts will be designed in accordance with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) floodplain impact requirements. Flood studies will be performed as required.

Vegetation and Wildlife: Construction limits will be posted and enforced to minimize impacts to vegetation and wildlife. Best Management Practices will be used to reduce runoff will benefit vegetation and aquatic wildlife. Wildlife crossings will be considered during final design, in coordination with US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) and state agencies. Exposed surfaces will be promptly re-vegetated during construction**.**

Threatened and Endangered Species: In areas where habitat fragmentation is unavoidable, measures to reduce the loss contiguity will be employed. Field surveys have been conducted for pondberry, bald eagle, and the fat pocketbook mussel in potential habitat areas during the appropriate season. The alignment of the Preferred Alternative has been shifted to avoid major populations of pondberry. For the protection of all Federally Listed Species, consultation with the USFWS and the Mississippi Natural Heritage Program will occur prior to construction.

Hazardous Materials: Hazardous material sites that could be potentially affected by the Preferred Alternative have been identified. Any site impacted by the project that is determined to contain hazardous materials will be remediated as required by regulations and MDOT policy.

Archaeology: A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been prepared for the mitigation of adverse affects to eligible archaeological sites. Prior to any construction activity, the terms of the MOA will have been fully completed.

Should cultural resources be discovered during construction, all construction activities will cease, and MDOT's Environmental division will be notified so that the site can be evaluated for the proper action.

Historic Structures: For all standing structures located in the APE, the remainder of the Preferred Alternative has been surveyed and evaluated for eligibility for the NRHP. Consultation has been carried out with the SHPO to determine if there are properties in the APE that would have an adverse effect constituting a constructive use.

Legend

- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

Robinsonville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Sherard
Clarksdale
Rena Lara
Alligator
Duncan
Shelby
Winstonville
Mound Bayou
Merigold
Gunnison
Rosedale
Beulah
Pace
Renova
Cleveland
Boyle
Skene
Dahomey NWR
Benoit
Shaw
Sunflower
Mattson
Dublin
Rome
Drew
Ruleville
Doddsville
State Penal Farm
Parchman
Askew WR
Tunica
Coahoma
Bolivar
Sunflower

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Alternatives for Detailed Study

Figure S-1

Table of Contents

Summary

Federal Highway Administration S-1
Contacts S-1
Brief Description of the Proposed Action S-1
Significant Actions Proposed by Others S-2
Summary of Major Alternatives S-2
Preferred Alternative S-7
Summary of Impacts S-9
Areas of Controversy S-15
Other Federal Actions Required S-15
Measures to Avoid or Minimize Adverse Impacts S-16

1.0 Purpose and Need 1-1
1.1 Description of Proposed Action 1-1
1.2 Study Area Description 1-1
1.2.1 Location 1-1
1.2.2 Topography 1-2
1.2.3 Land Use 1-2
1.3 Project Purpose and Need 1-3
1.3.1 History and Purpose 1-3
1.3.2 Project Status 1-6
1.3.3 System Linkage 1-7
1.3.4 Transportation Demand 1-9
1.3.5 Legislation 1-11
1.3.6 Social Advancement/Economic Development 1-11
1.4 Modal Interrelationships 1-17
1.5 Safety 1-18
1.6 Roadway Deficiencies 1-19

2.0 Alternatives 2-1
2.1 No-Build Alternative 2-1
2.2 Transportation System Management 2-1
2.3 Other Modes 2-3
2.4 Build Alternatives 2-3
2.4.1 Preliminary Alternative Corridors 2-3
2.4.1.1 Description of Segments 2-4
2.4.1.2 Description of Segment Combination 2-6
2.4.1.3 Analysis of Preliminary Corridors 2-7
2.4.2 Refined Alternative Corridors 2-9
2.4.2.1 Description of Corridors 2-10
2.4.2.2 Analysis of Refined Corridors 2-13
2.4.3 Alternatives Carried Forward for Detailed Study 2-17
2.4.3.1 Western Alternative 2-22
2.4.3.2 Central Alternative 2-24
2.4.3.3 Eastern Alternative 2-27
2.4.3.4 Selection of the Preferred Alternative 2-29
2.4.3.5 Basis for Selecting the Preferred Alternative 2-32
2.4.3.6 Typical Section and Design Summary 2-35

3.0 Affected Environment 3-1
3.1 Study Area 3-1
3.2 Land Use 3-3
3.2.1 Existing Land Use 3-3
3.2.2 Land Use Plans 3-4
3.3 Farmland 3-5
3.4 Social and Economic Characteristics 3-7
3.4.1 Demographics 3-7
3.4.1.1 Population 3-7
3.4.1.2 Age 3-10
3.4.1.3 Race 3-12
3.4.2 Economics 3-14
3.4.3 Environmental Justice 3-16
3.5 Community Facilities 3-19
3.5.1 Schools 3-19
3.5.2 Churches and Cemeteries 3-19
3.5.3 Public Facilities 3-20
3.5.4 Parks and Recreation 3-20
3.5.5 Correctional Facilities 3-21
3.5.6 Emergency Medical Services 3-21
3.6 Transportation and Utilities 3-22
3.6.1 US Highways, State Highways, and County Roads 3-22
3.6.2 Railroads 3-23
3.6.3 Airports 3-23
3.6.4 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities 3-23
3.6.5 Scenic Byways 3-24
3.6.6 Utilities 3-24
3.7 Air Quality 3-25
3.8 Noise 3-27
3.8.1 Fundamentals of Sound and Noise 3-27
3.8.2 Noise Impact Criteria 3-28
3.8.3 Existing Noise Levels 3-29
3.9 Geological Resources 3-31
3.9.1 Geology 3-31
3.9.2 Soils 3-32
3.10 Water Resources 3-35
3.10.1 Surface Water 3-35
3.10.2 Ground Water 3-37
3.11 Wetlands 3-37
3.12 Floodplains 3-39
3.13 Wild and Scenic Rivers 3-40
3.14 Coastal Zones and Coastal Barriers 3-40
3.15 Vegetation and Wildlife 3-41
3.15.1 Vegetative Communities 3-41
3.15.1.1 Forest Fringe Wetlands 3-41
3.15.1.2 Overcup Oak-Water Hickory 3-41
3.15.1.3 Hackberry-Elm-Ash Forest 3-42
3.15.1.4 White Oaks-Red Oaks-Other Hardwoods 3-42
3.15.2 Wildlife and Fisheries 3-42
3.15.3 Terrestrial Habitat 3-42
3.15.4 Aquatic Habitat 3-44
3.15.5 Threatened and Endangered Species 3-45

3.15.5.1 Federally-Protected Species 3-45
3.15.6 Conservation Easements 3-50
3.16 Cultural Resources 3-51
3.16.1 Historic Background 3-51
3.17 Section 4 (f) of the Department of Transportation Act 3-56
3.18 Hazardous Materials 3-57
3.18.1 Regulatory Agency Review 3-57
3.18.2 Federal Regulatory Review 3-57
3.18.3 State and Local Regulatory Review 3-59

4.0 Environmental Consequences 4-1
4.1 Land Use 4-1
4.1.1 Consistency with Plans 4-1
4.2 Farmland 4-2
4.3 Social and Economic 4-4
4.3.1 Economics 4-4
4.3.2 Environmental Justice 4-10
4.3.2.1 Environmental Justice Outreach Plan 4-10
4.3.2.2 Summary of Survey/Interview Information 4-13
4.3.2.3 Community Issues Committee 4-13
4.3.2.4 Follow-up Meetings 4-14
4.3.2.5 Analysis of Potential Impacts 4-17
4.3.2.6 Findings of EJ Analysis 4-21
4.3.2.6 Accomplishments of the Environmental Justice Process 4-22
4.4 Public Facilities and Community Cohesion 4-22
4.4.1 Schools or Colleges 4-22
4.4.2 Churches and Cemeteries 4-22
4.4.3 Public Facilities 4-22
4.4.4 Parks and Recreational Facilities 4-23
4.4.5 Correctional Facilities 4-23
4.4.6 Hospitals and Emergency Medical Services 4-23
4.4.7 Neighborhoods 4-23
4.4.8 Travel Patterns and Accessibility 4-24
4.5 Relocations 4-25
4.5.1 Displaced Residences and Businesses 4-25
4.5.2 Relocation Assistance 4-27
4.6 Transportation and Utilities 4-29
4.6.1 Railroads 4-29
4.6.2 Airports 4-29
4.6.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities 4-29
4.6.4 Utilities 4-30
4.7 Air Quality 4-31
4.8 Noise 4-32
4.8.1 Future Noise Level Estimates 4-32
4.8.1.1 Design Year (2030) No Build Alternative Noise Environment 4-32
4.8.1.2 Design Year (2030) Build Alternative Noise Environment 4-32
4.8.2 Noise Abatement Measures 4-34
4.8.2.1 Barrier Evaluation 4-34
4.8.2.2 Other Noise Abatement Measures 4-35

4.8.2.3 Land Use Development and Future Noise Abatement 4-36
4.8.2.4 Impending Development 4-37
4.9 Geologic Resources 4-37
4.10 Water Resources 4-38
4.10.1 Surface Water 4-39
4.10.2 Groundwater 4-42
4.11 Wetlands and Streams 4-42
4.11.1 Determination of Potential Wetland and Streams Impacts 4-43
4.11.1.1 Wetlands 4-44
4.11.1.2 Streams 4-46
4.11.2 Wetland and Stream Mitigation 4-48
4.11.3 Permitting 4-53
4.12 Floodplains 4-53
4.13 Wild and Scenic Rivers 4-55
4.14 Coastal Barriers and Coastal Zones 4-55
4.15 Vegetation and Wildlife 4-55
4.15.1 Effects on Vegetative Communities 4-55
4.15.2 Habitat Fragmentation 4-58
4.15.3 Effects on Wildlife 4-59
4.15.4 Effects on Fisheries/Aquatic Habitats 4-60
4.15.5 Effects on Threatened or Endangered Species 4-61
4.16 Conservation Easements 4-62
4.17 Cultural Resources 4-64
4.17.1 Archaeological Sites 4-65
4.17.1.1 Methodology 4-65
4.17.1.2 Impacts 4-66
4.17.1.3 Mitigation 4-68
4.17.2 Historic Structures 4-69
4.17.2.1 Methodology 4-69
4.17.2.2 Impacts 4-69
4.17.2.3 Mitigation 4-70
4.18 Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act 4-71
4.19 Hazardous Materials 4-72
4.20 Indirect and Cumulative Impacts 4-76
4.20.1 Indirect Impacts 4-76
4.20.1.1 Existing and Induced Development 4-77
4.20.1.2 Summary of Indirect Impacts 4-79
4.20.1.3 Mitigation 4-81
4.20.2 Cumulative Impacts 4-81
4.21 Energy Impacts 4-82
4.22 Visual Impacts 4-83
4.23 Construction Impacts 4-84
4.24 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources 4-87
4.25 Relationship Between Short-Term Impacts and Long-Term Benefits 4-90
4.26 Summary of Impacts 4-91

5.0 List of Preparers 5-1

6.0 Distribution 6-1

7.0 Comments on the DEIS and Responses 7-1

7.1 **DEIS Distribution** 7-1
7.2 **Comment and Response Summary** 7-4
7.2.1 Federal Agencies 7-4
7.2.2 State Agencies 7-10

8.0 Agency Coordination and Public Involvement 8-1
8.1 Agency Coordination 8-1
8.1.1 Notice of Intent 8-1
8.1.2 Scoping Meeting 8-1
8.1.3 Request for Participation and Comments 8-3
8.1.4 Other Agency Meetings 8-3
8.1.5 Coordination with FHWA and Other State DOTs 8-12
8.2 Public Involvement 8-13
8.2.1 Mailing List 8-13
8.2.2 Newsletters and Brochures 8-13
8.2.3 Citizen Questions and Comments 8-13
8.2.4 Project Website 8-14
8.2.5 Environmental Justice Task Force – Community Outreach Program 8-14
8.2.5.1 Environmental Justice Task Force Meetings 8-14
8.2.5.2 Public Meetings and Citizen Informational Workshops 8-17
8.2.6 Public Hearing 8-31
8.2.6.1 Summary of Alternative Preferences by Section 8-33
8.2.6.2 Resolutions of Letters of Support from Local Officials 8-34
8.2.6.3 Summary of Comment Forms and Letter Content 8-35
8.2.7 Follow Up Actions 8-42

Appendix Sections

Appendix A Notice of Intent
Appendix B Agency Correspondence
Appendix C Agency Meetings
Appendix D Public Involvement
Appendix E Farmland Evaluation Forms
Appendix F Noise Impact Forms/Details
Appendix G Plan and Profile Sheets (Separate Binder)
Appendix H Alternatives Development
Appendix I Economic Report
Appendix J Evaluating

List of Tables

Chapter 1

Table 1-1 ADT Volumes for Rural Segments within the Study Area 1-10
Table 1-2 ADT Volumes for Segments in North Tunica County, Cleveland, Clarksdale 1-10
Table 1-3 Safety Benefits of Interstate Highways 1-19

Chapter 2

Table 2-1 Segment Combinations for Preliminary Alternative Corridors 2-6
Table 2-2 Preliminary Alternative Corridor Screening Analysis 2-8
Table 2-3 Summary of Impacts for Refined Corridors 2-14
Table 2-4 Maximum and Minimum Impacts of Corridors 2-16
Table 2-5 Benoit Segment Options – Central Alternative in Souther Section 2-25

Chapter 3

Table 3-1 Total Acres of Prime Farmland 3-6
Table 3-2 Population Data for 1990-2000 3-7
Table 3-3 Population Trends by Place 3-9
Table 3-4 County Population by Age Range 3-10
Table 3-5 Population Over 65 for 2000 Census Tracts 3-11
Table 3-6 Minority Population: 1990-2000 3-12
Table 3-7 Minority Population by 2000 Census Tract 3-13
Table 3-8 Poverty Data for Study Area 3-14
Table 3-9 Income Data for Study Area 3-15
Table 3-10 Income Data by 2000 Census Tract 3-16
Table 3-11 Potential Environmental Justice Concerns for Minority Populations and Income Levels 3-18
Table 3-12 Mississippi and National Ambient Air Quality Standards 3-26
Table 3-13 Typical Sound Levels 3-28
Table 3-14 Noise Abatement Criteria Hourly A – Weighted Sound Level-Decibels (dBA) 3-29
Table 3-15 Summary of Ambient Noise Levels 3-30
Table 3-16 Federally Threatened and Endangered Species in Four-County Study Area 3-46

Chapter 4

Table 4-1 Farmland Impacts 4-3
Table 4-2 Long-Range Economic Impacts by Alternative 4-9
Table 4-3 Preliminary Interviewee List-EJ Outreach 4-11
Table 4-4 County Official Interviews 4-12
Table 4-5 Community Meetings and Workshops Held Within Study Area 4-15
Table 4-6 Evaluation of Factors for Potential Disproportionate Impacts 4-18
Table 4-7 Estimated Minority and Low-Income Relocations 4-19
Table 4-8 Minority and Low-Income Population Served in Study Area – Community Within 2 Miles of I-69 Access 4-20
Table 4-9 Residential and Business Relocations 4-26
Table 4-9B Available Housing 4-27
Table 4-10 Transmission and Gas Line Crossings 4-31

Table 4-11 Existing Measured and Future (2030) Modeled Receptors 4-33
Table 4-12 Number of Receptors that Approached/Exceeded FHWA NAC 4-34
Table 4-13 Potential Subsurface Problem Area……4-38
Table 4-14 303(d) Listed Waters within the Alternatives 4-41
Table 4-15 Jurisdictional Wetlands within the Alternatives..... 4-44
Table 4-16 Wetland Impacts for the Preferred Alternative..... 4-45
Table 4-17 Perennial Stream Crossings within the Alternatives 4-39
Table 4-18 Channel Impacts for the Preferred Alternative..... 4-48
Table 4-19 Floodplain Impacts..... 4-54
Table 4-20 Vegetative Communities..... 4-57
Table 4-21 Conservation Area Impacts 4-64
Table 4-22 Archaeological Sites..... 4-66
Table 4-23 Archaeological Sites..... 4-68
Table 4-24 Historic Structures..... 4-69
Table 4-25 Historic Structures..... 4-70
Table 4-26 Hazmat Database Results for the Study Area..... 4-73
Table 4-27 Hazardous Materials Sites..... 4-74
Table 4-28 Maintenance Coat..... 4-89
Table 4-29 Summary of Impacts 4-93
Table 4-30 Segment Combinations..... 4-94

Chapter 8
Table 8-1 Summary of DEIS Alternative Preferences..... 8-33

List of Figures

Chapter 1

Figure 1-1 National I-69 Corridor
Figure 1-2 Study Area

Chapter 2

Figure 2-1 Preliminary Alternative Segments
Figure 2-2 Refined Alternative Corridors
Figure 2-3 Alternatives for Detailed Study
Figure 2-4 Western Alternative
Figure 2-5 2030 Traffic Volumes—Western Alternative
Figure 2-6 Central Alternative
Figure 2-7 2030 Traffic Volumes—Central Alternative
Figure 2-8 Eastern Alternative
Figure 2-9 2030 Traffic Volumes—Eastern Alternative
Figure 2-10 Preferred Alternative
Figure 2-11A Typical Section – Frontage Roads on New Location
Figure 2-11B Typical Section – Frontage Roads Along Existing US 61- Eastern Widening
Figure 2-11C Typical Section – Frontage Roads Along Existing US 61- Western Widening
Figure 2-12A Typical Section – SR 8 Widening – Four Lane Divided
Figure 2-12B Typical Section – SR 8 Five-Lane Open Ditch
Figure 2-12C Typical Section – SR 8 Five-Lane Curb and Gutter

Chapter 3

Figure 3-1 Study Area and Alternatives
Figure 3-2 Land Use/Land Cover
Figure 3-3 Percent Minority Population by Census Tract
Figure 3-4 Median Household Income by Census Tract
Figure 3-5 Percent Population Below Poverty Level by Census Tract
Figure 3-6 Figure Divisions
Figure 3-7A Community Facilities
Figure 3-7B Community Facilities
Figure 3-8 Transportation Facilities
Figure 3-9 Utilities
Figure 3-10A Water Resources
Figure 3-10B Water Resources
Figure 3-11A 100-Year Floodplain
Figure 3-11B 100-Year Floodplain

Chapter 4

Figure 4-1 Noise Monitoring Sites
Figure 4-2A Wetland Impacts
Figure 4-2B Wetland Impacts
Figure 4-3A Streams Impacted
Figure 4-3B Streams Impacted
Figure 4-4 Pondberry Location
Figure 4-5 Hazardous Material Sites

Chapter 1
Purpose and Need

1.1 Description of Proposed Action

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are proposing to construct a multi-lane, interstate highway of approximately 120 miles that travels in a southwest-northeast direction from southwest of Benoit near State Route 1 (SR 1) in Bolivar County to east of Robinsonville near SR 304 in Tunica County, Mississippi. The project, located in several Mississippi Delta counties in the northwest part of the state, is identified as Section of Independent Utility Number 11 (SIU 11) of the national Interstate 69 (I-69) corridor (see **Figure 1-1**). This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) documents the need for constructing the 120-mile corridor. Alternatives were developed to respond to the social, economic, and environmental consequences. In order to respond adequately to the environmental, engineering, and planning issues associated with the Preferred Alternative for SIU 11 of the national I-69 corridor and to evaluate the impacts of the Preferred Alternative, this FEIS was prepared.

1.2 Study Area Description

1.2.1 Location

Most of Tunica, Coahoma, and Bolivar Counties are contained in the study area. In addition, the northwest portion of Sunflower County also is in the study area. The study area (see **Figure 1-2**) is located east of the Mississippi River Levee; south of SR 304; west of US 49 West and SR 3; and north of SR 442 and SR 448.

Sunflower County is located within the study area, but does not contain any municipalities inside the study area. Within the remainder of the study, Tunica County has one municipality, Coahoma County has six, and Bolivar County has fourteen. Based on data from the 2000 Census, the population is 1,132 for the Town of Tunica in Tunica County. The City of Clarksdale (with a

population of 20,645) is the largest municipality in Coahoma County; and the City of Cleveland (with a population of 13,841) is the largest municipality in Bolivar County. The population of the second largest municipality in Coahoma County is 1,467 for the Town of Jonestown; and the population for the second largest municipality in Bolivar County is 2,595 for the City of Rosedale. The cities of Clarksdale and Cleveland have substantially more population than other municipalities in this primarily rural study area.

1.2.2 Topography

Because the study area is located within the Lower Mississippi River Delta, the topography of the land is primarily flat. Levees have been constructed along the Mississippi River. The levees are earthen structures with a steeper slope on the river side than on the land side and were built to control flooding. Little topographical change occurs within the study area. Any undulation or minor topographical changes in the study area are a result of the Mississippi River meandering over geologic time, leaving depositional and erosional remnants.

1.2.3 Land Use

In general, most of the land in the study area is rural. Agricultural activity is the predominant land use. The land is farmed for cotton, rice, soybeans, or converted into ponds for aquaculture. In the rural environment, most of the uncultivated land is in low areas around lakes and streams. US 61 is the primary north-south corridor through the study area. The majority of the cities, as

well as commercial and industrial activity, are located along US 61 or near other modes of transportation, including existing county airports or railroad lines. From the south, the primary urban areas are Cleveland in Bolivar County, Clarksdale in Coahoma County, and Tunica in Tunica County. These cities as well as smaller municipalities are located along US 61.

1.3 Project Purpose and Need

1.3.1 History and Purpose

The I-69 Corridor has been defined by the United States Congress to commence in Port Huron, Michigan/Sarnia, Ontario, Canada and terminate in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) in Texas at the United States/Mexico border, a distance of over 1,600 miles.

This I-69 Corridor, which was originally known as Corridor 18, was designated by Congress as a High Priority Corridor of National Significance in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). It was further defined and formalized in the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The I-69 Corridor has been identified to address the transportation needs associated with the anticipated increase in the movement of goods between the United States, Mexico, and Canada, partners in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) of 1992. The I-69 Corridor has been designated as high priority for planning studies and eventual construction. Once complete, this corridor would provide for the national economic interests, enhance local economic development opportunities along and near the corridor, and provide an improved system of transportation for both routine travel and emergency travel in the event of a national crisis.

The I-69 Steering Committee adopted the following statement of overall purpose:

- To improve international and interstate trade in accordance with national and state goals;
- To facilitate economic development in accordance with state, regional, and local policies and plans; and
- To improve surface transportation consistent with national, state, regional, and local needs, and with the congressional designation of the corridor.

Based on the general location of the I-69 Corridor, the Steering Committee also developed the following overall goals:

Goal 1: To improve international and interstate movement of freight and people by ensuring a safe transportation system that is accessible, integrated, and efficient while offering flexibility of transportation choices in mid-America.

Goal 2: To enhance the regional and local transportation systems by providing transportation capacity to meet current and future needs.

Goal 3: To facilitate economic development and enhance economic growth opportunities domestically and internationally through efficient and flexible transportation with particular emphasis being given to economic growth in the Lower Mississippi Delta Region.

Goal 4: To facilitate connections to intermodal facilities and major ports along the corridor.

Goal 5: To facilitate the safe and efficient movement of persons and goods by fostering a reduction in incident risk.

Goal 6: To upgrade existing facilities to be utilized as I-69 within the corridor to design standards suitable for Interstate highway and commensurate with the projected demand.

Goal 7: To directly connect the urban areas named by Congress (the "named cities" of Indianapolis, Evansville, Memphis, Shreveport/Bossier City, and Houston and the Lower Rio Grande).

I-69 also is a key transportation recommendation of the Delta Initiatives, which is aimed at the revitalization and economic development of the Lower Mississippi Delta. The Lower Mississippi Delta is composed of portions of seven states bound together through their location along the Mississippi River. Those seven states are Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. This Lower Mississippi Delta region has long been considered one of the poorest regions in the nation, and the Mississippi Delta counties contained within SIU 11 are located in the heart of the Lower Mississippi Delta.

With a total length of over 1,600 miles, the added sections for the I-69 Corridor would require a long construction period. This length precludes development of the full corridor as a single construction project. Further, the types of work to be undertaken vary from location to location. The practical approach is to undertake a series of projects in sections, which all fit into and are consistent with the overall purpose and need for I-69. Accordingly, the entire corridor was broken down into viable sections of sufficient length to address environmental issues on a broad scope. The sections must have independent utility or independent significance, which provides each section the ability to be used without additional future transportation improvements in the area. The sections also must not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements. Each of these sections is referred to as a Section of Independent Utility, or a SIU.

The I-69 Corridor in Mississippi is divided into the following four SIUs.

- SIU 9 begins in Tennessee north of Memphis near Millington and ends in De Soto County, Mississippi at the new I-55/SR 304 interchange. A draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) has been completed for this segment and has been through the Public Hearing. The final environmental impact statement (FEIS) is being prepared.
- SIU 10 includes the relocated section of SR 304 in De Soto County between I-55 and US 61, as well as a spur that intersects the existing section of SR 304 east of Robinsonville in Tunica County. SIU 10 has been approved as part of the I-69 Corridor and is presently under construction.
- SIU 11 begins at the new spur with existing SR 304 east of Robinsonville in Tunica County and ends at SR 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County.
- SIU 12 begins at SR 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County and proceeds to the southwest across the Mississippi River along the alignment of the Great River Bridge project into Arkansas and ends near McGehee, Arkansas. A final environmental impact statement (FEIS) has been completed for SIU 12 and the ROD has been issued.

The general purpose of the SIU 11 project is to provide a safe, efficient, and cost effective interstate/freeway transportation facility that would meet design year traffic flow and promote economic development within the Mississippi Delta region of Mississippi. This project has logical termini consisting of a northern connection to SIU 10 and a southern connection to SIU 12.

1.3.2 Project Status

In response to the ISTEA of 1991, several studies were made to give form to the I-69 authorizing legislation. Those studies included the 1995 Corridor 18 Feasibility Study, the 1996 Corridor 20 Feasibility Study, and the 1997 Corridor 18 Special Issues Study. After ISTEA and TEA-21, additional studies were made to refine planning efforts. These additional studies included a 1999 report on SIUs and a February 2000 report on purpose and need. The additional studies also included a study of the SR 304 corridor in Mississippi, which eventually became SIU 10.

The statement of purpose and need for the I-69 Corridor identified benefits to the nation that have been shown to outweigh the costs of providing the transportation facility. These benefits are related to system linkage, capacity, transportation demand, economic development, modal/freight interrelationships, safety, and roadway deficiencies. Studies considering alternative means of transportation have shown that an Interstate highway facility will best meet the needs as identified. Completed planning and feasibility studies for I-69 verified that it qualified for additional study.

The 32 SIUs that encompass the I-69 Corridor were developed in a manner consistent with FHWA's procedures for establishing logical termini and independent utility. FHWA approval was then granted for the states to advance the SIUs to the stages of project planning, development, and the FHWA National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decision-making process. The SIUs will be studied by the state(s) contained within the SIUs, addressing state and local needs, schedules, and funding constraints in accordance with the NEPA process.

Interagency workshops and briefings have been conducted. The primary mechanism for working with the resource agencies has been through the Southeast Natural Resource Leaders Group (SENRLG) and its counterparts in Dallas, Texas, and Chicago, Illinois. SENRLG, which will continue to serve as an advisory group to I-69 decision makers, is a collaboration of regional and federal executives who lead agencies with natural resources as part of their mission.

There have been many public involvement activities and opportunities throughout the I-69 Corridor development process. During the planning and feasibility study stages, a series of public meetings were held in Memphis, Tennessee. On November 7, 1994, a meeting was held to receive suggestions and comments. Another meeting was held on September 25, 1995, to discuss

the results of the feasibility study. A meeting was held on August 29, 1996, to receive suggestions and comments. On May 28, 1997, a meeting was held to discuss the results of the Special Issues Study.

A number of advocacy groups were involved during corridor studies. Additionally, ten Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) have been involved in the planning for I-69, and more opportunities for public involvement will continue throughout the process. Currently, state-specific studies are being conducted in accordance with each state's public involvement process.

1.3.3 System Linkage

SIU 9 will determine the routing of I-69 through or around Memphis, Tennessee. SIU 10 has already been determined as the relocated section of SR 304 under construction in De Soto County, Mississippi between I-55 and US 61, and its spur that connects to the south to existing SR 304 in Tunica County (see **Figure 3-8**). The study on SIU 12 begins at SR 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County, Mississippi and proceeds to the southwest across the Mississippi River into Arkansas and ends near McGehee, Arkansas. The approximately 120-mile study of SIU 11 will connect SIU 10 with SIU 12 and will compose the majority of mileage for I-69 in Mississippi. Since Memphis, Tennessee and Shreveport, Louisiana are two of the federally-mandated cities that I-69 would serve, the SIU 11 study is vital to the I-69 Corridor in providing an efficient link between Memphis and Shreveport.

The surface transportation network within the study area of SIU 11 consists of a combination of U.S. highways, state highways, city streets, and county roads in a primarily rural setting. This road network, connecting to and surrounding the location of the proposed project, provides good levels of service to local traffic. These existing highways and county roads generally follow a north-south or east-west direction. SIU 11 of I-69 would provide a new north-south interstate highway, with a small amount of east-west movement, over its approximate 120 miles between SIU 10 and SIU 12. With its northeast to southwest diagonal tracking path, this new interstate highway would provide a new corridor and cross a number of major north-south and east-west highways and county roads. At these major crossings, interchanges would be provided to access the intersecting routes and the traffic generators these intersecting routes serve. Due to its diagonal path and the connections it would provide to the existing transportation system, this section of I-69 would improve the existing surface transportation network.

Three US highways—US 61, US 278/SR 6, and US 49—are located in the study area. US 61 serves communities, towns, and cities such as Jonestown, Robinsonville and Tunica in Tunica County; Lula, Rich, Coahoma, Lyon, and Clarksdale in Coahoma County; and Alligator, Duncan, Shelby, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Merigold, Cleveland, and Boyle in Bolivar County. The MDOT has either four-laned or is in the process of four-laning the entire section of US 61 within the study area. US 278/SR 6 enters into Mississippi concurrent with US 82 near Greenville, which is south of the study area. US 278/SR 6 then exits US 82 and becomes concurrent with US 61 at Leland, which is roughly 10 miles east of Greenville. US 278/SR 6 and US 61 then separate in the study area at Clarksdale, where US 278/SR 6 become concurrent with SR 6 and resume its east-west orientation. Within the study area, the overlapping section of US 278/SR 6 and US 61 connects the cities of Cleveland and Clarksdale. US 49 crosses the Mississippi River approximately five miles west of Lula and runs south along the alignment of US 61. At Clarksdale, US 49 separates from US 61 and moves southeast out of the study area. Within the study area US 49 joins Lula, Rich, Coahoma, Jonestown, and Lyon with the city of Clarksdale.

Nine state highways are located in the study area. SR 1 (also called the Great River Road) runs south to north along the western edge of the study area. It begins outside the study area at Onward in the central part of the state, enters the study area south of Benoit in Bolivar County, and leaves the study area at US 49 in Coahoma County. Within the study area, SR 1 serves communities, towns, and cities such as Benoit, Beulah, Rosedale, and Gunnison in Bolivar County; and Rena Lara, Sherard, Stovall, and Friars Point in Coahoma County. SR 8 begins at the intersection with SR 1 at Rosedale in Bolivar County and extends east through the town of Pace and the city of Cleveland. After exiting Cleveland, SR 8 continues east into Sunflower County and then out of the study area. Other west to east state highways within the study area—such as SR 446, SR 32, and SR 444 in Bolivar County; SR 322 and SR 316 in Coahoma County; and SR 4 and SR 304 in Tunica County—serve communities, towns, or cities such as Skene, Benoit, Shelby, and Duncan in Bolivar County; Sherard and Jonestown in Coahoma County; and Tunica and Robinsonville in Tunica County.

Each of the counties contains a network of county roads. The major county roads are graveled or paved and follow a north-south, east-west grid pattern corresponding to section lines.

1.3.4 Transportation Demand

One of the purposes of the I-69 corridor is to support international and domestic trade related traffic. Memphis is a major distribution center and Shreveport is one of the cities mandated by legislation for the location of I-69. With construction of the I-69 Great River Bridge (SIU 12) near Benoit, Mississippi, it is estimated that the cumulative daily traffic on SIU 11 in the 2030 Design Year will range from 18,000 to more than 50,000 vehicles. Truck traffic is expected to account for as much as 30% of the daily volume on some segments, as many as 10,400 trucks per day. The traffic demand data reported herein was obtained or derived from the traffic studies conducted for the national I-69 corridor and for the two adjacent segments (SIUs 10 and 12), as well as from discussions with MDOT Planning Division.[1]

Level of Service (LOS) is a measure describing operating conditions on a roadway segment or at an intersection. Six levels are defined using the letters A to F, with A representing the least congested condition and F the most congested. Generally, LOS D for urban areas and LOS C for rural areas are the minimum acceptable LOS during peak periods, with LOS E and F indicating failing or near-failing conditions. While there are many roadway and traffic characteristics that affect the LOS for a given segment, it is possible to approximate volume intervals for each LOS on a roadway such as I-69 on both rural and urban segments. Most of SIU 11 is characterized as rural; however, in the immediate vicinity of Cleveland, Clarksdale, and the gaming area in northern Tunica County, the interstate would exhibit more urban operational characteristics. Volume thresholds for a given LOS on an urban interstate segment are about 25% higher than those for a rural segment. **Tables 1-1** and **1-2** show volume thresholds for rural and urban LOS, respectively. It must be noted that **Tables 1-1** and **1-2** reflect nominal volume-LOS relationships, not hard and fast values. Precise LOS calculations require consideration of all parameters for the analysis segment, including truck percentages, driver population factors, peak-hour factors, etc.

[1] 1. *Corridor 18 Feasibility Study*, 1995. Wilbur Smith Associates, and HNTB Corporation.
2. *Draft Environmental Impact Statement for SIU 12 of the I-69 Corridor*. July 29, 2002.
3. *MDOT Environmental Assessment for SR 304 Between US 61 and I-55 in DeSoto County and Tunica County, Mississippi*, approved June 3, 1996.
4. *Approved Re-Evaluation of MDOT Environmental Assessment for SR 304 Between US 61 and I-55 in DeSoto County and Tunica County, Mississippi*. The re-evaluation redesignated a portion of this section of SR 304 for I-69. November 22, 2000.

Table 1-1 ADT Volumes for Rural Segments Within the Study Area	
Level of Service	**Daily Volume**
A	< 18,200
B	18,200 – 31,800
C	31,800 – 45,500
D	> 45,500

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2003.

Table 1-2 ADT Volumes for Segments in North Tunica County, Cleveland, Clarksdale	
Level of Service	**Daily Volume**
A	< 23,600
B	23,600 – 38,200
C	38,200 – 58,200
D	> 58,200

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2003.

The cities of Greenville, Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica—along with the river ports at Greenville and Rosedale—presently generate a substantial amount of truck traffic from within and outside Mississippi; and SIU 11 would be expected to increase the amount of truck traffic to these generators. The casinos and development near the casinos at Robinsonville in Tunica County have made this gaming area the third largest in the nation, trailing only Las Vegas and Atlantic City. The Robinsonville area has become a major one-day traffic generator and a major tourist attraction for Mississippi.

The MDOT adopted its updated four-lane program on November 27, 2001. That program is called "Vision 21." The four I-69 SIUs that impact Mississippi, including SIU 11, are part of that program.

1.3.5 Legislation

Since 1991, the I-69 Corridor has been supported by Congressional mandates.

- In 1991, Corridor 18 (from Indianapolis, Indiana, to Memphis, Tennessee, via Evansville, Indiana) and Corridor 20 (Texarkana, Texas, to Laredo, Texas) were designated by Congress as corridors of national significance in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act.

- In 1992, the North American Free Trade Agreement was passed. This agreement has resulted in additional traffic demands and an increase in international freight movement.
- In 1993, Corridor 18 was amended by Congress to extend from Memphis, Tennessee, to Houston, Texas via Shreveport/Bossier City, Louisiana.
- In 1995, Corridor 18 was again amended by Congress in the National Highway System Designation Act to extend from Houston to a crossing of the Mexico border in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Additionally, the Act required Corridor 18 to be located in Mississippi and Arkansas for the section between Memphis and Shreveport/Bossier City.
- In 1998, the TEA-21 added connecting facilities to Corridor 18 and officially designated the extension south of Indianapolis as Interstate 69.
- In 2005, the states of Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Indiana received planning, design, and construction funding for I-69 through the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

1.3.6 Social Advancement/Economic Development

Two important needs for this section of the I-69 corridor are enhancing the opportunity for local residents in the disadvantaged Delta region to improve their quality of life and encouraging economic development to provide for long-range stability in the region. An economic study and analysis was conducted in the early stages of this project to identify the corridors that would have the greatest potential for stimulating economic development[2] (A copy of the 2002 Economic Report is contained in **Appendix I**). Factors that were evaluated in the report included:

- Economic and demographic profiles for the study area, including current and historic population and housing trends, employment, income, and public services;
- Publications on rural highway development and the associated potential positive and negative effects on economic development;
- Interviews with public and private economic development officials to gain a greater understanding of the factors influencing economic development within the study area; and
- Analysis of factors that can influence economic development, including proximity to population centers, concentrations of development, industrial parks, major employers, tourist development opportunities, and transportation facilities such as river ports and airports. In addition, GIS analysis was used identify areas that would have adverse social, economic, and environmental effects.

[2] *Stimulating Economic Development, I-69 Alternatives Alignments*, Neel-Schaffer, 2002.

The results of the analysis evaluated three corridors for their potential for economic development. All three corridors were later refined to the detailed study alternatives as discussed in Sections 2.3.2.2 and 2.4. The economic development study was updated in 2004 to reflect the detailed study alternatives (A copy of the 2005 Economic Report is contained in **Appendix J**). The corridors with the greatest potential for economic development include the Eastern and Central corridors.

With the construction of this I-69 in Northwest Mississippi, disadvantaged persons living in this region would have greater transportation access to health services, educational opportunities, job training and opportunities, and other social and cultural activities.

Employees would be able to reach places of employment more easily and safely, increasing commuter safety and expanding the area where employees would reside and commute. Travelers, commuters, shippers, and public transportation systems would have the opportunity to experience savings in travel time, greater safety, and reduced costs for operating their vehicles.

The public transportation system has been driven by the area's development as well as increased tourism within the study areas to places such as the casinos, resorts, "Blues Highway", and Delta Blues Museum. Tunica County, for example, has a high concentration of poverty, many disabled individuals, many households without autos, and high unemployment. With nearly 16 percent of the local population lacking access to a vehicle -- more than double the national non-metro rate of non-car ownership – public transportation has be used transport workers from throughout the county as well as from surrounding counties.[3]

Currently, each county in the study area has public transportation services. The primary public transportation services are provided by the Delta Area Rural Transit System (DARTS), Bolivar County Council on Aging, and North Delta Planning & Development District. In Tunica and Coahoma counties, DARTS operates more than 30 multi-passenger vehicles and has funding from MDOT. Its services include transporting people to and from jobs and training opportunities. According to DART's director, Antionette Gray, the DARTS program covers 7 counties. In 2002 to 2003 DARTS provided more than 228,350 one-way trips, of which she estimated 40% were for job transportation within Tunica and Coahoma counties.

[3] *Public Transportation on the Move in Rural America*, Economic Research Center, USDA, 2004.

This section of the I-69 Corridor is located in one of the most economically depressed areas in the entire country. As indicated in the economic study report[4] as well as by Mississippi State Economist, Dr. Phil Pepper, it is difficult to obtain an accurate assessment of potential jobs created that would be created by this section of I-69 as there are too many other factors that also play major roles in the economic vitality of an area. The corridor would have a positive effect on the rural Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC) identified in legislation and located in the area. Increased opportunities for employment and large population shifts due to migration may not occur to the extent these shifts have occurred in the past.

Environmental Justice is part of this study to ensure that minority and low-income persons are not adversely impacted by the project and to make sure minority and low-income persons are afforded increased opportunities.

In 1988, Congress enacted Public Law 100460, establishing the Lower Mississippi Development Commission to assess the needs, obstacles, and goals of the people living in the Lower Mississippi Delta Region. The region includes 219 counties and parishes within the seven states of Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee. This commission, which is commonly called the Delta Commission, studied and made recommendations on the economic needs, problems, and opportunities of the region, developing a 10-year economic development plan for the Delta. The initial report of the Delta Commission was released in 1989. In 1990, the final report was prepared and submitted to President Bush and the 101st Congress. That report was titled "The Delta Initiatives: Realizing the Dream…. Fulfilling the Potential." Issues addressed in the Delta Initiatives Report include high rates of poverty, especially among the African-American population, inadequate economic development, and problems resulting from the legacy of segregation. The Delta Initiatives Report called for an aggressive plan of revitalization and development of the Delta. Improving the physical infrastructure was one of the twelve central themes whose resolution would help the Delta reach its potential. Developing an improved system of limited access highways, airports, rail, and water port facilities, in order to promote economic development and expansion, was a public infrastructure transportation goal contained in the report.

The Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities program was created under the 1993 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act. Approximately one fourth of all the rural EZs and ECs

[4] *Stimulating Economic Development, I-69 Alternatives Alignments*, Neel-Schaffer, 2002.

nationwide that were announced in 1994 were located in the Delta. This program's purpose is to promote economic development and improve the quality of life in these distressed areas. Eligible areas are those with a maximum population of 30,000 that have pervasive poverty, unemployment, and general distress. The EZ/EC program is based upon the principles of sustainable development, leadership from the local grassroots level, economic opportunity, long-range strategic planning, and community-based partnerships. Enterprise communities receive special consideration in competition for funding under numerous federal programs. The federal government has focused special attention on working cooperatively with designated enterprise communities to overcome regulatory impediments. The Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone Alliance (MDEZ) is a federally recognized alliance of three empowerment zones, which includes the Bolivar County Empowerment Zone. The MDEZ encompasses parts of Bolivar, Holmes, Humphreys, Leflore, Sunflower, and Washington Counties in Mississippi. The portion of the MDEZ in Bolivar County is inside the SIU 11 study area, while the portion of the MDEZ in Sunflower County is south and east of the SIU study area. Holmes is the only county in the MDEZ that does not border a county included in the SIU 11 study area. This alliance works to coordinate and support the efforts of the individual zones. Projects of the alliance zone include an extensive outreach program composed of trained education advocates who serve to educate the community on the EZ/EC initiative, encourage creative problem solving by localities, and promote meaningful participation by citizens and business owners.

In 1995, the FHWA released "Linking the Delta Region with the Nation and the World," which analyzed the progress toward fulfilling most of the Lower Mississippi Delta Commission transportation recommendations. That document related the emergence of community development innovations such as the EZ/EC Program. The document noted that between 1990 and 1995 many of the highway-related recommendations of the Lower Mississippi Delta Development Commission had been substantially or partially implemented. It was noted in the report that during the same period of time the counties and parishes of the Delta region, where these transportation improvements were being implemented, cumulatively outperformed the U.S. as a whole in relative job growth.

In 1999, the Board of Trustees of Mississippi's Institutions of Higher Learning, Center for Policy Research and Planning, released a report titled "Mississippi Handbook of Selected Data." The report provides statistics on the 82 counties in the state, as well as some nationwide statistics. Among other things, the handbook includes information on population, education, income, and

employment. The 1995 estimates for percentage of all ages in poverty for each county in the state—based on the U.S. Bureau of the Census, State and County Income and Poverty Estimates—are shown in the handbook. For the five counties that are in the study area for SIU 11, the poverty percentage estimates varied from a low of 35.2% in Bolivar County to a high of 41.6% in Sunflower County. The county in Mississippi with the highest percentage poverty estimate was Holmes County with 44.9% and the 8.8% estimate for DeSoto County was the lowest percentage. The county average for the state was 21.4%.

In 2000, the FHWA released "Delta Visions, Delta Voices: The Mississippi Delta Beyond 2000." The Federal section of the report is organized around four key themes, and one of those themes is to revitalize the regional economy. Transportation development is cited as critical to the economic advancement of the region. The report recommends that a number of high-priority projects—such as I-69 and the Great River Bridge—should receive the required funding to make them a reality. The other themes of the report are to improve the quality of life; to protect and restore the natural resources and the environment and enhance tourism; and to promote regional planning and development. Infrastructure improvements have the potential to address the problems the report cites in each of these three other themes.

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA), a federal and state partnership, was created in an effort to remedy chronic economic distress in the Lower Mississippi Delta Region. The DRA consists of 240 counties or parishes in an eight-state region, including 49 counties located in Mississippi. The Authority is lead by a Federal Co-Chairman, who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, and the governors of each participating state. The initiative of the authority is to help local, economically distressed communities to leverage other federal and state programs to improve basic infrastructure and stimulate growth. The authority must use at least 75% of funds in distressed counties and parishes, with 50% of the funds to be used for transportation and basic infrastructure improvements. The DRA is a partner with USDA's Rural Development Program (RDA), which assists the DRA in evaluating criteria for potential projects. Also assisting the DRA is Local Development Districts (LDD), whose purpose is to act as a liaison between State and local governments. The planned responsibilities of the DRA are outlined in the statute:

- Produce a regional development plan
- Set Priorities for approval of grants in the region

- Assess the region's needs and assets
- Inform participating states about interstate cooperation
- Work with states and local agencies to develop model legislation
- Enhance the capacity of and support Local Development Districts (LDD)
- Encourage private investment in economic development projects within the region
- Assist state governments with the states' economic development programs

Consistent with the research conducted at these federal, state, and regional levels, the proposed I-69 Corridor within the study area would enhance economic development—not only through the extensive construction program, but more importantly by bringing an efficient and competitive route for the movement of goods through the Delta and for tourist travel to the area. These factors would serve as a catalyst for long-term job growth to help this region catch up with others in the national economy.

Studies of the movement of commodities—both finished goods and raw materials—show that there is a significant demand for this movement to occur along a route within the designated I-69 Corridor. With an increasing global economy and evolving international trade opportunities, direct and continuous connections from Canada and Mexico play a key role in the health of the U.S. economy. The update to the *I-69 (Corridor 18) Special Environmental Study*-(HNTB, February 7, 2000) estimated that more than four billion (4,000,000,000) tons of freight move within the I-69 Corridor each year. As trade increases between U.S., Canada, and Mexico, the amount of freight certainly would increase. I-69 would give the nation new capacity to efficiently ship commodities from border to border, significantly reducing travel time and costs.

1.4 Modal Interrelationships

Several railroad corridors are found throughout the study area. One main rail corridor runs in a north-south orientation from the Tunica/De Soto County Line to the Bolivar/Washington County Line. However, most of this rail corridor is abandoned and the railroad is selling its right-of-way. The only active part of this railway is the Mississippi Delta Railroad, which runs from the Tunica/Coahoma County Line to Clarksdale. Active spurs branch off of the Mississippi Delta Railroad and run from Lula to Jonestown in Coahoma County. Another active section of the Mississippi Delta Railroad follows the US 49 corridor from Clarksdale southeast and leaves the

study area near Mattson. Another railroad, the Great River Railroad, begins in Rosedale and runs southward through both Beulah and Benoit before leaving the study area. The Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission operates the Great River Railroad, which connects the cities of Rosedale and Greenville. The city of Greenville is in Washington County, which is outside the study area and south of Bolivar County.

Three general aviation airports are located within the study area. One airport is in Tunica County, and it is located approximately two miles east of Tunica. A new runway is currently under construction at this airport to better accommodate the air travel demand in this area generated by the casinos at Robinsonville. That new runway will measure 8,200 feet by 150 feet. The second airport is located to the west of US 61 in Coahoma County approximately seven miles north of Clarksdale. The Clarksdale Airport's runway measures 5,400 feet by 100 feet. The third airport is in Bolivar County, just to the north of SR 8 in Cleveland, approximately two miles west of the junction of SR 8 and US 61. The Cleveland Airport's runway measures 4,000 feet by 75 feet. Delta State University at Cleveland has a flight school that uses the Cleveland Airport. Comparing the runway size of these airports with the ones in Mississippi that provide commercial airline flights for the traveling public—which include the Greenville Airport—the airport in Tupelo has the smallest runway measuring 6,500 feet by 100 feet. Several landing strips for crop dusting aircraft also are located throughout the SIU 11 study area.

The Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission operates the only water port contained in the study area. This port is located in Bolivar County at Rosedale, just west of SR 1 and south of the junction of SR 1 and SR 8. The Rosedale-Bolivar County Port is one of the state's five Mississippi River ports that accommodate barge traffic. An industrial park is located opposite the port to the east of SR 1 and to the south of SR 8. Washington County is outside the study area and borders Bolivar County to the south along the Mississippi River. It is noteworthy that the port at the city of Greenville in Washington County is another of the five Mississippi River ports that accommodate barge traffic, and the Greenville Port is larger than the port at Rosedale.

Interchanges would be provided for this section of I-69 in reasonable proximity to these railroads, airports, and water ports. These intermodal connections should further enhance the opportunity for economic development in and near the study area. Special emphasis has been placed on efficient connection(s) to the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port, including the widening of SR 8 to connect with I-69.

1.5 Safety

There is not an Interstate highway in the five-county study area for this section of I-69. Although the segment would have some east-west orientation, it primarily would run in a north-south direction. This Interstate segment at its northern termini would provide a safer system of transportation to the casinos at Robinsonville and to the Memphis metropolitan area. At its southern terminus, SIU 11 would connect to a new crossing of the Mississippi River into Arkansas at the Great River Bridge and reduce the exposure time it presently takes for traffic to cross the river into Arkansas by traveling to either Helena or Greenville.

An Interstate highway of this length would draw appreciable traffic from the existing system of US highways, state highways, and county roads. With its control of access to interchange locations, this interstate would provide a safer system of transportation for the traveling public that elects to use it instead of the existing system, which primarily has limited or no access control.

Analysis of crash records has consistently shown that Interstate highways provide safer conditions than other facilities. This safety benefit is due to the geometric design standards, medians, safety features such as guardrail, and particularly control of access, which greatly reduces conflicts among vehicles. Safety benefits of Interstate highways are quantified in Table 1-3, using 2000 statewide crash data for Mississippi. The fatal accident rate is over 25% less for Interstate facilities than for other major highways in the state.

Table 1-3
Safety Benefits of Interstate Highways

	Interstate System	All Other NHS Facilities
Total Fatalities	125	191
Total VMT (Millions)	6,370	7,054
Accident Rate (Fatalities/100M VMT)	1.96	2.71

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2003 MDOT Planning Division.

1.6 Roadway Deficiencies

Crossing highways and county roads would be reconstructed to appropriate standards at interchange locations for I-69. Upgrading of some highways and county roads outside the interchange limits also must occur to provide a connector capable of accommodating I-69 truck traffic. Major county roads crossing I-69 without an interchange would be reconstructed a sufficient length each side of I-69 to accommodate a grade separation bridge.

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

National I-69 Corridor

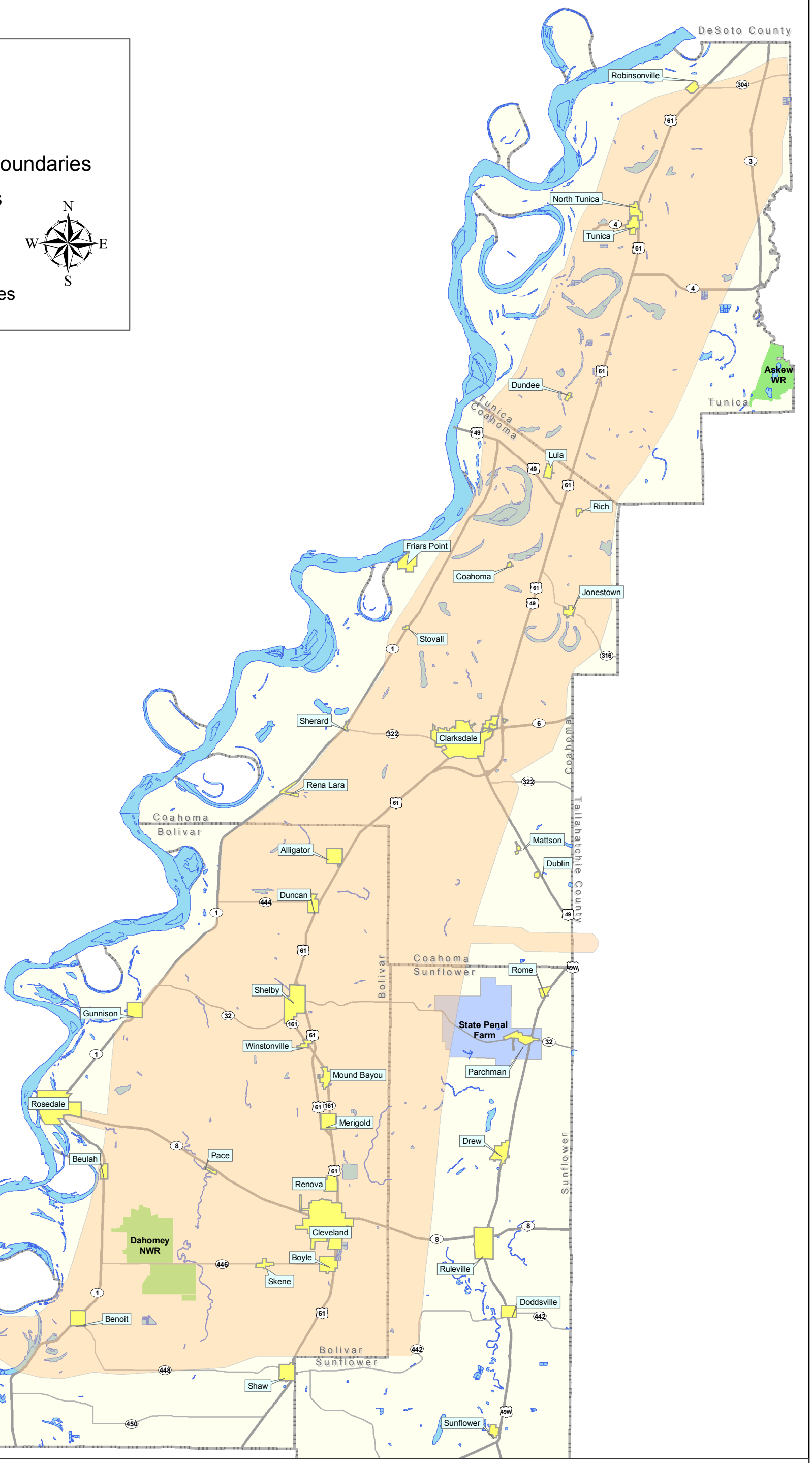
Figure 1-1

Legend

- Cities
- Study Area Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles



MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69 ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Study Area

Figure 1-2

Chapter 2
Alternatives

The proposed project involves construction on new location and/or improvement of existing roadways. The following alternatives are presented:

- No-Build Alternative
- Transportation System Management (TSM)
- Other Modes
- Build Alternatives

The selection of the Preferred Alternative, including the reasons for its selection is also discussed.

2.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would retain the existing roadway network. It would avoid negative impacts caused by highway construction to residences and businesses, wetlands, streams, forests, cultural resources, and other resources.

The No-Build Alternative would not meet the project purpose of providing a safe, efficient, and cost-effective transportation facility that would serve design year traffic and promote economic development within the Mississippi Delta region. Moreover, the No-Build Alternative would leave a gap in the construction of the national I-69 corridor. Therefore, the No-Build Alternative would not fulfill the purpose and need of the project.

2.2 Transportation System Management

Transportation System Management (TSM) is the application of minor construction, operational, and institutional actions to make productive and cost-effective use of existing transportation facilities and services. Specific TSM measures that would be considered for I-69 include traffic

signals and signal progression, adding turning lanes, adding passing lanes, and travel demand reduction strategies.

Signal improvements and progression refer to modifications in traffic signal timing and phasing to optimize traffic and reduce vehicle delay. There are very few signals in the I-69 study area, and signal progression is neither an existing problem nor a potential solution for the proposed project. Therefore, signal improvements and progression are not a viable alternative for the proposed project. Signal improvements would not meet the purpose and need for this project.

Separate turn lanes at intersections can improve traffic flow by providing a separate storage area for turning vehicles and thus reducing the delay to through-traffic and rear-end accidents. The proposed study area does not have existing problems with delay or a high number of rear-end collisions where turn lanes do not exist. Turn lanes at intersections would not meet the project purpose and need.

Passing lanes on two-lane highways can provide additional capacity by creating a separate lane for passing slower vehicles. The proposed study area does not have existing problems with capacity; therefore, a two-lane highway with passing lanes would not serve the project purpose and need.

Reducing travel demand can be a way of providing an improved level of service in a corridor without the major capital investment or environmental impacts associated with a roadway construction project. Travel demand reduction strategies could include staggered work hours at employment sites, growth management, and road-use pricing. One of the national goals of the I-69 corridor is to improve international and interstate trade. Many of the trips on I-69 would be interstate transport of goods, which would not respond to staggered work hours. Therefore, staggered work hours would not substantially reduce traffic and truck trips also would not be affected. Growth management and road-use pricing are not considered feasible options because they involve area-wide policies rather than policies applicable to distinct corridors. Reducing travel demand would not serve the project purpose and need.

2.3 Other Modes

Interchanges for the proposed project would be provided in reasonable proximity to the existing railroads, airports, and water ports. These intermodal connections would further enhance the opportunity for economic development in and near the study area. Special emphasis was placed on efficient connection(s) to the Rosedale–Bolivar County Port. The Rosedale–Bolivar County Port is located in Bolivar County at Rosedale, just west of SR 1 and south of the junction of SR 1 and SR 8. It is one of the state's five Mississippi River ports that accommodate barge traffic and is the only state port located in the study area. An industrial park is located opposite the port to the east of SR 1 and to the south of SR 8. As part of the proposed project, existing SR 8 would be widened to provide an intermodal connection to the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port.

Rail in the study area consists of the Mississippi Delta line and its spurs from the Coahoma County line to Clarksdale. Nearby airports include Tunica, Coahoma County, and Bolivar County facilities (all general aviation) as well as Memphis International. The proposed interstate would improve access to these other modes. None of these existing facilities (or potential improvement) would address the economic development, national transportation, or truck commerce goals identified as the project's purpose and need. Railroads or airports would not be as beneficial to the study area as the construction of the proposed project. The I-69 corridor would help to connect the less developed areas to the more developed areas within the study area. As an alternative, other modes would not address the purpose and need of the project.

2.4 Build Alternatives

Other alternatives examined consist of construction on new location and/or improvement of existing roadways. The following section describes the process of evaluating highway corridors and determining those to be carried forward for additional study.

2.4.1 Preliminary Alternative Corridors

To determine the location of alternatives for study, social and environmental databases were entered into a Geographic Information System (GIS). One-mile-wide corridor segments through Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties were determined through analysis of GIS data. The

beginning and end points of the preliminary corridors correspond to termini for SIU 10 and SIU 12, which were discussed in Section 1.3.1.

2.4.1.1 Description of Segments

The one-mile-wide preliminary corridors and segments are shown on **Figure 2-1**. Each preliminary corridor consisted of individual segments. Each segment is described below (segments that follow existing US 61 are indicated by an "*"):

Bolivar County

- B1 – This segment is located in the southwestern corner of Bolivar County and encompasses Benoit. I-69 would enter Mississippi through this segment.
- B2 – This segment is located to the east of B1 and is directly south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge.
- B3 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of B1 and runs northward. It ends south of SR 8.
- B4 – This segment begins at the northeastern terminus of B2 and runs north-northeast. It ends just southwest of Merigold.
- B5 – This segment begins at the southeastern terminus of B2. It runs east and then turns northward to end just southeast of Merigold.
- B6 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of B3 and travels northward east of SR 1. It ends just north of the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line.
- B7 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of B3 and travels eastward to end west of Mound Bayou.
- B8* – This segment begins at Merigold and runs northward. It ends just south of the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line.

Coahoma County

- C1 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of B6. It runs northeast and ends just north of Harris Bayou.
- C2* – This segment begins at the northern terminus of B8 just south of the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line. It runs northward and ends approximately two miles south of Clarksdale.
- C3* – This segment is an east-west segment that provides connectivity between the northern termini of C1 and C2.
- C4 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of C1 and travels northward along SR 1. It ends just north of Moon Lake.
- C5* – This segment begins at the northern termini of C2 and C5. It travels eastward along the Clarksdale Bypass and ends east-southeast of the city.

- C6* – This segment begins at the eastern terminus of C5 and travels north-northeast. It ends approximately one mile west of Rich.
- C7 – This segment begins at the eastern terminus of C5 and travels along the eastern edge of the study area. It ends at the Coahoma/Tunica County Line.
- C8 – This segment begins at the end of C4 and runs northward. It ends at the Coahoma/Tunica County Line.
- C9 – This segment travels southeast between SR 1 and US 61 along US 49.
- C10* – This segment begins at the northern terminus of C6. It runs northward and ends at the Coahoma/Tunica County Line.

Tunica County

- T1 – This segment begins at the Coahoma/Tunica County Line at the northern terminus of C8. It runs along the western edge of the study area and ends approximately two miles southwest of Beaver Lake.
- T2* – This segment starts at the Coahoma/Tunica County Line at the northern terminus of C10 and goes north-northeast along US 61. It ends approximately two miles east of Dundee.
- T3 – This segment begins at the Coahoma/Tunica County Line at the northern terminus of C7. It runs along the eastern edge of the study area for approximately seven miles.
- T4 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of T1 and follows the western edge of the study area. It ends just north of Beaver Lake.
- T5 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of T1 and goes northeast. It ends just southeast of Beaver Lake.
- T6* – This segment begins at the northern end of T1 and travels north-northeast. It ends at the northern terminus of T5 just south of Beaver Lake.
- T7 – This segment begins at the southern terminus of T6 and travels northeast for approximately three miles.
- T8 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of T4 and goes approximately one mile in a northeasterly direction. It ends southwest of Tunica.
- T9* – This segment begins at the northern terminus of T4 and goes approximately one mile in a northeasterly direction. It ends southwest of Tunica.
- T10 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of T6 and travels east for approximately two miles.
- T11 – This segment begins at the northern termini of T7 and T3. It travels northward and ends at the eastern terminus of T10 just south of SR 4.
- T12 – This segment is northwest of Tunica and is approximately one mile long.
- T13 – This segment begins at the northwest terminus of T12. It travels along the western edge of the study area and ends at SR 304.
- T14* – This segment provides a connection between T8 and T12 west of Tunica.
- T15 – This segment begins at the northern end of T11 and travels north for approximately eight miles.

- T16 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of T3 and runs northward along the eastern edge of the study area. It ends at SR 304.
- T17* – This segment begins at the northern terminus of T3 and runs northward along the eastern edge of the study area. It ends at SR 304.
- T18 – This segment begins at the northern termini of T15 and T17 and ends at the northern terminus of T13.
- T19 – This segment begins at the northern terminus of T18 and encompasses SR 304 to the end of the project.
- T20 – This segment provides a connection between T4 and T13.

2.4.1.2 Description of Segment Combinations

The individual segments described in the previous section were arranged into 17 combinations. **Table 2-1** lists the various combinations. Different parameters were screened for each of the combinations. The results of these combinations were evaluated to determine potential refined 1,000-foot-wide corridors.

Table 2-1
Segment Combinations for Preliminary Alternative Corridors

Combination	Segments
Bolivar County Alternatives	
1	B1+B3+B6
2	B1+B3+B7+B8
3	B1+B2+B4+B8
4	B1+B2+B5+B8
Coahoma County Alternatives	
5	C1+C4+C8
6	C1+C3+C5+C6+C10
7	C1+C3+C5+C6+C8+C9
8	C2+C5+C7
Tunica County Alternatives	
9	T1+T4+T20+T13+T18+T19
10	T1+T4+T8+T14+T17+T18+T19
11	T1+T5+T9+T10+T15+T18+T19
12	T2+T6+T9+T14+T13+T18+T19
13	T2+T6+T9+T14+T17+T18+T19
14	T2+T7+T11+T15+T18+T19
15	T2+T7+T16
16	T3+T11+T15+T18+T19
17	T3+T16

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

2.4.1.3 Analysis of Preliminary Alternative Corridors

Potential natural and human environmental impacts were evaluated for the preliminary alternative corridors. Impact categories included crossings of streams, open water, floodplain, potential wetland sites, and farmland. Other non-natural impacts that were evaluated included crossings of railroads, power lines, and gas lines. In addition, potential impacts were calculated for historic, archaeological, and hazardous material sites. **Table 2-2** shows the impacts.

The public and resource agencies were invited to comment on the preliminary alternative corridors. Major items of concern expressed by the public were the location for the crossing of SR 8 and the control of access that an interstate highway requires on adjacent property. The public recognized Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) as a sensitive environmental area, and recognized that an alternative bypassing the refuge to the south and east may be necessary to avoid environmental damage to the refuge. In Tunica County, community leaders expressed that the T15 alternative segment provides the best opportunities for Tunica's economic growth. They believed the T15 segment makes the best use of the expanding airport and nearby industrial areas.

2.4.2 Refined Alternative Corridors

The 17 preliminary one-mile corridors were refined and narrowed to nine 1,000-foot corridors based on the results listed in **Table 2-2,** input from the public and regulatory/resource agencies, and field visits to verify conditions. Coordination was conducted with the EPA and any information provided was implemented into the GIS analysis.

Table 2-2
Preliminary Alternative Corridor Screening Analysis

Name	Segments/ Combinations	Length			Crossings				Open Water (acres)	Potential Wetlands (acres)	100-Year Floodplain[b] (acres)	Farmlands (acres)	Historic Sites[c]	NRHP[d] Archaeology Sites	Total Hazardous Materials Sites[e]
		New Alignment (miles)	Existing Alignment (miles)	Total Length (miles)	Railroad	Power Line	Gas Line	Perennial Stream							
Bolivar County Alternatives															
1	B1+B3+B6	26.7	14.0	40.7	2	3	1	5	294	3,373	2,341	107,048	5	5	1
2	B1+B3+B7+B8	16.8	28.0	44.9	4	3	4	6	190	2,876	2,490	151,635	6	3	1
3	B1+B2+B4+B8	22.9	21.8	44.7	3	2	5	7	443	3,143	17,861	265,161	6	7	1
4	B1+B2+B5+B8	28.8	23.7	52.5	4	4	6	12	545	3,807	18,827	308,711	7	7	1
Coahoma County Alternatives															
5	C1+C4+C8	11.9	17.3	29.2	1	2	2	6	410	1,553	567	29,514	7	5	0
6	C1+C3+C5+C6+C10	1.1	30.1	31.2	3	1	4	6	159	671	1,544	57,478	5	7	0
7	C1+C3+C5+C6+ C9+C8	2.0	33.5	35.5	3	5	4	7	235	845	1,551	58,837	5	6	0
8	C2+C5+C7	19.0	12.9	31.9	1	1	2	5	58	865	2,582	33,459	0	3	1
Tunica County Alternatives															
9	T1+T4+T20+T13+ T18+T19	33.9	3.4	37.3	1	1	2	6	418	1,658	1,727	89,185	2	3	0
10	T1+T4+T8+T14+T17+ T18+T19	25.9	5.0	30.9	1	1	2	5	624	1,488	1,435	72,583	2	1	0
11	T1+T5+T9+T10+T15+ T18+T19	29.2	5.4	34.6	1	2	2	8	610	1,796	1,498	91,778	8	1	1
12	T2+T6+T9+T14+T13+ T18+T19	23.4	18.5	41.9	1	3	3	10	370	989	994	107,887	7	2	0
13	T2+T6+T9+T14+T17+ T18+T19	12.8	18.8	31.5	1	3	3	7	565	1,017	860	89,680	7	0	0
14	T2+T7+T11+T15+ T18+T19	24.9	5.9	30.9	1	2	3	6	144	1,271	897	115,109	2	0	1
15	T2+T7+T16	19.6	8.7	28.3	1	2	2	3	70	666	2,236	130,908	1	1	0
16	T3+T11+T15+ T18+T19	30.4	2.3	32.7	1	2	1	7	152	1,545	1,541	99,306	2	0	1
17	T3+T16	25.1	5.0	30.1	1	2	0	4	78	941	2,880	115,105	1	1	0

[a]The acreage within the corridor includes total corridor width of one mile. Actual impact of an alignment using this corridor would be much less.
[b]The 100-year floodplain consists of area in Zone A on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).
[c]Historic sites include both historic structures and National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) sites.
[d]National Register of Historic Places.
[e]Hazardous Materials Sites involve those sites that are either Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) sites or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) sites.

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2003.

Each of the refined alternative corridors begins at SIU 12 east of the Great River Bridge and extends to SIU 10 in Tunica County. The following paragraphs describe each of the nine refined alternative corridors shown in **Figure 2-2**.

2.4.2.1 Description of Corridors

Corridor A (MS 1 to Lula/West of Tunica)

Corridor A begins at the Mississippi terminus of the Great River Bridge. It turns northward west of Benoit and passes to the west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, crosses Route 1 south of Beulah, and passes east of both Beulah and Gunnison. In Coahoma County, Corridor A continues to the northeast, passing approximately two miles to the east of Rena Lara. At Route 322, it turns northward until it crosses Route 1, where it turns again to the northeast. It passes west of Stovall and east of Friars Point, where it turns to the northeast. Corridor A crosses US 61 and loops back to US 61 east of Lula near the Tunica County Line. In Tunica County, Corridor A follows US 61 for nine miles until it turns to the northwest to pass west of Tunica. It then turns to the north and northeast to the project terminus in northeastern Tunica County.

Corridor B (West of Cleveland to US 61 to Mid-East of Tunica)

Corridor B begins at the Mississippi terminus of the Great River Bridge. It passes south of Benoit and continues east to pass south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. Approximately two miles east of the Bogue Phalia River, it turns to the north to pass west of Cleveland. Just west of Merigold, it joins with the newly aligned US 61 and follows US 61 through Bolivar County. At Clarksdale, it joins the Clarksdale Bypass and near Lyon it goes onto new location east of US 61 before rejoining US 61 approximately five miles north of Clarksdale. Corridor B follows US 61 through the remainder of Coahoma County with the exception of a two-mile section near Lula. In Tunica County, Corridor B diverges from US 61 after approximately five miles. It stays generally parallel to US 61, passing east of the Tunica airport. About six miles northeast of Tunica, it turns to the northeast and ends at the project terminus in northern Tunica County.

Corridor C (East of Cleveland/East US 61 Corridor)

Corridor C begins at the Mississippi terminus of the Great River Bridge. It turns southeast just west of Benoit before turning east and continuing east between one and three miles north of Route 488. After crossing US 61, it turns north and passes to the east of Boyle, Cleveland, and

Renova. After crossing the Big Sunflower River, it continues north along the county line before crossing into Sunflower County and Coahoma County. Once in Coahoma County, Corridor C turns to the north-northeast to reenter Bolivar County southeast of Duncan. It enters Coahoma County again at US 61 northeast of Alligator. Corridor C continues northeast on new location and bypasses Clarksdale to the south and east on the Clarksdale Bypass. Once northeast of Clarksdale, it veers back to the northeast and turns to the north as it enters Quitman County. It enters Tunica County near the intersection of the Coahoma County/Quitman County/Tunica County Lines. In Tunica County, Corridor C shifts to the north-northeast and runs through the eastern portion of the county until it ends at the project terminus in northeastern Tunica County.

Corridor D (Westernmost)

Corridor D begins at the Mississippi terminus of the Great River Bridge. It turns northward west of Benoit and passes to the west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, crosses Route 1 south of Beulah and passes east of both Beulah and Gunnison. In Coahoma County, Corridor D continues to the northeast, passing approximately two miles to the east of Rena Lara. At Route 322, it turns northward until it crosses Route 1, where it turns again to the northeast. Once it crosses Route 1, it roughly parallels Route 1. In Tunica County, it follows the same course several miles west of US 61 until it crosses US 61 and ends at the project terminus in northeastern Tunica County.

Corridor E (East of Cleveland to US 61 to Mid East of Tunica)

Corridor E begins at the Mississippi terminus of the Great River Bridge. It turns southeast just west of Benoit before turning east and continuing east between one and three miles north of Route 488. After crossing US 61, it turns north and passes to the east of Boyle, Cleveland, and Renova. After crossing the Big Sunflower River, it continues north along the county line before crossing into Sunflower County and Coahoma County. Once in Coahoma County, Corridor E turns to the north-northeast to reenter Bolivar County southeast of Duncan. It enters Coahoma County again at US 61 northeast of Alligator and follows US 61 to the Clarksdale Bypass. Corridor E joins the Clarksdale Bypass and goes onto new location east of US 61 before following US 61 approximately five miles north of Clarksdale. Corridor E follows US 61 through the remainder of Coahoma County with the exception of a two-mile section near Lula. In Tunica County, Corridor E diverges from US 61 after approximately five miles. It stays generally parallel to US 61, passing east of the Tunica airport. About six miles northeast of Tunica, it turns to the northeast and ends at the project terminus in northeastern Tunica County.

Corridor F (West of Dahomey to US 61)

Corridor F starts at the Mississippi terminus of the Great River Bridge. It shifts southeast, passes south of Benoit, and then turns north to bypass the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge to the west. After crossing Route 8, it then swings to the east until it intersects the existing US 61. Corridor F follows US 61 out of Bolivar County and into Coahoma County. It loops to the south and east of Clarksdale on the Clarksdale Bypass and rejoins the existing US 61 north of Clarksdale. It follows US 61, loops briefly to the east on new alignment, and rejoins US 61 before it leaves Coahoma County. Upon entering Tunica County, Corridor F follows the existing US 61 corridor until approximately 1.5 miles east of Dundee. It then veers to the north-northeast and roughly parallels US 61 until it turns to the northeast and ends in northeastern Tunica County.

Corridor G (East of Cleveland/Easternmost)

Corridor G begins at the Mississippi terminus of the Greater River Bridge. It bypasses Benoit to the southwest and roughly parallels Route 448. Once it crosses US 61, it turns to the north and passes east of Boyle, Cleveland, and Renova. It leaves Bolivar County and enters the northwestern corner of Coahoma County. Once in Coahoma County, Corridor G turns to the northeast until it crosses Route 322, where it shifts to the north. It returns to a northeastern orientation approximately 3.5 miles south of Jonestown. It then leaves Coahoma County and enters Quitman County on a roughly northward track. Corridor G enters Tunica County roughly at where the Coahoma County/Quitman County/Tunica County Lines intersect. Once in Tunica County, Corridor G roughly parallels US 61 five to six miles east of the highway before ending in the northeastern part of the county.

Corridor H (Westernmost to Easternmost)

Corridor H starts at the Mississippi terminus of the Great River Bridge. It shifts to the north and passes west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. It roughly parallels Route 1 as it leaves Bolivar County. Upon entering Coahoma County, Corridor H continues to parallel Route 1. Approximately four miles east of Sherard, it veers to the northeast, crosses the county, and leaves the county approximately 3.5 miles south-southwest of Rich. In Quitman County, it turns to the north and leaves the county approximately at the intersection of the Coahoma County/Quitman County/Tunica County Lines. In Tunica County, Corridor H parallels US 61 two to six miles east of the highway. It ends in northeastern Tunica County.

Corridor I (Westernmost to Easternmost North of Rich)

Corridor I begins at the Mississippi terminus of the Great River Bridge. It bypasses Benoit to the northwest and passes west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. It roughly parallels Route 1 as it leaves Bolivar County and enters Coahoma County. In Coahoma County, Corridor I turns to the northeast approximately two miles to the east of Friars Point. It continues to the northeast and exits Coahoma County approximately a mile and a half northeast of Rich. Once in Tunica County, Corridor I roughly parallels US 61 approximately six to eight miles east of the highway. It ends in northeastern Tunica County.

2.4.2.2 Analysis of Refined Corridors

The preliminary impacts associated with each of the refined corridor alternatives are summarized in **Tables 2-3** and **2-4**. These preliminary impact estimates were used to evaluate the nine 1,000-foot corridors. The environmental screening estimates and mapping were sent to cooperating agencies for their review. Comments on the corridors were evaluated and later discussed in an April 2002 cooperating agency scoping meeting (see Chapter 7). Some of the major concerns were related to the corridors west of Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (Corridors A, D, F, H, and I), as the USFWS desires to avoid barriers to wildlife traveling between the Refuge and the Mississippi River. There were concerns that this natural environmental corridor between the Mississippi River and Refuge would be bisected and habitats fragmented. In fact, the USFWS intends to purchase property west of the Refuge for expansion towards the Mississippi River. The most easternmost alternative (Corridor G) would place I-69 as far from the river as possible. Several agencies also stated a preference for Corridor B because it uses as much of existing US 61 as possible.

Following the agency scoping meeting, a report titled *Screening Analysis: I-69 Alternate Alignments— Stimulating Economic Development* (Neel-Schaffer, June 2002) was prepared. This economic report analyzed three corridors: Corridor D (generally paralleling the Mississippi River and SR 1), Corridor B (utilizing as much as US 61 as possible), and Corridor G (eastern limits of the Delta counties).

After the *Screening Analysis: I-69 Alternate Alignments— Stimulating Economic Development* was prepared, Corridor D was refined so that it would be located to the east of the Dahomey National Corridor Wildlife Refuge. Corridors D, B, and G represent a western corridor (east of the refuge), central corridor, and an eastern corridor through the study area.

Table 2-3
Summary of Impacts for Refined Alternative Corridors

Corridor	Corridor Description	Length			Crossings				
		Existing Alignment (miles)	New Alignment (miles)	Total Length (miles)	Active Railroad Crossings	Power Line Crossings	Gas Line Crossings	Perennial Stream Crossings	Intermittent Stream Crossings
A	MS 1 to Lula/West of Tunica	10.5	93.9	104.4	4	6	7	18	94
B	West of Cleveland/US 61/Mid-East of Tunica	31.8	84.8	116.6	4	5	16	18	105
C	East Cleveland/East 61 Alignment	1.6	120.4	122.0	3	7	8	23	119
D	Westernmost	0.9	102.2	103.0	2	5	5	14	95
E	Eastern Cleveland to US 61/US 61 to Mid-East Tunica	20.2	102.9	123.1	4	7	17	23	122
F	West of Dahomey to US 61	31.8	83.4	115.2	4	5	14	15	113
G	East Cleveland/Easternmost	1.1	115.6	116.7	3	5	4	20	123
H	Westernmost to Easternmost	0.3	101.7	102.0	4	5	4	16	105
I	Westernmost to Easternmost North of Rich	0.5	101.1	101.7	4	5	4	15	102

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

Table 2-3
Summary of Impacts for Refined Alternative Corridors (contd.)

Corridor	Corridor Description	Acreage within Corridors				Historic Sites	Archaeological Sites	Total Hazardous Materials Sites
		Open Water (acres)	Potential Wetlands (acres)	100-Year Floodplain (acres)	Farmlands (acres)			
A	MS 1 to Lula/West of Tunica	27.1	308.6	825.6	6,420.7	4	28	0
B	West of Cleveland/US 61/Mid-East of Tunica	20.2	149.0	868.9	6,504.1	0	55	2
C	East Cleveland/East 61 Alignment	27.6	280.9	1,470.3	7,279.1	2	18	1
D	Westernmost	68.0	387.6	713.5	6,340.0	0	4	0
E	Eastern Cleveland to US 61/US 61 to Mid–East Tunica	23.3	229.7	1,182.4	6,883.9	1	52	2
F	West of Dahomey to US 61	32.2	246.7	311.3	6,330.9	0	54	1
G	East Cleveland/Easternmost	41.1	326.0	1,642.1	7,127.6	1	7	0
H	Westernmost to Easternmost	45.1	355.2	1,111.5	6,236.2	1	2	0
I	Westernmost to Easternmost North of Rich	20.9	292.4	1,010.3	6,427.9	1	13	0

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2004.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

Table 2-4
Maximum and Minimum Impacts of the Refined Alternative Corridors

Parameter	Minimum Values		Maximum Values	
	Corridor	Quantity	Corridor	Quantity
Existing Alignment (miles)	Corridor H	0.3	Corridor F	31.8
New Alignment (miles)	Corridor F	83.4	Corridor C	120.4
Total Length (miles)	Corridor I	101.7	Corridor E	123.1
Active Railroad Crossings	Corridor D	2	Corridors A, B, E, F, H, and I	4
Power Line Crossings	Corridors B, D, F, G, H, and I	5	Corridors C and E	5
Gas Line Crossings	Corridors G, H, and I	4	Corridor E	17
Perennial Stream Crossings	Corridor D	14	Corridor C	23
Intermittent Stream Crossings	Corridor A	94	Corridor G	123
Open Water (acres)	Corridor B	20.2	Corridor D	68.0
Potential Wetlands (acres)	Corridor B	149.0	Corridor D	387.6
100-Year Floodplains (acres)	Corridor F	311.3	Corridor G	1,642.1
Farmlands (acres)	Corridor H	6,236.2	Corridor C	7,279.1
Historic Sites	Corridors B, D, and F	0	Corridor A	4
Archaeological Sites	Corridor H	2	Corridor B	55
Total Hazardous Materials Sites	Corridors A, D, G, H, and I	0	Corridors B and E	2

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2004.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

2.4.3 Alternatives Carried Forward for Detailed Study

The 1,000-foot corridors were narrowed and refined based on impacts calculated using GIS, detailed investigation of the corridors in the field, analysis of economic development potential, and agency/public comments. For each alternative, important resources were identified early in the process and avoided to the extent practicable (as described in **Appendix H**). These resources included wetlands, natural areas, residences, businesses, major utilities, and cultural resources. Where such resources could not be avoided, alignments were developed to minimize impacts. Based on these factors, three south-north alternatives were selected for detailed study. For each of the alternatives, 2030 future traffic volumes were evaluated. The Western Alternative, Central Alternative, and Eastern Alternative and their 2030 future volumes/planning levels of service are shown on **Figures 2-3** through **2-9.** The right-of-way width for each alternative would be approximately 450 feet on new location. Alternatives that would use existing alignment would use the existing right-of-way as well as 200 additional feet of right-of-way to accommodate frontage roads.

Due to the length of the project and to facilitate a combination of segments, each alternative is divided into a southern, middle, and northern section (see **Figure 2-3**). These three sections of the project are consistently used through the remainder of the FEIS. Each section of the study area is described below:

Southern Section

The southern section begins at SIU 12 (Great River Bridge-Eutaw Landing) terminus, in Bolivar County to the west of SR 1 and Benoit. As mentioned in Chapter 1, a FEIS and ROD have been completed for SIU 12. The southern section ends at the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County. Alternatives carried forward for detailed study in this section include three alternatives crossing SR 1 near Benoit, two alternatives south of Dahomey NWR, two alternatives around Cleveland – one east and one west – and three alternatives north of Cleveland – one along existing US 61, one to the east and one to the west (see **Figure 2-3**). Additional analyses have evaluated only the section from the project terminus to east of Benoit (see Section 2.4.3.2) and for the alternatives from south of Cleveland to south of Clarksdale.

SR 8 Improvements

SR 8 between Cleveland and Rosedale, currently a two-lane highway, would be improved to four lanes. The widening should help stimulate economic development by providing a multi-lane connection between the Rosedale – Bolivar County Mississippi River Port and I-69.

During the preliminary stages, the alternative concepts considered for widening SR 8 addressed:

- four-lane divided vs. five-lane sections,
- rural five-lane sections with open ditches vs. urban curb and gutter sections with storm drainage pipes,
- widening on either side of the existing road as well as symmetric widening,
- treatment of the section through Pace, and
- treatment of the western project terminus

The existing western terminus of SR 8 at the SR 1 intersection in Rosedale is located slightly north of the SR 1 intersection with the access road to the Great River Road State Park. The widening of SR 8 would offset these two intersections by realigning SR 8 to the south to intersect SR 1 opposite the access road to the State Park. From west to east, the plan for widening SR 8 includes:

- One common alternative for a five-lane curb and gutter section on new and existing alignment through the built up area at Rosedale,
- One common alternative for a five-lane open ditch section along existing alignment on the outskirts of Rosedale,
- One common alternative for adding two lanes adjacent to the existing lanes to provide a four-lane divided section to the western limits of Pace,
- Three alternatives to the Bolivar County Correctional Facility,
- One common alternative for a five-lane open ditch section along existing alignment on the outskirts of Cleveland, and
- One common alternative for a five-lane curb and gutter section along existing alignment to connect with the existing five-lane curb and gutter section at Cleveland.

While a four-lane divided section is generally preferred by MDOT, a five-lane section was recommended in the congested areas of Rosedale and Pace to reduce impacts to residences and businesses, and to encourage economic development in accordance with the purpose and need for this road. In addition, east of Rosedale, continuation of the five-lane section to the east would avoid a stream crossing, an agricultural airstrip with likely chemical contamination, and several

residences. At the eastern portion of Pace, for alternates that would widen SR 8 along existing alignment, a five-lane section was needed to avoid cemeteries located on both sides of the highway and to avoid residences located nearby the cemeteries. At Cleveland, the five-lane section was extended to the west to be consistent with the existing five-lane section and to minimize relocations.

The three alternatives between the western limit of Pace extending east to the Bolivar County Correctional Facility are:

- Alternative B (Referred to in the Draft EIS as the Widening Alternative) – Widening to a five-lane open ditch section along existing alignment over the entire length between the point where the Pace Bypass Alternate leaves SR 8 and the Bolivar County Correctional Facility;
- Alternative C (Referred to in the Draft EIS as the Bypass Alternative) – Bypassing to the north with a four-lane divided section on new location to east of Pace where the bypass would rejoin SR 8 and adding two new lanes adjacent to the existing lanes to provide a four-lane divided section to the Bolivar County Correctional Facility; and,
- Alternative D (a combination of Alternative B and C to minimize impacts) – Continuing the four-lane divided section by adding two new lanes adjacent to the existing lanes from the point where the Pace Bypass Alternative leaves SR 8 to the western part of Pace, widening to a five-lane open ditch section to slightly east of Pace where the Pace Bypass Alternative rejoins SR 8, and adding two new lanes adjacent to the existing lanes to provide a four-lane divided section to the Bolivar County Correctional Facility.

Impacts for Alternative D have been estimated based on the previous impact analyses that had been completed for the other two SR 8 alternatives. The SR 8 improvement is included with the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives for this section of I-69 (see **Figure 2-3**).

Middle Section

The middle section begins at the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County and ends approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line (near the town of Rich). During the alternatives evaluation, the Middle Section was determined to be superior to other preliminary alignments in avoiding and minimizing impacts. Therefore, all three alternatives are identical from the Clarksdale Bypass north to approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line (see **Figure 2-3**).

Northern Section

The northern section begins in Coahoma County, four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line and ends at SIU 10, which is to the north and east of Robinsonville. SIU 10 has already been approved as part of the national I-69 corridor; the construction is complete; and, it is open to traffic. SIU 10 includes the eastern portion of the relocated four-lane section of SR 304 built to interstate standards between I-55 in De Soto County, and US 61 in Tunica County as well as a four-lane interstate spur from the from the eastern portion of relocated SR 304 in De Soto County to the existing two-lane section of SR 304 in Tunica County (see **Figure 2-3**).

Interchanges, Spurs, and Upgrades

To compare the alternatives in each section, the locations of interchanges were selected. Interchanges are mandatory at some locations, particularly at state and federal routes. Other interchanges have been proposed near communities for construction phasing and for stimulating economic development. The condition of the crossroad at each interchange location was analyzed to determine the improvements that were needed on the crossroad to accommodate truck traffic generated by the interchanges.

It is important to consider the improvements needed on the crossroad at interchange locations for several reasons. One reason is to satisfy the expectation of the drivers for the various types of vehicles, including legally loaded trucks, which will exit and enter the interstate by using the

crossroad within and outside the limits of the interchange. Another important reason is associated with the maintenance of traffic during and after the construction of I-69.

Because the cost for building the entire section of I-69 is so great, the construction would almost certainly have to be accomplished in a number of segments. The segmental construction would require I-69 traffic to use the interchange locations and the connecting network of county roads and state and Federal highways to enter and exit the interstate segments that are opened to traffic. Therefore, it is important for truck traffic to have at least one connecting approach to each interchange location capable of accommodating truck traffic and a posting of the maximum allowable weight limit in Mississippi of 80,000 pounds.

At some interchange locations, a crossroad is recommended on new location from the interchange to a nearby state or Federal highway that has an 80,000-pound weight limit posted for truck traffic. In addition to addressing the need of accommodating truck traffic, the new crossroad approach might be needed to address transportation network connectivity or Design Year 2030 traffic. In these instances the new crossroad approach is called a "Spur."

Several of the proposed interchanges are with state or Federal highways that currently have an 80,000-pound weight limit. Improvements are either already planned or not needed outside the limits of many of these interchanges for the crossing highway to accommodate the Design Year 2030 projected traffic.

Other existing crossroads at proposed interchange locations may have a legal weight limit of less than 80,000 pounds posted from the interchange to a nearby state or Federal highway with the maximum allowable weight limit. Improvement to such a crossroad along its existing alignment is needed to accommodate 80,000-pound truck traffic and Design Year 2030 projected traffic. In such instances, the needed crossroad approach improvement is called an "Upgrade."

The interchanges, spurs, and upgrades for the alternatives are shown on **Figures 2-4**, **2-6**, and **2-8**. The impacts of interchanges and spurs (shown in solid lines) are included in the overall analysis of impacts, as are frontage roads associated with any of the alternatives. Upgrades are not included in this FEIS, and would require separate environmental documentation on a project-by-project basis.

Alternative Combinations

While descriptions, graphics, and impact summaries are highlighted for each alternative, combinations of alignments between and within the alternatives were also considered within each of the three sections. In particular, the Southern Section has several possible connections from the project's southern terminus to the alignments, as discussed in detail in Section 2.4.3.2.

2.4.3.1 Western Alternative

Southern Section

In the southern section, the Western Alternative begins at SIU 12, Great River Bridge-Eutaw Landing, and proceeds east to Lake Bolivar before turning southeast to cross SR 1 south of Benoit and just north of Ray Brooks School. The alternative crosses SR 448 north of the point where the alignment of SR 448 changes from north-south to east-west. From SR 448, the Western Alternative proceeds east before turning to the north several miles northwest of Shaw. The Western Alternative continues north and parallels US 61 to the west. It bypasses Boyle, Cleveland, Merigold, and Shelby on new alignment. It then turns northeast and crosses SR 444. The Western Alternative continues in a northeast direction, past Duncan, Alligator, and Rena Lara. It then proceeds east to cross US 61 and connects to New Africa Road at the Clarksdale Bypass. The Western Alternative is shown on **Figure 2-4,** with projected traffic volumes shown on **Figure 2-5**.

The following interchanges, spurs, and crossroad connectivity improvements are identified with the Western Alternative's southern section.

- SR 1 Interchange
- Shaw–Litton Road Interchange
- Litton Road West Spur/Shaw Spur and US 61 Interchange
- SR 446 Interchange; also upgrade east to US 61
- SR 8–Cleveland Interchange
- Hiter Road-Merigold Interchange; also upgrade east to US 61
- Mound Bayou Street Interchange; also upgrade county road east to US 61
- SR 32 Interchange
- SR 32 West/East Spur (provides access between US 61 and SR 32)
- SR 444 Interchange; also upgrade west to SR 1 and east to US 61
- Rena Lara–Alligator Interchange

- Rena Lara Spur and Alligator Spur and upgrade east to US 61
- US 61–South Clarksdale Interchange
- New Africa Road Interchange

Middle Section (Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives)

The Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives are identical for the middle section of the study area. The middle section begins at the south end of the New Africa Road Interchange and ends approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. The alternatives would use the current Clarksdale Bypass south and east of Clarksdale. To avoid development near Lyon, the alternatives leave US 49/US 61 to the east and turn north to parallel US 49/ US 61. They rejoin US 49/ US 61 north of Eagles Nest Road and end approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line, where the three major alternatives split in the northern section.

The following interchanges, spurs, and crossroad connectivity improvements are identified with the middle section:

- US 49 Interchange (includes a five-lane connecting road from the interchange northwest to the Old US 61 intersection in Clarksdale)
- SR 6 Interchange
- Eagles Nest Road Interchange
- Eagles Nest Road Spur
- Coahoma Interchange; also upgrade county road west to SR 1 and SR 316 east to Jonestown

Northern Section

The Western Alternative continues northeast on existing US 61 from four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line to just south of Crenshaw Road. It then continues to the northeast on new location and crosses Dubbs Road, SR 4, Prichard Road, and Arkabutla Dam Road. The Western Alternative then turns east and crosses Kirby Road and SR 3. It turns north to cross the two-lane SR 304 and end on the SIU 10 Spur (SIU 11 project north terminus; SIU 10 south terminus).

The following interchanges spurs, and crossroad connectivity improvements are identified with the Western Alternative's northern section:

- US 49 Interchange; also upgrade county road and SR 315 east to SR 3 in order to provide access to the towns of Rich and Sledge
- US 61 Interchange and Crenshaw Road Spur
- Dubbs Road Interchange; also upgrade Dubbs Road west to US 61
- SR 4 Interchange
- Prichard Road Interchange; also upgrade west to US 61 and east to SR 3
- Arkabutla Dam Road; also upgrade west to US 61
- Kirby-Counce Road Interchange; also upgrade Counce Road east to SR 3
- SR 304–Kirby Road Spur (this spur would connect the Kirby Road – Conce Road Interchange to the five-lane section of SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3, and serve as a major access to the casinos at Robinsonville)
- SR 304 Interchange; a portion of two-lane SR 304 to the west of this interchange south of the SIU 10 Spur would be rebuilt to provide a multilane facility on new location with grade separations at the Illinois Central Railroad and SR 3 (by connecting directly to the five-lane section of Old SR 304 west of the railroad between US 61 and SR 3, the multilane facility will serve as a major access to the casinos at Robinsonville)

2.4.3.2 Central Alternative

Southern Section

One of the objectives of the Central Alternative was to use as much of existing US 61 as possible. In places, the Central Alternative is on new location to avoid environmental impacts, cultural resources, and relocation of homes, businesses, church, cemeteries, or other important community facilities. As shown on **Figure 2-6**, the original Central Alternative begins at the SIU 12 terminus and proceeds east to Lake Bolivar before turning southeast to cross SR 1 south of Ray Brooks School. It continues to the southeast and crosses several water bodies, including Lake Vista and Bushy Lake. Because a relatively large quantity of wetlands was identified within this initial segment, another option was developed in this area to minimize wetland impacts, relocations, and costs. The new option proceeds southeast across Lake Bolivar, crosses SR 1 north of Scott at Lake Vista, and then turns east to join the original alignment near SR 448. This second option is also part of the Eastern Alternative. The difference in impacts between the original Central Alternative alignment in this area and the revised alignment is summarized in **Table 2-5**. The various figures in this document show the revised alignment for the Central Alternative in this area, and all quantities are based on the revised alignment.

Table 2-5 Benoit Segment Options Central Alternative in the Southern Section		
Impact Category	**Original Option***	**Segment Option to Minimize Wetland and Relocation Impacts**
Residential Relocations	0	0
Wetlands (acres)	62	18
Construction Cost w/R.O.W. (Estimated, Millions)	$91.3	$87.2

Additional categories did not have any substantial difference.
* As shown on Figure 2-6.
Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc. 2004; Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2004

East of SR 448, the Central Alternative parallels SR 448 to the north and parallels the Western Alternative. Several miles northwest of Shaw the Central Alternative turns north, joins the Western Alternative south of SR 446, and separates from it after crossing SR 8. The Central Alternative turns northeast and joins US 61 near Merigold. The alignment for this section was revised following the Public Hearing, as discussed in Section 2.4.3.4 It continues along US 61 to the Coahoma County line near Bobo with the exception of the portion between Shelby and Hushpuckena where the Central Alternative is slightly east of US 61. At Bobo, the Central Alternative then proceeds west of existing US 61. South of Clarksdale, the Central Alternative turns east and crosses US 61. It then connects to the New Africa Road at the Clarksdale Bypass (on same alignment as the Western Alternative). The Central Alternative is shown on **Figure 2-6**, with projected traffic volumes shown on **Figure 2-7.** The following interchanges, spurs, and crossroad connectivity improvements are identified with the Central Alternative's southern section:

- SR 1 Interchange
- Shaw–Litton Road Interchange
- Litton Road West Spur/Shaw Spur and US 61 Interchange
- SR 446 Interchange; also upgrade east to US 61
- SR 8–Cleveland Interchange
- Merigold US 61 Interchange
- Merigold–US 61 Spur
- Mound Bayou Interchange
- Mound Bayou Spur
- Hutton Road Interchange; also upgrade county road west to SR 161
- Shelby Interchange
- Shelby Spur

- Duncan Interchange
- Alligator Interchange
- Bobo Interchange
- US 61–S. Clarksdale Interchange
- New Africa Road Interchange

Middle Section

There is only one alternative for the middle section, which extends from the south end of the Clarksdale Bypass to approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. The alternative is described in detail in Section 2.4.3.1 (Middle Section: Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives).

Northern Section

The Central Alternative continues northeast on new location from approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line to just south of Crenshaw Road; it then turns north and joins the Western Alternative prior to crossing Dubbs Road. The alternative remains concurrent with the Western Alternative to the end of the project north of SR 304. It turns north to cross the two-lane SR 304 and end on the SIU 10 Spur (SIU 11 project north terminus; SIU 10 south terminus).

The following interchanges, spurs, and crossroad connectivity improvements are identified with the Central Alternative's northern section:

- US 49–US 61 Interchanges and Upgrade County Road and SR 315 east to SR 3
- Crenshaw Road Interchange and Upgrade of Crenshaw Road west to US 61
- Dubbs Road Interchange and Upgrade of Dubbs Road west to US 61
- SR 4 Interchange
- Prichard Road Interchange and Upgrade of Prichard Road west to US 61 and East to SR 3
- Arkabutla Dam Road Interchange and Upgrade of Arkabutla Dam Road west to US 61
- Kirby–Counce Road Interchange and Upgrade of Counce Road to SR 3
- SR 304–Kirby Road Spur (this spur would connect the Kirby Road – Counce Road Interchange to the five-lane section of SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3 and serve as a major access to the casinos at Robinsonville)

- SR 304 Interchange and a portion of the two-lane SR 304 to the west of this interchange south of the SIU 10 Spur would be rebuilt to provide a multilane facility on new location with grade separations at the Illinois Central Railroad and SR 3 (by connecting directly to the five-lane section of Old SR 304 west of the railroad between US 61 and SR 3, the multilane facility will serve as a major access to the casinos at Robinsonville)

2.4.3.3 Eastern Alternative

Southern Section

The Eastern Alternative begins at the SIU 12 terminus and proceeds southeast across Lake Bolivar. It crosses SR 1 north of Scott at Lake Vista and then turns east to join the Central Alternative before crossing SR 448. Near the crossing of the Bogue Phalia, the Eastern Alternative and the Central Alternative separate, with the Eastern Alternative continuing east. After crossing US 61, the Eastern Alternative turns north paralleling US 61 to the east. After crossing SR 8 the Eastern Alternative takes a slight northeast turn and crosses into Sunflower County where it continues to the north and passes west of the State Penal Farm at Parchman. It continues north into Coahoma County. East of Bobo, it turns northeast and then connects to the Clarksdale Bypass prior to New Africa Road. The Roundaway–Tutwiler Spur is an important element of this alternative. Since a major purpose of an eastern corridor alternative is to serve the eastern portion of the Delta along US 49 and SR3, this spur is essential to provide a connection to the east. The Eastern Alternative is shown on **Figure 2-8**, with projected traffic volumes shown on **Figure 2-9**. The following interchanges, spurs, and crossroad connectivity improvements are identified with the Eastern Alternative's southern section:

- SR 1 Interchange
- US 61 Interchange
- Boyle Interchange
- Merigold Spur and US 61 Interchange
- Merigold US 61 Interchange
- SR 8–Cleveland Interchange
- Merigold Upgrade/Spur*;* county road four-laned to provide bypass of Cleveland from county road west to US 61
- Parchman Road Interchange; also upgrade Parchman Road west to US 61
- Roundaway Interchange
- Roundaway–Tutwiler Spur
- Bobo Interchange; also upgrade county road west to US 61

- South Clarksdale Interchange
- New Africa Road Interchange

Middle Section

There is only one alternative for the middle section from the south end of the Clarksdale Bypass to approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. Please see Section 2.4.3.1 (Middle Section: Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives).

Northern Section

The Eastern Alternative is concurrent with the Central Alternative from four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica county line to north of Crenshaw Road where the Eastern Alternative turns northeast to cross Dubbs Road, SR 4, Prichard Road, and SR 3. After crossing SR 3, it proceeds in a northerly path and crosses Arkabutla Dam Road. The Eastern Alternatives makes a slight turn to the northeast and crosses the two-lane SR 304 to end on the SIU 10 Spur (SIU 11 project north terminus; SIU 10 south terminus). The following interchanges, spurs, and crossroad connectivity improvements are identified with the Eastern Alternative's northern section:

- US 49–US 61 Interchanges; also upgrade county road and SR 315 east to SR 3 in order to provide access to the towns of Rich and Sledge.
- Crenshaw Road Interchange; also Upgrade Crenshaw Road west to US 61
- Dubbs Road Interchange; also Upgrade Dubbs Road west to US 61
- SR 4 Interchange
- Prichard Road Interchange; also Upgrade Pritchard Road west to US 61 and east to SR 3
- Arkabutla Dam Road Interchange; also Upgrade Arkabutla Dam Road west to US 61
- SR 304–Kirby Road Spur (this spur would connect the Kirby Road – Counce Road Interchange to the five-lane section of SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3 and serve as a major access to the casinos at Robinsonville)
- SR 304 Interchange, A portion of the two-lane SR 304 to the west of this interchange south of the SIU 10 Spur would be rebuilt to provide a multilane facility on new location with grade separations at the Illinois Central Railroad and SR 3 (by connecting directly to the five-lane section of Old SR 304 west of the railroad between US 61 and SR 3, the multilane facility will serve as a major access to the casinos at Robinsonville)

During economic studies conducted for the alternatives, one potential shift was considered in this section of the Eastern Alternative (A copy of the 2002 Economic Report is contained in **Appendix I**). The east side of Cleveland along SR 8 has the highest number of employees of any

alignment within a 2.5-mile radius of interchanges. This one area made the major difference in the employment data for the three alternatives since all three alternatives follow the same alignment through the Clarksdale area. Based on this factor, the economic study recommended a modified eastern alignment that would connect with existing US 61 at Merigold and basically utilize the Central Alternative from that point to the north. This modified alignment would be able to take advantage of the heaviest concentration of industrial employment in Bolivar County and also utilize all other existing resources to the fullest potential possible along US 61. The modified Eastern Alternative was considered along with the other three build alternatives in the subsequent and more quantitative 2004 economic analysis, as described in Section 4.3.1 (A copy of the 2005 Economic Report is contained in **Appendix J**). No detailed alignment shifts were developed or studied.

2.4.3.4 Selection of the Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative is a modified version of the Central Alternative, which uses as much of existing US 61 as possible (see **Figure 2-10**). The Preferred Alternative and the basis for its selection are discussed in the following text.

Southern Section

The Preferred Alternative begins at the SIU 12 terminus and proceeds southeast across Lake Bolivar. It crosses SR 1 north of Scott at Lake Vista and then turns east before crossing SR 448. As discussed in Section 2.4.3.2, this crossing avoids and minimizes impacts. After crossing SR 448, the Preferred Alternative parallels SR 448 to the north until several miles northwest of Shaw where it turns to the north. This portion of the Preferred Alternative is identical to the Central Alternative, including the revised alignment at Lake Bolivar.

After crossing SR 446, the Preferred Alternative generally proceeds northeast and crosses SR 8 on the west side of Cleveland. Northwest of Renova, the Preferred Alternative turns east to join US 61 near Merigold. It follows existing US 61, passing west of Merigold and Mound Bayou, and then passing east of Winstonville and Shelby. At the northern portion of Shelby, the Preferred Alternative leaves US 61 to avoid impacts and proceeds slightly to the northeast on new location to parallel US 61 as it continues north until rejoining US 61 at Hushpuckena. The Preferred Alternative then continues along US 61 to the Coahoma County line near Bobo. It then proceeds on new location west of existing US 61. South of Clarksdale, it turns east and follows

the US 61 Clarksdale Bypass. The following interchanges, spurs, and crossroad connectivity improvements are identified with the Preferred Alternative in the southern section:

- SR 1 Interchange
- Litton Road Interchange
- Shaw-US 61 Spur and US 61 interchange
- SR 446 Interchange; also upgrade SR 446 east to US 61
- SR 8–Cleveland Interchange
- US 61 South- Merigold Interchange
- Mound Bayou Interchange
- Mound Bayou Spur
- Hutton Road Interchange; also upgrade county road west to SR 161
- Shelby Interchange
- Duncan Interchange
- Alligator Interchange
- Bobo Interchange
- South State Street Interchange
- New Africa Road Interchange (existing)

The Preferred Alternative includes several modifications made to the Central Alternative in the Southern Section. Following the public hearing and public comment, the alignment between Litton Road and Merigold was modified. This modified alignment resulted in

- dividing less farmland,
- using more existing county roads as frontage roads,
- reducing residential relocations,
- more equitably impacting farmland between landowners,
- crossing farmland at the outer property edges or adjacent to a county road,
- having less disruption to drainage, and
- there were less disruptions to county roads.

SR 8 Improvements

The Preferred Alternative would include the widening of SR 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale. SR 8 would have a five-lane section extended west of Cleveland to a point west of the SR 8-Cleveland Interchange, where the roadway would transition to a four-lane divided section and remain this way until the eastern edge of Pace. At that point, the roadway would transition to a five-lane

section through the built-up area of Pace. The roadway would then transition back to a four-lane divided section to a point slightly east of Rosedale where it would again transition to a five-lane section to the intersection with SR 1.

The Preferred Alternative (Alternative D) was selected based on input received at the Public Hearings. It is a combination of the B and C alternatives presented at the Public Hearing. Like Alternative B, the Preferred Alternative D uses the existing SR 8 corridor through Pace. Therefore, it avoids the expected negative impacts associated with using the portion of the Pace Bypass Alternative, Alternative C, that would have opened a new environmental corridor through a major farming environment.

Middle Section

In the middle section, the Preferred Alternative begins at the south end of the New Africa Road Interchange and ends approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. It would use the current Clarksdale Bypass south and east of Clarksdale. Near Lyon, the Preferred Alternative would parallel US 49/US 61 to the east to avoid existing development. It rejoins US 49/ US 61 north of Eagles Nest Road to approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line, where the northern section begins.

The following interchanges, spurs, and crossroad connectivity improvements are identified with the middle section:

- US 49 Interchange (includes a five-lane connecting road from the interchange northwest to the Old US 61 intersection in Clarksdale)
- SR 6 Interchange
- Eagles Nest Road Interchange
- Eagles Nest Road Spur
- Jonestown-Coahoma Interchange; also upgrade county road west to SR 1 and SR 316 east to Jonestown

Following the public hearing, the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange was modified to better accommodate traffic, to lessen farmland impacts, and to avoid archaeological sites.

Northern Section

The Preferred Alternative continues northeast on new location from approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line to just south of Crenshaw Road; it then turns north prior to crossing Dubbs Road. The alternative turns northeast near Arkabutla Dam Road. The Preferred Alternative proceeds northeast and crosses SR 3. It turns north to cross the two-lane SR 304 and end on the SIU 10 Spur (SIU 11 project north terminus; SIU 10 south terminus).

- Modification due to the presence of Pondberry
- Dubbs Road Interchange modification to incorporate more parallel county roads to share the farmland impacts more equitably.

The following interchanges, spurs, and crossroad connectivity improvements are identified with the Preferred Alternative's northern section:

- US 49 North–US 61 North Interchanges and Upgrade County Road and SR 315 east to SR 3
- Crenshaw Road Interchange and Upgrade of Crenshaw Road west to US 61
- Dubbs Road Interchange and Upgrade of Dubbs Road west to US 61
- SR 4 Interchange
- Prichard Road Interchange and Upgrade of Prichard Road west to US 61 and East to SR 3
- Arkabutla Dam Road Interchange and Upgrade of Arkabutla Dam Road west to US 61
- Kirby–Counce Road Interchange and Upgrade of Counce Road east to SR 3
- SR 304–Kirby Road Spur (this spur would connect the Kirby Road – Counce Road Interchange to the five-lane section of SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3 and serve as a major access to the casinos at Robinsonville)
- SR 304 Interchange and a portion of the two-lane SR 304 to the west of this interchange south of the SIU 10 Spur would be rebuilt to provide a multilane facility on new location with grade separations at the Illinois Central Railroad and SR 3 (by connecting directly to the five-lane section of Old SR 304 west of the railroad between US 61 and SR 3, the multilane facility will serve as a major access to the casinos at Robinsonville)

Archeological surveys identified sites that would be impacted by the Western Alternative in the vicinity of US 49 and the Welcome Center. Therefore, the decision was made to use the Central Alternative as the Preferred Alternative. The interchange with US 49 and US 61 was modified to provide a grade separation and interchange at US 61 and the US 49 connector.

2.4.3.5 Basis for Selecting the Preferred Alternative

The Central Alternative was designated as the Preferred Alternative for the following reasons:

- Greatest economic benefits
- Most minority and low-income population served
- Least environmental impacts
- Most cost effective route
- Best intermodal connections
- Greatest community support

Greatest economic benefits

Research has been conducted into the potential benefits of the I-69 corridor. Based on a study completed in 2005 (*Evaluating Economic Benefits of I-69 in the Mississippi Delta Region*, Wilbur Smith Associates, 2005), the build alternatives would differ in their potential economic effects (A copy of the 2005 Economic Report is contained in **Appendix J**). The Preferred Alternative provides the greatest economic benefits based on:

- Providing the greatest savings in vehicle miles traveled as a total throughout the study area, based on the transportation model used to project traffic volumes for the alternatives.
- Offering the most opportunities for attracting business development and diversifying the economy, with fewer competitive disadvantages.
- Offsetting potential job losses in the agricultural industry with the attraction of new businesses.

Facilitating economic development and enhancing economic growth opportunities are an important part of the purpose and need for the I-69 corridor. Research from the Delta Regional Authority as well as by others shows that economic development is likely to follow a "clustering" concept that involves concentrating public and private investment in key areas or clusters. Cleveland and Clarksdale are key cities for creating an environment for economic development opportunities (see Section 4.3.1), since existing development provides a base for additional development to occur in close proximity. Therefore, population centers and interchanges along I-69 would be prime candidate areas for economic development. In the Southern Section, the Preferred Alternative is closer to more communities than is the East or West Alternatives. Through the Southern and Middle Sections, the Preferred Alternative follows much of US 61 and would benefit Bolivar County's existing population centers between Cleveland and Clarksdale. In addition, this alternative has more proposed interchange locations and thus provides more access opportunities and opportunities for economic development.

The Preferred Alternative would be closer to more industrial parks. One major exception, the industrial site on the east of Cleveland, has limited expansion area. Bolivar County believes this alternative has the best long-term economic growth potential for Cleveland and Bolivar County as a whole. Furthermore, it does more to develop the tourism and heritage efforts of the Blues Corridor by following US 61. By following US 61, it offers the shortest and least expensive route for manufacturers located between Cleveland and Clarksdale. By being located closer to the municipalities along US 61, the cost to municipalities of providing utility services to businesses at interchange locations would be less.

Most minority and low-income population served

The Preferred Alternative is the only alternative within the Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone and serves more disadvantaged and minority residents. By passing closest to the minority communities along US 61, this alternative best meets Environmental Justice guidelines. The Preferred Alternative also has been endorsed by the leaders of the minority communities along US 61.

Least environmental impacts

The Preferred Alternative is supported by the EPA as being the least damaging from an ecological standpoint. As the alternative that minimizes overall impacts, the modified Central Alternative also has been determined to be the Environmentally Preferred Alternative. By following US 61, there would be less right-of-way needed and fewer environmental issues. The Preferred Alternative would have the least wetland impacts. In addition, it would avoid more Wetland Reserve Program land than the other alternatives and would be the least disruptive to wild game and the natural habitat.

Most cost effective.

The Preferred Alternative is most cost effective alternative. It costs approximately $40 million dollars less than the next least expensive alternative and has the least amount of maintenance associated costs. In addition, this alternative is the shortest length route and thus would minimize user cost.

Best intermodal connections

The Preferred Alternative is located closer to the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port than the Eastern Alternative, and the same distance as the Western Alternative. It includes an improved SR 8 connection between Cleveland and Rosedale, which addresses improved access to the Port from Cleveland and other areas of the Delta, such as the industries in Cleveland. In addition, the Preferred Alternative would also be located near the Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica airports.

Greatest community support

Following the Public Hearing, comments were received which indicated support for alternatives. The greatest support was demonstrated for the Central Alternative, which was modified to reduce impacts, and then selected as the Preferred Alternative. It was preferred by more than 80% of the public attending the public hearings, including cities and towns along US 61 in Bolivar County north of Cleveland (see Chapter 8).

Based on the above support, the Central Alternative as revised is the generally Preferred Alternative.

2.4.3.6 Typical Section and Design Summary

The proposed Interstate facilities consist of two lanes in each direction, a grassed median, and where appropriate, a two-lane frontage road. The typical section, which applies to the Preferred Alternative, is shown as **Figures 2-11A**, **B**, and **C**. **Figure 2-11A** represents the highway on new location, while **Figures 2-11B** and **2-11C** represent widening along existing US 61 to the east and west, respectively. **Figure 2-12A**, **B**, and **C** correspond to the typical sections found along SR 8. The access for I-69 will be full control (Type 1).

The location of potential frontage roads began during the development of the Preliminary Alternative Corridors. Frontage roads will not be provided for the entire length of the project, but will be developed on one or both sides where it is determined to be economically justified. Frontage roads may vary in width from 16 feet to 24 feet, and may be paved or gravel, depending on the number of property owners served. The following factors were considered to retrofit an efficient frontage road concept into the alternatives eventually selected for detailed study:

- The large initial widths for the alternative corridors allowed flexibility for narrowing the widths for the chosen corridors as the study progressed.

- Efforts were made to cross major streams at good angles in anticipation of having bridges at those locations.
- Efforts were made to cross county roads and highways at good angles in anticipation of having either grade separation bridges or interchanges at those locations.

In the process of refining the preliminary alternative corridors, complete property ownership information was obtained. The property information was necessary to determine the locations of alternatives relative to property lines; to determine how much of a specific owner's property was impacted; and, to determine if the alternatives could be adjusted to lessen or avoid the impact of dividing farmland.

Within the opportunities and constraints allowed by the natural and human environments, the following approach was used to refine the alternatives in a manner that took into account disruptions to neighborhoods or farming operations, community cohesion, and possible frontage roads.

- Alternative corridors were generally placed at the fringe areas of municipalities and communities, and a grade separation bridge or interchange was placed at a nearby U.S. highway, state highway, or county road to provide access for local traffic to cross the interstate.
- The typical spacing between interchanges or grade separations was kept to no more than two miles when a property owner's access to the other side of the interstate was divided.
- In most instances where county road bridges were proposed, the county roads would be bridged over the interstate. This approach meant only one bridge would be needed instead of the two bridges that would be required if the interstate were taken over the county roads.
- The alternative corridors were placed adjacent to or nearby the existing road network. This approach maintained existing traffic patterns, lessened the need for providing frontage roads, and was an effort to lessen the impact to farming operations divided by the interstate.
- The locations of primary drainage ditches were considered when refining the alternatives because these ditches tend to naturally divide farming operations.
- When bisecting of farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative. The property retained by the owner after the I-69 right-of-way was acquired could then hopefully be large enough to farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would be an uneconomical remnant.

The following describes the frontage road concept used for the new location alternatives and for alternatives using US 61:

- For new location alternatives, the alternatives followed and paralleled the county roads when possible. Recognizing the concept of taking most county roads over the interstate, the alternatives had to be kept a sufficient distance away from paralleling county roads to allow the county road to be bridged over the interstate. In most instances this minimum distance from the county road to the alternative was **700** to 1,000 feet. Such distances provided enough distance to take a county road over the interstate without impacting that county road's intersection with another nearby county road. By keeping alternatives a minimum of 700 to 1000 feet away from the parallel county roads, the belief was that the remaining farmland divided by alternatives would not become an uneconomical remnant of property for the landowner.
- When new location alternatives were proceeding east to west or north to south, efforts were made to follow section lines and property lines as much as possible to eliminate the need for providing frontage roads.
- For new location alternatives, a combination of parallel county roads and added frontage roads was used in conjunction with the grade separation bridges and interchanges as the means of providing access to large parcels of property divided by alternatives.
- For alternatives using US 61, the existing southbound lanes of US 61 would be converted to a two-lane, two-way frontage road from Merigold to the north part of Shelby in Bolivar County and from Hushpuckena in Bolivar County to the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line. From the Swan Lake/Clarksdale Airport area in Coahoma County to the Dundee area in Tunica County, the existing northbound lanes of US 61 would be converted to a two-lane, two-way frontage road. This was used as a means to maintain traffic on US 61 during the construction of I-69 for these alternatives. Should an incident occur requiring the closure of the northbound and/or southbound lanes of the interstate, this frontage road concept would provide a means to detour the interstate traffic over a continuous frontage road between Merigold and the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line and between Swan Lake and Dundee. The concept of utilizing one of the existing lanes of US 61 for a frontage road addresses access needs on one side of the interstate, and also provides a two-lane road for economic development. The access needs for the other side of alternatives that use US 61 was addressed in a similar manner to that of the new location alternatives.

2.4.3.7 Project Phasing

Subsequent to selection of the Preferred Alternative, the project was reviewed for the applicability of recent guidance on major projects receiving federal funding. Construction of the I-69 SUI 11 is envisioned to be phased over the next 19 years. Therefore, the project was determined to consist of five distinct and operationally independent phases:

Section 1: 18.465 miles, SR 304 Interchange to South of SR 4 Interchange
Anticipated Letting Date: 2016
Estimated Letting Year Construction Cost: $275 Million

Section 2: 31.549 miles, South of SR 4 Interchange to North of SR 6 Interchange
Anticipated Letting Date: 2022
Estimated Letting Year Construction Cost: $460 Million

Section 3: 48.160 miles, North of SR 6 Interchange to South of SR 446 Interchange
Anticipated Letting Date: 2019
Estimated Letting Year Construction Cost: $483 Million

Section 4: 22.807 miles, South of SR 446 Interchange to Great River Bridge
Anticipated Letting Date: 2026
Estimated Letting Year Construction Cost: $408 Million

Section 5: 17.764 miles, SR 1 at Rosedale to Cleveland
Anticipated Letting Date: 2029
Estimated Letting Year Construction Cost: $124 Million

The five sections are detailed in **Appendix G** (in a separate binder) with updated plan and profile sheets as well as cost estimates in 2001 dollars to maintain consistency with previous estimates used in the DEIS. In addition, to correlate with the varying dates of construction, total costs by section were estimated (also included in **Appendix G**) by adjusting cost factors to reflect the anticipated year of letting.

Legend

- Preliminary Alternative Segments
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

N W E S

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 12

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6 T7 T8 T9 T10 T11 T12 T13 T14 T15 T16 T17 T18 T19 T20

C1 C2 C3 C4 C5 C6 C7 C8 C9 C10

B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8

Robinsonville, North Tunica, Tunica, Dundee, Lula, Rich, Askew WR, Tunica Quitman, Sledge, Falcon, Friars Point, Coahoma, Jonestown, Stovall, Marks, Sherard, Clarksdale, Lambert, Rena Lara, Coahoma Bolivar, Mattson, Dublin, Quitman Tallahatchie, Alligator, Duncan, Tutwiler, Coahoma Sunflower, Rome, Sumner, Webb, Gunnison, Shelby, State Penal Farm, Winstonville, Parchman, Mound Bayou, Rosedale, Merigold, Drew, Glendora, Tallahatchie Leflore, Beulah, Pace, Renova, Dahomey NWR, Cleveland, Ruleville, Tallahatchie, Skene, Boyle, Doddsville, Schlater, Benoit, Bolivar Sunflower, Shaw, Sunflower, Greenwood

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Preliminary Alternative Segments

Figure 2-1

Legend

- Refined Alternative Corridors
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

Robinsonville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Sherard
Clarksdale
Rena Lara
Alligator
Mattson
Dublin
Duncan
Rome
Shelby
Gunnison
Winstonville
Mound Bayou
State Penal Farm
Parchman
Rosedale
Merigold
Beulah
Pace
Drew
Renova
Cleveland
Boyle
Skene
Ruleville
Doddsville
Shaw
Sunflower
Benoit
Askew WR
Dahomey NWR

Tunica
Coahoma
Bolivar
Coahoma
Sunflower
Bolivar
Sunflower
Bolivar
Sunflower

D
A,B,E,F
A
B,E,F
C,G,H,I
A,D,I
H
C,G
C
B,C,E,F
A,D,H,I
G
B,F
C,E
F
B
A,D,H,I
C,E,G
B,C,E
G,F
C,E
F
C,E,G
G

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Refined Alternative Corridors

Figure 2-2

Legend

- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

Robinsonville, North Tunica, Tunica, Dundee, Lula, Rich, Friars Point, Coahoma, Jonestown, Stovall, Sherard, Clarksdale, Rena Lara, Alligator, Duncan, Shelby, Gunnison, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Rosedale, Beulah, Pace, Merigold, Renova, Cleveland, Boyle, Skene, Benoit, Dahomey NWR, Shaw, Mattson, Dublin, Rome, Drew, Ruleville, Doddsville, Sunflower, Parchman, State Penal Farm, Askew WR

Tunica, Coahoma, Bolivar, Sunflower

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69 ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Alternatives for Detailed Study

Figure 2-3

Legend

- Western Alternative with Spurs
- Upgrade
- Interchange
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

SR 304 Interchange and Spur
SR 304-Kirby Rd Spur
Robinsonville
Kirby-Counce Rd Interchange and East Upgrade
Arkabutla Dam Rd Interchange and Upgrade
Prichard Rd Interchange
North Tunica
Tunica
Prichard Rd East/West Upgrades
SR 4 Interchange
Tate Co.
Dubbs Rd Interchange and Upgrade
Askew WR
Dundee
Crenshaw Rd Interchange and Spurs
Tunica
Quitman
Coahoma
Lula
Sledge
US 49 Interchange
Rich
County Road-SR 315 Upgrade
Falcon
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown-Coahoma Interchange
Friars Point-Coahoma-Hwy 61-County Rd Upgrade
SR 316 Upgrade
Jonestown
Stovall
Eagles Nest Rd Spur
Eagles Nest Rd Interchange
Existing 61
Marks
Sherard
Clarksdale
SR 6 Interchange
US 61-S.Clarksdale Interchange
Lambert
Rena Lara Spur
US 49-US 61 Interchange
Rena Lara
New Africa Rd Existng Interchange
Rena Lara-Alligator Interchange
Coahoma
Bolivar
Alligator Spur and Upgrade
Mattson
SR 444 Interchange and Upgrades
Alligator
Dublin
Quitman
Tallahatchie
Duncan
Tutwiler
Coahoma
Sunflower
Bolivar
SR 32 Interchange, Spur, and Upgrade
Shelby
Rome
Sumner
Webb
Gunnison
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Parchman
Mound Bayou
Mound Bayou Interchange
County Rd East Upgrade
Merigold
Rosedale
SR 8 Widening
Merigold Interchange
Hiter Rd Upgrade
Glendora
Pace Bypass
Drew
Tallahatchie
Leflore
Beulah
Pace
Renova
Sunflower
SR 8- Cleveland Interchange
Tallahatchie
Cleveland
Dahomey NWR
SR 446 Interchange
SR 446 Upgrade
Ruleville
Boyle
Skene
End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11
Litton Rd Interchange
Shaw- US 61 Spur
Doddsville
Schlater
Benoit
US 61 Interchange
SR 1 Interchange
Bolivar
Sunflower
Shaw
Sunflower
Greenwood

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Western Alternative

Figure 2-4

Legend

- LOS A
- LOS B
- LOS C
- LOS D
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

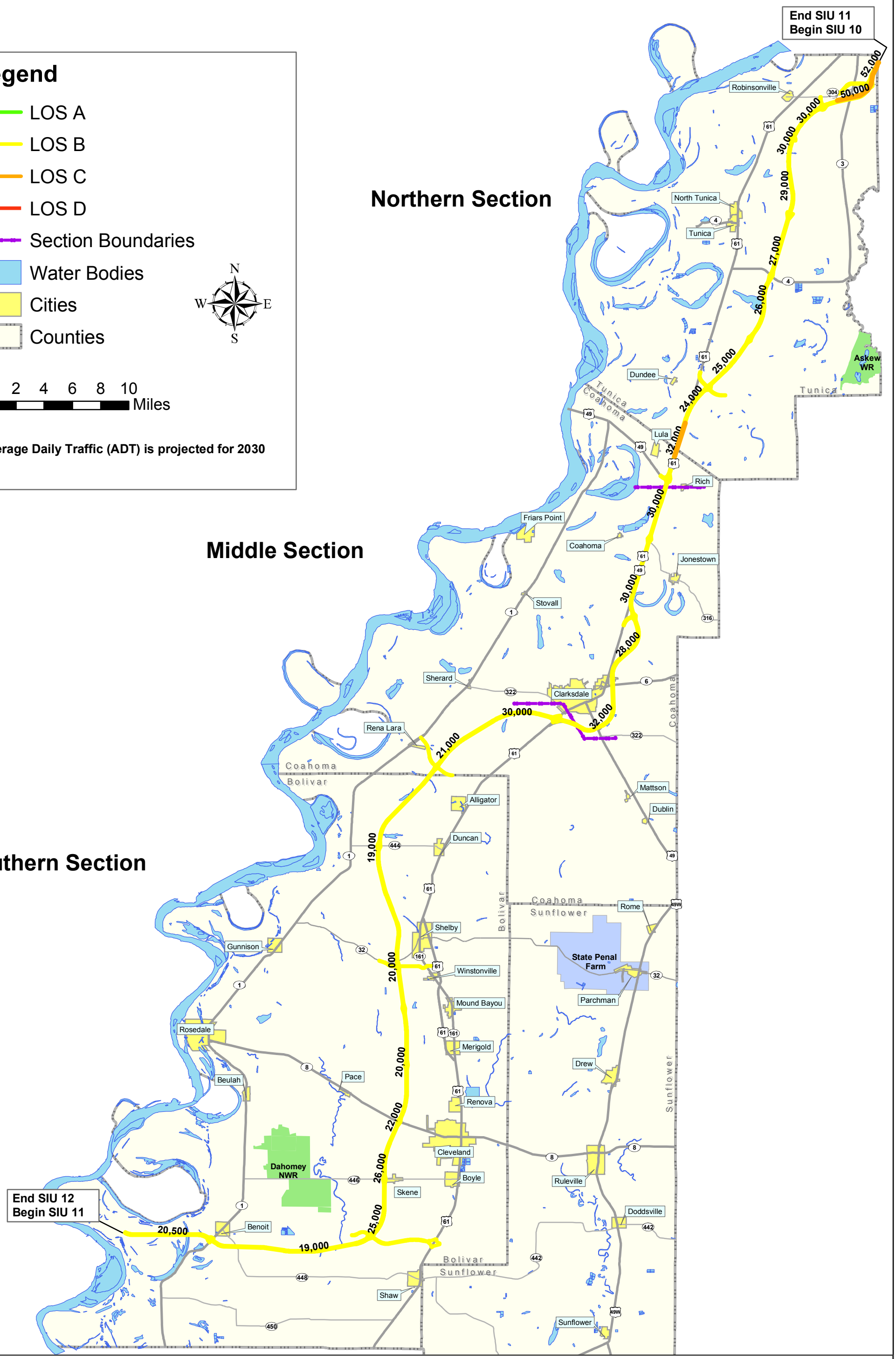
0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is projected for 2030

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section



MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

2030 Traffic Volumes
Western Alternative

Figure 2-5

Legend

- Central Alternative with Spurs (Preferred)
- Upgrade
- Interchange
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

N W E S

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

SR 304 Interchange and Spur
SR 304-Kirby Rd Spur
Robinsonville
Kirby-Counce Rd Interchange and East Upgrade
Arkabutla Dam Rd Upgrade and Interchange
Prichard Rd Interchange
North Tunica
Tunica
Prichard Rd East/West Upgrades
SR 4 Interchange
Tate Co.
Dubbs Rd Interchange and Upgrade
Dundee
Crenshaw Rd Interchange and Upgrade
Askew WR
Tunica
Quitman
Tunica
Coahoma
Lula
Sledge
US 49 North-US 61 North-Interchange
Rich
County Road-SR 315 Upgrade
Falcon
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown-Coahoma Interchange
SR 316 Upgrade
County Road Upgrade
Jonestown
Stovall
Eagles Nest Rd Spur
Eagles Nest Rd Interchange
Existing 61
Marks
Sherard
Clarksdale
SR 6 Interchange
Lambert
South State Street Interchange
US 49 South- DeSoto Ave Interchange
Rena Lara
New Africa Rd Existng Interchange
Bobo Interchange
Coahoma
Bolivar
Mattson
Alligator
Dublin
Alligator Interchange
Quitman
Tallahatchie
Duncan
Duncan Interchange
Tutwiler
Coahoma
Sunflower
Rome
Shelby
Shelby Interchange
Bolivar
Sumner
Webb
Gunnison
Hutton Rd Interchange and County Rd West Upgrade
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Mound Bayou
Parchman
Mound Bayou Interchange and Spur
Rosedale
SR 8 Widening
Merigold
US 61 South-Merigold Interchange
Drew
Glendora
Tallahatchie
Leflore
Sunflower
Beulah
Pace
Renova
SR 8-Cleveland Interchange
Cleveland
Tallahatchie
Dahomey NWR
SR 446 Interchange
SR 446 Upgrade
Ruleville
Boyle
Skene
End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11
Litton Rd Interchange
Shaw- US 61 Spur
Doddsville
Schlater
Benoit
US 61 Interchange
Bolivar
Sunflower
SR 1 Interchange
Shaw
Sunflower
Greenwood

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Central Alternative (Preferred)

Figure 2-6

Legend

- LOS A
- LOS B
- LOS C
- LOS D
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is projected for 2030

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

Robinsonville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Sherard
Clarksdale
Rena Lara
Alligator
Duncan
Mattson
Dublin
Shelby
Gunnison
Winstonville
Mound Bayou
Rosedale
Beulah
Pace
Merigold
Drew
Renova
Cleveland
Boyle
Skene
Dahomey NWR
Benoit
Ruleville
Doddsville
Shaw
Sunflower
Rome
Parchman
State Penal Farm
Askew WR

Tunica
Coahoma
Bolivar
Sunflower

50,000
29,000
28,000
27,000
26,000
25,000
24,000
30,000
28,000
30,000
32,000
24,000
22,000
21,000
22,000
23,000
23,000
25,000
27,000
26,000
20,500
19,000

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

2030 Traffic Volumes
Central Alternative (Preferred)

Figure 2-7

Legend

- Eastern Alternative with Spurs
- Upgrade
- Interchange
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

SR 304 Interchange and Spur
Robinsonville
Arkabutla Dam Rd Interchange and County Rd West Upgrade
Prichard Rd Interchange
North Tunica
Tunica
Prichard Rd West Upgrade
Prichard Rd East Upgrade
SR 4 Interchange
Tate Co.
Dubbs Rd Interchange and Upgrade
Askew WR
Dundee
Tunica
Coahoma
Quitman
Crenshaw Rd Interchange, Upgrade, and Spur
Lula
Sledge
US 49 Interchange
Rich
County Road-SR 315 Upgrade
Falcon
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown-Coahoma Interchange
Friars Point-Coahoma-Hwy 61-County Rd Upgrade
SR 316 Upgrade
Jonestown
Stovall
Eagles Nest Rd Spur
Eagles Nest Rd Interchange
Marks
Existing 61
Sherard
Clarksdale
SR 6 Interchange
Lambert
US 61-S.Clarksdale Interchange
US 49-US 61 Interchange
Rena Lara
US 61-S.Clarksdale Interchange
New Africa Rd Existng Interchange
Coahoma
Bolivar
Bobo Interchange and County Rd West Upgrade
Mattson
Alligator
Dublin
Quitman
Tallahatchie
Duncan
Bolivar
Roundaway Interchange
Roundaway-Tutwiler Spur
Tutwiler
Parchman Rd Interchange and Parchman Rd West Upgrade
Coahoma
Sunflower
Shelby
Rome
Sumner
Webb
Gunnison
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Mound Bayou
Parchman
Rosedale
SR 8 Widening
Merigold
Glendora
Pace Bypass
Merigold City Interchange
Merigold Interchange and County Rd West Spur
Drew
Tallahatchie
Leflore
Beulah
Merigold City Interchange
Pace
Renova
Sunflower
SR8- Cleveland Interchange
Cleveland
Tallahatchie
Ruleville
Dahomey NWR
Boyle Rd Interchange and County Rd West Upgrade
Skene
Boyle
Doddsville
Schlater
End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11
US 61 Interchange
Benoit
Bolivar
Sunflower
SR 1 Interchange
Shaw
Sunflower
Greenwood

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Eastern Alternative

Figure 2-8

Legend

- LOS A
- LOS B
- LOS C
- LOS D
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is projected for 2030

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

Robinsonville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Tunica
Coahoma
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Sherard
Clarksdale
Coahoma
Rena Lara
Coahoma
Bolivar
Alligator
Mattson
Dublin
Duncan
Coahoma
Sunflower
Rome
Bolivar
Shelby
Gunnison
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Parchman
Mound Bayou
Rosedale
Merigold
Drew
Beulah
Pace
Renova
Sunflower
Cleveland
Dahomey NWR
Boyle
Ruleville
Skene
Doddsville
Benoit
Bolivar
Sunflower
Shaw
Sunflower

50,000
26,000
24,000
23,000
22,000
21,000
20,000
30,000
30,000
28,000
32,000
30,000
15,000
13,000
12,000
13,000
14,000
13,000
18,000
20,500

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

2030 Traffic Volumes
Eastern Alternative

Figure 2-9

Legend

- Preferred Alternative with Spurs
- Upgrade
- Interchange
- Section Boundaries
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Water Bodies
- Cities

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

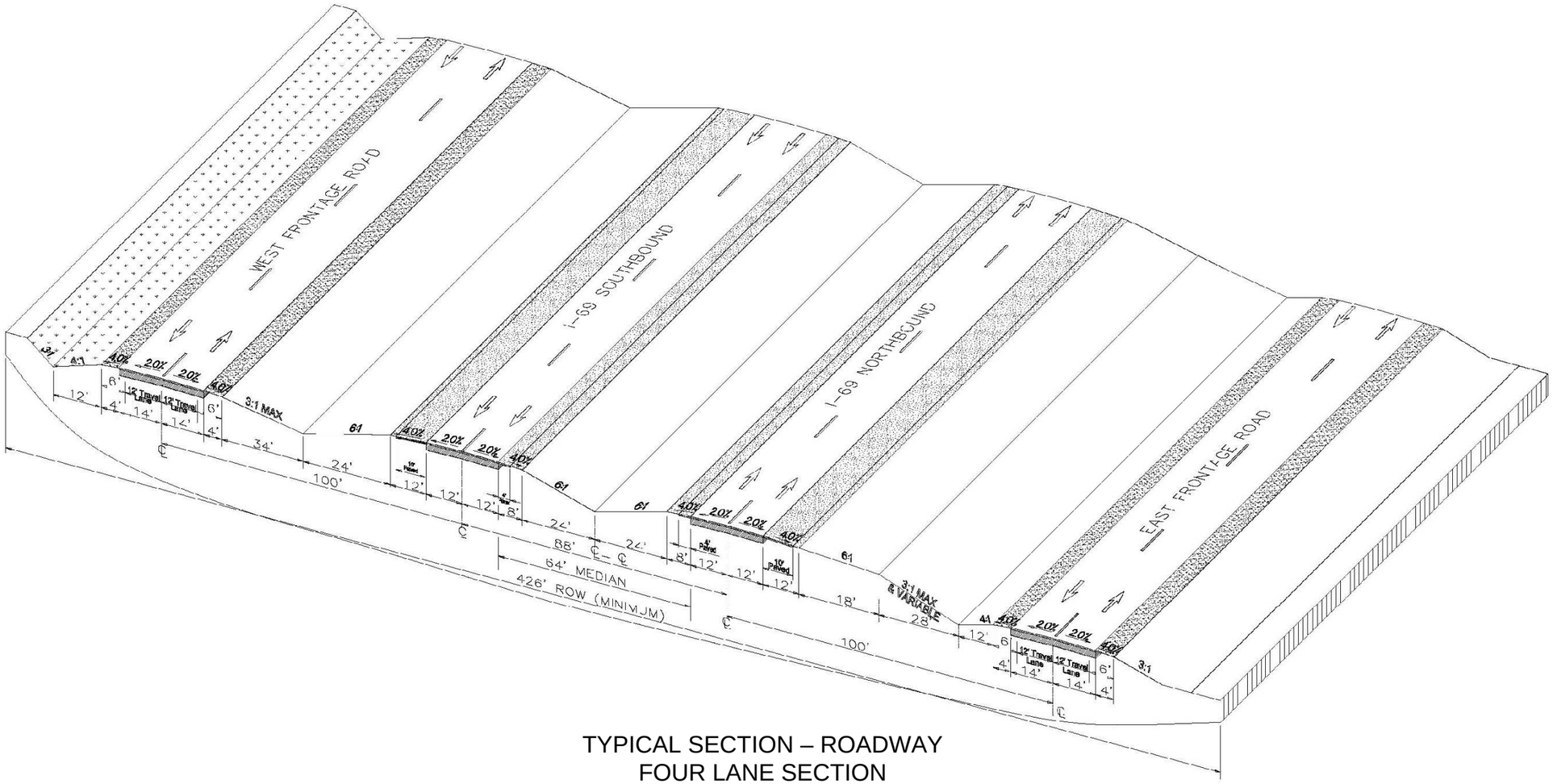
SR 304 Interchange and Spur
SR 304-Kirby Rd Spur
Robinsonville
Kirby-Counce Rd Interchange and East Upgrade
Arkabutla Dam Rd Upgrade and Interchange
Prichard Rd Interchange
North Tunica
Tunica
Prichard Rd East/West Upgrades
SR 4 Interchange
Tate Co.
Dubbs Rd Interchange and Upgrade
Dundee
Crenshaw Rd Interchange and Upgrade
Askew WR
Tunica
Quitman
Tunica
Coahoma
Lula
Sledge
US 49 North-US 61 North-Interchange
Rich
County Road-SR 315 Upgrade
Falcon
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown-Coahoma Interchange
SR 316 Upgrade
County Road Upgrade
Jonestown
Stovall
Eagles Nest Rd Spur
Eagles Nest Rd Interchange
Existing 61
Marks
Sherard
Clarksdale
SR 6 Interchange
Lambert
South State Street Interchange
US 49 South- DeSoto Ave Interchange
Rena Lara
New Africa Rd Existng Interchange
Bobo Interchange
Coahoma
Bolivar
Mattson
Alligator
Dublin
Alligator Interchange
Quitman
Tallahatchie
Duncan
Duncan Interchange
Tutwiler
Coahoma
Sunflower
Rome
Shelby
Shelby Interchange
Bolivar
Sumner
Webb
Gunnison
Hutton Rd Interchange and County Rd West Upgrade
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Mound Bayou
Parchman
Mound Bayou Interchange and Spur
Rosedale
SR 8 Widening
Merigold
US 61 South-Merigold Interchange
Drew
Glendora
Tallahatchie
Leflore
Sunflower
Beulah
Pace
Renova
SR 8-Cleveland Interchange
Cleveland
Tallahatchie
Dahomey NWR
SR 446 Interchange
SR 446 Upgrade
Ruleville
Boyle
Skene
Litton Rd Interchange
Shaw- US 61 Spur
Doddsville
Schlater
Benoit
US 61 Interchange
Bolivar
Sunflower
SR 1 Interchange
Shaw
Sunflower
Indianola

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

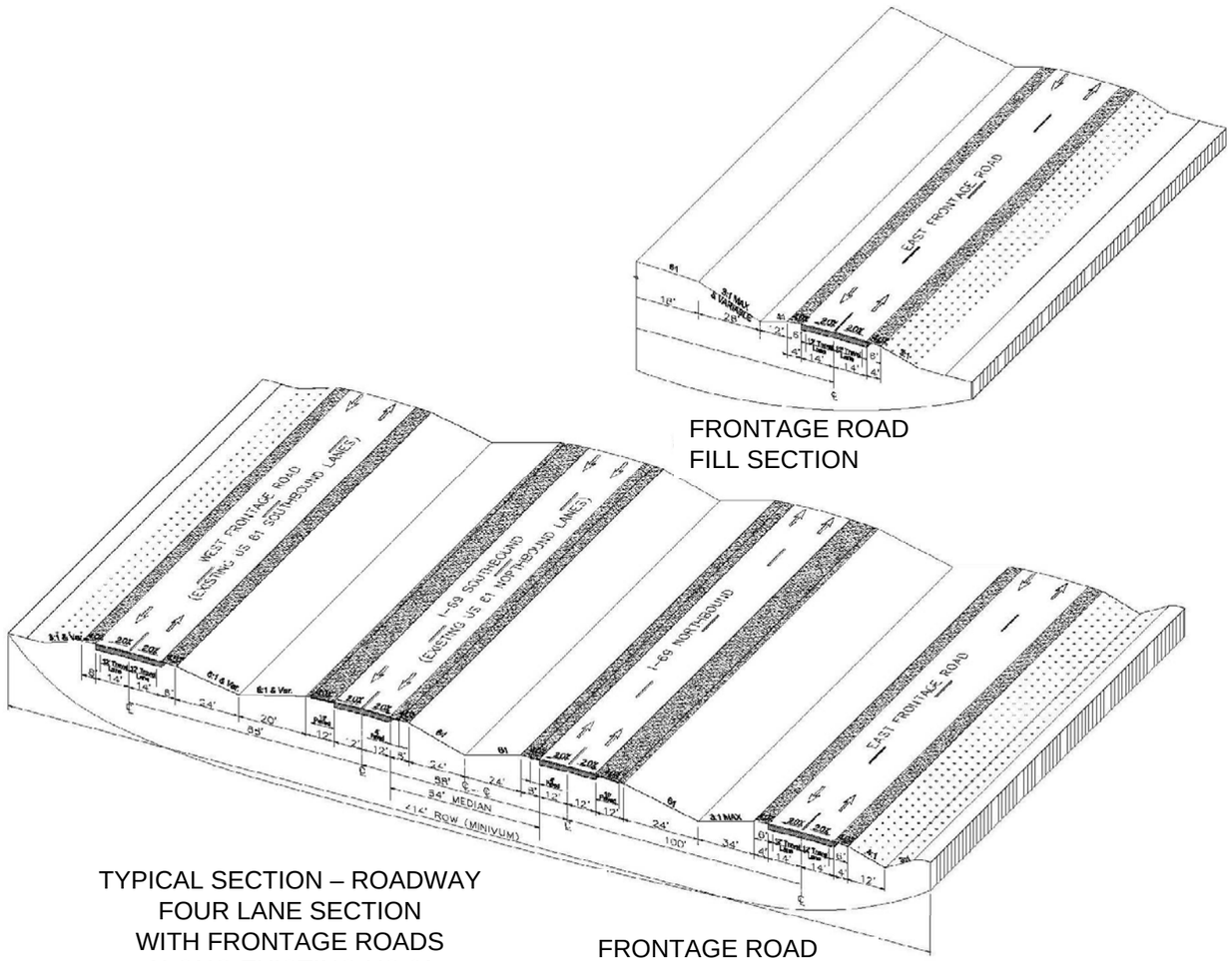
MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Preferred Alternative

Figure 2-10



TYPICAL SECTION – ROADWAY
FOUR LANE SECTION
WITH FRONTAGE ROADS
ON NEW LOCATION



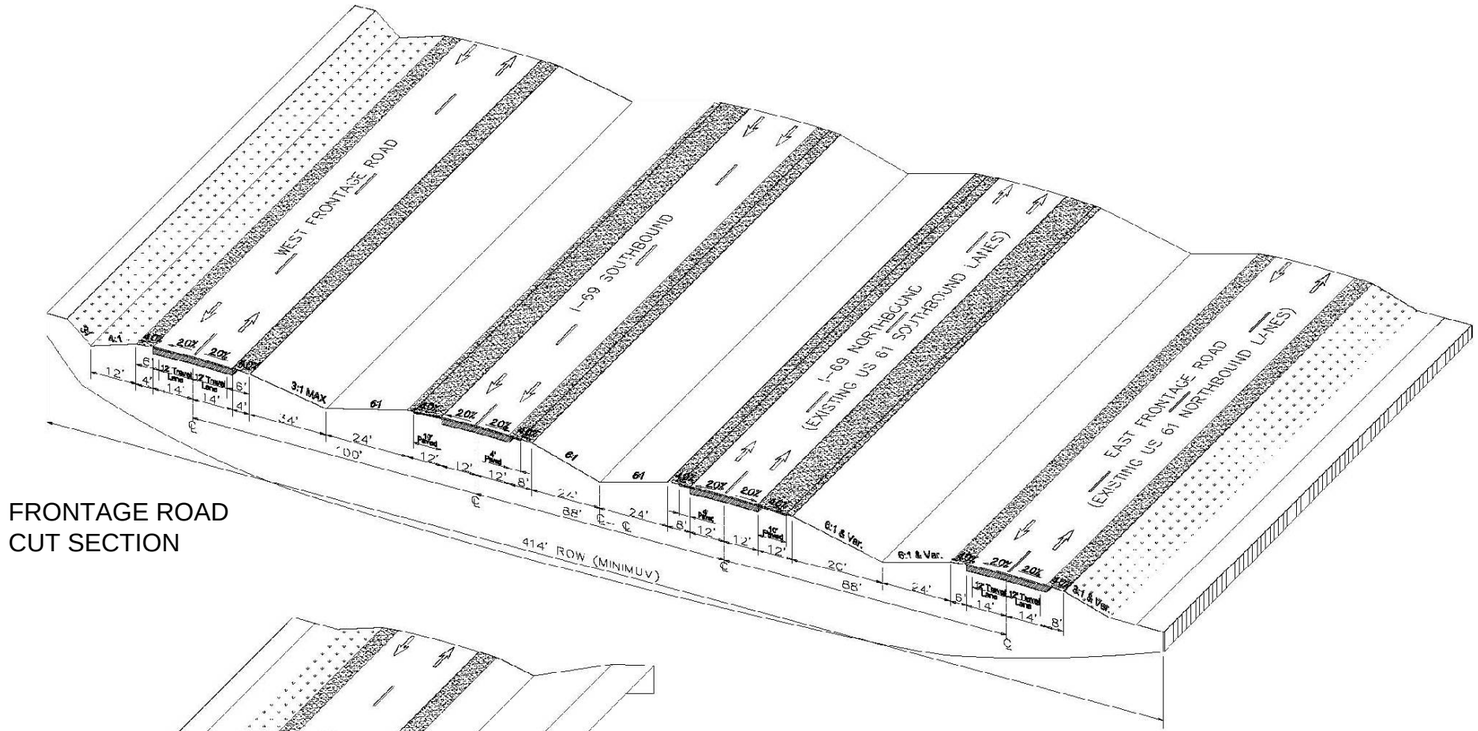
FRONTAGE ROAD
FILL SECTION

TYPICAL SECTION – ROADWAY
FOUR LANE SECTION
WITH FRONTAGE ROADS
ALONG EXISTING US 61
WITH WIDENING TO EAST

FRONTAGE ROAD
CUT SECTION

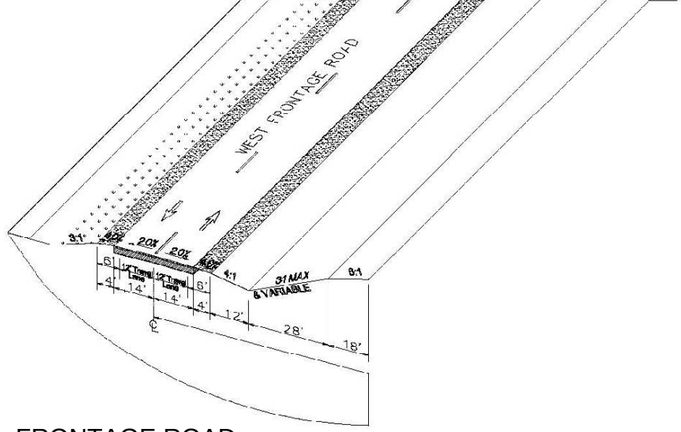
Typical Section – Frontage Roads Along Existing US 61 – East Widening

Figure 2-11B

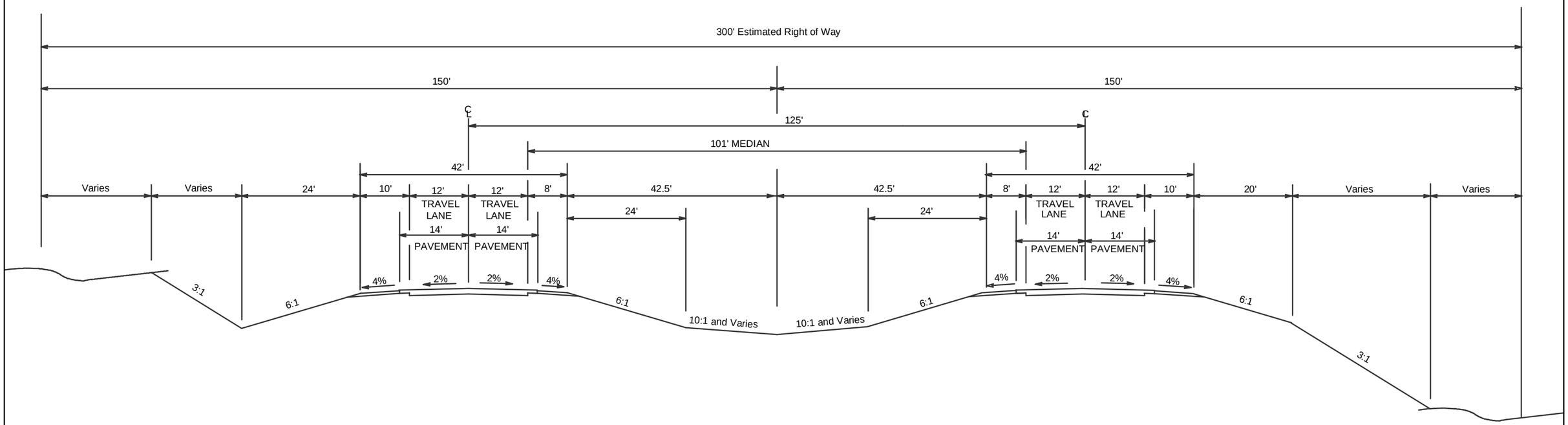


FRONTAGE ROAD
CUT SECTION

TYPICAL SECTION – ROADWAY
FOUR LANE SECTION
WITH FRONTAGE ROADS
ALONG EXISTING US 61
WITH WIDENING TO WEST



FRONTAGE ROAD
FILL SECTION



ALTERNATIVES B, C, AND D FROM EAST OF ROSEDALE NEAR STATION 125+00 CONTINUING EAST TO NEAR STATION 515+00 WEST OF PACE

ALTERNATIVE D FROM WEST OF PACE NEAR STATION 515+00 CONTINUING EAST ALONG SR 8 TO THE WESTERN PORTION OF PACE NEAR STATION 570+00

ALTERNATIVE C (PACE BYPASS) AND ALTERNATIVE D FROM SLIGHTLY EAST OF PACE NEAR STATION 650+00 CONTINUING EAST TO NEAR STATION 750+00 AND THE BOLIVAR COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

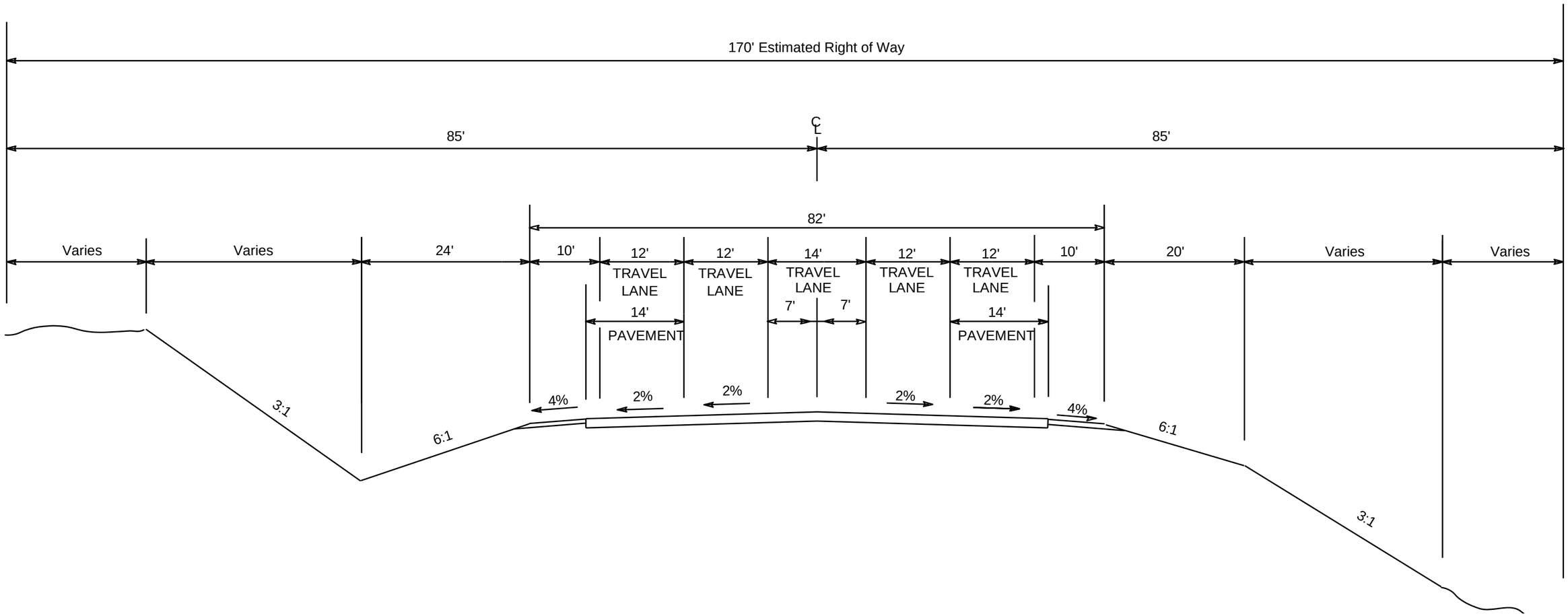
ALTERNATIVE C (PACE BYPASS) FROM SLIGHTLY WEST OF PACE NEAR STATION 515+00 LEAVING SR 8 TO THE NORTH AND PROCEEDING EAST ON NEW LOCATION UNTIL REJOINING SR 8 EAST OF PACE NEAR STATION 650+00

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY

ROBINSON TO BENOIT – SECTION 11

Typical Section- SR 8 Widening- Four-Lane Divided

Figure 2-12 A



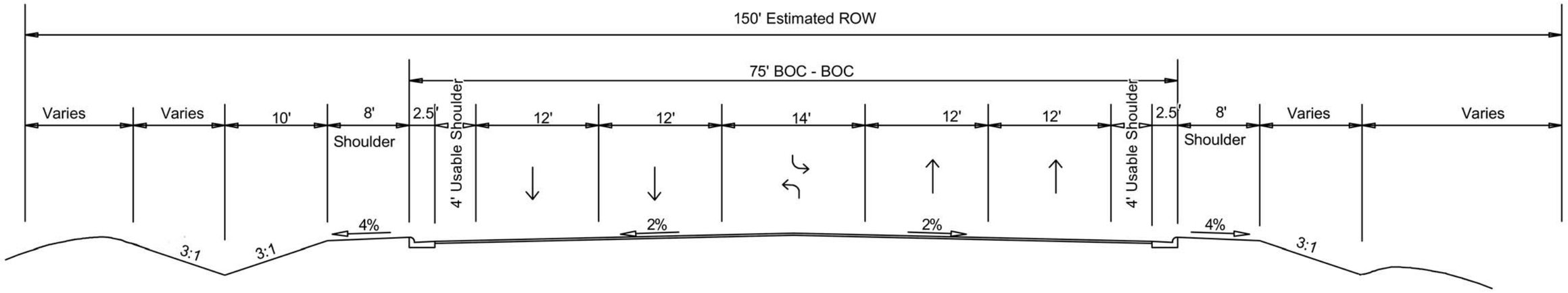
ONLY ALTERNATIVE FROM
STATION 32+00 AT ROSEDALE TO
STATION 125+00 EAST OF ROSE E

WIDENING THROUG PACE ALTERNATIVE
FROM STATION 505 0 WEST OF PACE TO
STATION 750+00 EA OF PACE

ALTERNATIVES B, C, AND D
FROM NEAR STATION 750+00
EAST OF PACE TO NEAR
STATION 942+00 AT
CLEVELAND

Typical Section- SR 8 Five-Lane Open Ditch

Figure 2



ALTERNATIVES B, C, AND D IN ROSEDALE FROM STATION 12+00 AT AN INTERSECTION WITH SR 1 CONTINUING EAST TO NEAR STATION 32+00

ALTERNATIVES B, C, AND D FROM NEAR STATION 943+00 CONTINUING EAST TO NEAR STATION 953+00 AT CLEVELAND

Typical Section- SR 8 Widening Five-Lane Curb and Gutter

Figure 2-12 C

Chapter 3
Affected Environment

This chapter provides a general description of the current social and economic characteristics and natural environment of the study area. The descriptions establish a baseline condition of the social and environmental settings of the study area and provide a basis for determining environmental consequences of the proposed project.

3.1 Study Area

The study area for the proposed I-69 SIU 11 corridor is located in the Delta region of northwest Mississippi. The study area is located east of the Mississippi River; south of the Tunica/DeSoto County Line; west of US 49 W; and north of SR 450. As shown by the study area boundary lines on **Figure 3-1**, the majority of Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties, as well as the northwestern portion of Sunflower County, are within the study area. These counties cover approximately 1,367 square miles. The major towns and cities located within these counties include the following:

Bolivar

- Alligator
- Benoit
- Beulah
- Boyle
- Cleveland (Co-County Seat)
- Duncan
- Gunnison
- Merigold
- Mound Bayou
- Pace
- Rosedale (Co-County Seat)
- Shelby
- Winstonville

Coahoma

- Clarksdale (County Seat)
- Coahoma
- Jonestown
- Lula
- Lyon

Tunica

- Tunica (County Seat)

Sunflower

- No towns or cities within the study area.

Based on the data from the 2000 Census, the City of Clarksdale in Coahoma County is the largest city within the study area with a population of 20,645. The City of Cleveland, with a population of 13,841, is the largest municipality in Bolivar County and the Town of Tunica has the largest population—1,132—in Tunica County. As noted above, in Sunflower County, there are no major cities or towns within the study area. The cities of Clarksdale and Cleveland have substantially more population than other municipalities in the primarily rural study area.

Although it is not identified as being part of the four-county study area, a spur to the Eastern Alternative extends approximately one mile across the Coahoma County Line into Tallahatchie County. All impacts associated with each alternative and their associated spurs will be discussed in Chapter 4**.**

3.2 Land Use

3.2.1 Existing Land Use

In general, most of the land in the study area is rural. Agricultural activity is the predominant land use of Bolivar, Coahoma, Sunflower, and Tunica Counties (see **Figure 3-2**). The soils within the Lower Mississippi Delta Region make up some of the richest soils in the region. Most of the rural land is farmed for cotton, rice, soybeans, or converted into ponds for aquaculture. In the rural environment, most of the uncultivated land is in low areas around lakes and streams.

Due to the topography of the study area being predominately flat, levees have been constructed along the Mississippi River to help with flood control. Little topographical change occurs outside of the levee system. Any undulation in the land follows the meanders created by the Mississippi River as it shifted over the years.

From the south, the primary urban areas within the study area are Cleveland in Bolivar County, Clarksdale in Coahoma County, and Tunica in Tunica County. These cities as well as smaller municipalities are located along US 61.

US 61 is the primary north-south corridor through the study area. Most of the commercial and industrial activity within the study area is located along US 61 or near other modes of transportation including existing county airports or railroad lines. All counties within the study area have at least one industrial park. Most of these industrial parks have space available for future industrial development. Major employers within the study area include: Cooper Tire & Rubber Company (Coahoma County) and Baxter Healthcare (Bolivar County. In Tunica County, employment is supported by a number of casinos and hotels located in the Robinsonville area. There are a few other private employers within Tunica County, the largest being Pillowtex which employs approximately 320 employees.

3.2.2 Land Use Plans

Only Tunica County has a comprehensive land use plan. No other counties within the study area have land use plans. The Tunica County Comprehensive Plan had the following comments pertaining to the proposed construction of the I-69 corridor through Tunica County:

- Tunica County will show the proposed I-69 alternative on the Future Land Use and Transportation Plans.
- Tunica County plans to limit development in the desired I-69 corridor to avoid conflicts with right-of-way acquisition when construction begins.
- Most of the proposed alternatives would be acceptable and would not interfere with the county's land use planning for that area.
- Proposed construction of I-69 should be near existing modes of transportation to help allow for more economic growth in already industrial areas.

Interviews with County officials for the study area also were conducted to gain a perspective of each county's needs and wants for the proposed project. The interviews were conducted to allow all counties within the study area to voice their concerns on issues associated with the construction of this section of the I-69 corridor. Interviewed officials stated specific factors and locations within the county to encourage benefits from economic development. Concerns voiced by the officials included avoiding a large amount of relocations for businesses and residents of

the area, and looking at environmental issues such as degradation of prime and unique farmland that is essential to the region's economy.

3.3 Farmland

In general, farmland is land that is suitable for crop production. However, farmland may be categorized more specifically by the individual characteristics of the soils and their ability to produce crops. One category of farmland is "prime farmland." Prime farmland is defined by the Federal Farmland Protection Act (1981) and the U.S. Council on Environmental Quality (1976) as land having the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Prime farmlands have the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically and consistently produce high yields of crops when properly managed. Prime farmland includes cropland, pastureland, rangeland, and forestland, but does not include land converted to urban, industrial, transportation, or water uses.

"Unique farmland" is categorized with prime farmland for analysis purposes and is defined as an area which has physical and environmental characteristics that support the cultivation of specialty crops. In addition, the Mississippi Department of Agriculture also defines areas as "statewide and locally important farmland." These areas are evaluated separately from prime and unique farmland. Statewide and locally important farmlands are essential to the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, or oilseed crops, which are particularly important to the region.

Prime, unique, statewide and locally important farmlands are present throughout the study area. Coordination with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has occurred to determine the locations of prime, unique, statewide and locally important farmland within the proposed construction areas for this section of the I-69 corridor.

Land in the study area is intensively cultivated. The soils are part of the Southern Mississippi Valley Alluvium soil group, which is considered essential to the productivity of the croplands in the study area. Approximately 55 percent of the croplands in the study area are made up of Southern Mississippi Valley Alluvium soils.

According to the NRCS, more than half of the total acreage of each county is considered prime farmland. **Table 3-1** presents acres of farmable land, percent farmable land, percent prime farmland, and average farm size for each county within the study area.

Table 3-1
Total Acres of Prime Farmland

Farmland	Bolivar	Coahoma	Sunflower	Tunica
Acres of Farmable Land	508, 067	274,000	417,974	182,200
Percent of Farmable Land	87%	76.7%	94.2%	67.2%
Total Acres of Prime Farmland	387,588	234,834	328,236	143,020
Percent of Prime Farmland	66%	64%	74%	52.6%
Average Size of Farm in Acres	888	840	853	840

Source: NRCS Jackson, Mississippi for Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2003.

3.4 Social and Economic Characteristics

3.4.1 Demographics

The currently available 2000 Census data was used to determine the demographics associated with the study area. To investigate historic trends in the study area, both 1990 and 2000 Census data were compared.

3.4.1.1 Population

To determine population trends, population totals for the counties, towns, and cities within the study area were reviewed. **Table 3-2** shows the population breakdown by county for the years 1990 and 2000.

Table 3-2
Population Data for 1990-2000

State/County	Population		Percent Change
	1990	2000	1990-2000
Mississippi	2,573,216	2,844,658	10.5
Bolivar	41,875	40,633	-3.0
Coahoma	31,665	30,622	-3.3
Sunflower	32,867	34,369	4.6
Tunica	8,164	9,227	13.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau SF1 100% Count Data, 1990 and 2000.
Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc, 2004.

Tunica County has had the greatest increase in population. It is likely that the gaming industry in Tunica County has influenced this change. In 1992, Tunica County opened its first casino. Eight additional casinos have opened since then. Both Bolivar and Coahoma Counties have lost small amounts of their population, a trend that occurred throughout the 1990s.

Table 3-3 shows population trends and percent change for the major cities and towns within the study area. Most of the towns and cities within the four-county study area are small towns with populations of less than 1,000. The major cities and towns within the study area that have experience growth include Clarksdale, Shelby, and Jonestown. The second largest city in the study area, Cleveland, has had a decline in population.

Table 3-3
Population Trends by Place

County	Towns and Cities	Population		Percent Change 1990-2000
		1990	2000	
Bolivar	Alligator	187	220	17.6
	Benoit	641	611	-4.7
	Beulah	460	473	2.8
	Boyle	651	720	10.6
	Cleveland	15,384	13,841	-10.0
	Duncan	416	578	38.9
	Gunnison	611	633	3.6
	Merigold	572	664	16.1
	Mound Bayou	2,222	2,102	-5.4
	Pace	354	364	2.8
	Shelby	2,806	2,926	4.3
	Winstonville	277	319	15.2
	Clarksdale	19,717	20,645	4.7
Coahoma	Coahoma	254	325	28.0
	Jonestown	1,467	1,701	16.0
	Lula	224	370	65.2
	Lyon	446	418	-6.3
Sunflower	No major cities or towns within the study area.			
Tunica	Tunica	1,175	1,132	-3.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.
Kimley – Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

3.4.1.2 Age

Information about age distribution within Mississippi and the study area is shown in **Table 3-4**. In the table, the population is identified for each age group and county within the study area. In addition, the percentage of overall population within each age group is shown.

Table 3-4
County Population by Age Range

Age Range	Total Population (Percent)				
	County				Mississippi
	Bolivar	Coahoma	Sunflower	Tunica	
Total Population	40,633	30,622	34,369	9,227	2,844,658
0-10	6,928 (17.1)	6,052 (19.8)	5,574 (16.2)	1,725 (18.7)	465,032 (16.4)
11-17	5,118 (12.6)	4,056 (13.3)	4,020 (11.7)	1,812 (19.6)	310,155 (10.9)
18-21	3,672 (9.0)	2,029 (6.6)	3,002 (8.8)	613 (6.6)	190,179 (6.7)
22-34	7,248 (17.8)	4,722 (15.4)	7,030 (20.5)	1,590 (17.2)	502,593 (17.7)
35-49	7,759 (19.1)	6,081 (19.9)	7,510 (21.9)	1,950 (21.1)	617,483 (21.7)
50-64	5,428 (13.4)	3,928 (12.8)	3,900 (11.4)	1,238 (13.4)	433,685 (15.3)
65-74	2,216 (5.5)	1,922 (6.3)	1,673 (4.9)	500 (5.4)	185,710 (6.5)
75+	2,264 (5.6)	1,832 (6.0)	1,660 (4.8)	433 (4.7)	157,813 (5.6)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau SFI 100% Count Data, 2000.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

As shown above, the percentage of people aged less than 18 years is higher in the study area counties, particularly Tunica County, than for Mississippi. Generally, the population of people age 65 or older is less than 12.5 percent for each county in the study area.

The population over 65 within the study area and shown by Census tract (Year 2000) is identified in **Table 3-5**. At the Census tract level, the percent of the population over 65 ranges from 5.8 to 14.5 percent.

Table 3-5
Study Area Population Over 65 by
2000 Census Tracts

County	Census Tract	Total Population	Population over 65	Percent Population over 65
Bolivar	9501.00	5,145	679	13.2
	9502.00	4,296	451	10.5
	9503.00	4,366	506	11.6
	9504.00	5,757	610	10.6
	9505.00	5,352	476	8.9
	9506.00	7,453	842	11.3
	9507.00	8,264	909	11.0
Coahoma	9501.00	5,120	548	10.7
	9502.00	2,791	338	12.1
	9503.00	3,707	382	10.3
	9504.00	4,828	632	13.1
	9505.00	5,715	794	13.9
	9506.00	1,917	213	11.1
	9507.00	6,544	851	13.0
Sunflower	9501.00	9,067	557	5.8
	9502.00	5,073	736	14.5
	9503.00	3,135	282	9.0
Tunica	9501.00	4,253	349	8.2
	9502.00	4,974	582	11.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Year 2000, 2003.
Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc., 2004.

3.4.1.3 Race

Minority population trends for Mississippi and the four-county study area are shown in **Table 3-6** for the years 1990 and 2000. The minority Year 2000 populations for Bolivar County (66.8 percent), Coahoma County (70.7 percent), Sunflower County (66.9 percent), and Tunica County (72.5 percent) are nearly double the statewide minority population for Mississippi, which is 37.9 percent. Coahoma County had the largest increase in minority population between 1990 and 2000.

Table 3-6 Minority Population: 1990 – 2000							
State/ County	Total Population		Minority Population		Percent Minority		
	1990	2000	1990	2000[a]	1990	2000	Percent Change
Mississippi	2,573,216	2,844,658	939,755	1,078,538	36.5	37.9	1.4
Bolivar	41,875	40,633	26,616	27,126	63.6	66.8	3.2
Coahoma	31,665	30,622	20,664	21,657	65.3	70.7	5.4
Sunflower	32,867	17,815	21,263	11,925	64.7	66.9	2.2
Tunica	8,164	9,227	6,172	6,686	75.6	72.5	-3.1

[a]Minority populations from the 2000 Census include persons who consider themselves to be of two or more races.

Note: Total population and minority population data is based on populations of entire county.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau SF1 100% Count Data, 1990 and 2000.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

Minority populations by 2000 Census tract are shown in **Table 3-7** and on **Figure 3-3**. Only one Census tract (Bolivar County, Tract 9506.00) has a minority population below 20 percent. All other Census tracts have minority populations that are above 47 percent. Two census tracts in Coahoma County (Tract 9506.00 and 9507.00) have minority populations at or above 98 percent. Based on data shown in Tables 3-6 and 3-7, most of the census tracts within the study area have minority populations at or above the countywide percentages, and considerably higher than the statewide percentage.

Table 3-7 Minority Population by 2000 Census Tracts				
County	**Census Tract**	**Total Population**	**Minority Population**	**Percent Minority**
Bolivar	9501.00	5,145	4,333	84.2
	9502.00	4,296	3,617	84.2
	9503.00	4,366	3,927	90.0
	9504.00	5,757	4,413	76.7
	9505.00	5,352	2,539	47.4
	9506.00	7,453	842	11.3
	9507.00	8,264	7,229	87.5
Coahoma	9501.00	5,120	4,372	85.4
	9502.00	2,791	1,347	48.3
	9503.00	3,707	2,379	64.2
	9504.00	4,828	2,286	47.4
	9505.00	5,715	2,769	48.5
	9506.00	1,917	1,898	99.0
	9507.00	6,544	6,421	98.1
Sunflower	9501.00	9,067	6,259	69.0
	9502.00	5,073	3,612	71.2
	9503.00	3,135	2,001	63.8
Tunica	9501.00	4,253	3,127	73.5
	9502.00	4,974	3,490	70.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau SF3 Summary Data, 2000.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

3.4.2 Economics

The percent of population below the poverty level, median household income, and per capita income data were obtained for Mississippi, counties, and 2000 Census tracts. **Table 3-8** provides information related to Mississippi and the four-county study area.

Table 3-8 Poverty Data for Study Area						
State/County	Total Population		Below Poverty Level[a]		Percent of Population Below Poverty Level	
	1990	2000	1990[b] Population	2000[b] Population	1990	2000
Mississippi	2,573,216	2,844,658	631,029	568,932	24.5%	20.0%
Bolivar	41,875	40,633	17,158	13,531	41.0%	33.3%
Coahoma	31,665	30,622	13,997	10,993	44.2%	35.9%
Sunflower	32,867	17,815	12,302	10,311	37.4%	57.9%
Tunica	8,164	9,227	4,597	3,054	56.3%	33.1%

[a] The poverty level thresholds vary between family size and composition and is a dollar amount set for the total family income. The population below the poverty threshold describes the amount of people that are below the defined threshold.
[b] Census estimates were based on the one-in-six sample of housing units that received the long form. Poverty level was based on 1989 data for the 1990 Census and 1999 data for the 2000 Census.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau SF3 Summary Data, 1990 and 2000.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

According to the 2000 Census, approximately 20 percent of the population in Mississippi lives below the poverty level. Within the study area, Sunflower County has the greatest percentage of people below the poverty level (57.9 percent) and Tunica County has the least amount (33.1 percent).

The median household income for Mississippi is $31,330 (see **Table 3-9**). The median household incomes for the four-county study area are nearly $10,000 less that of the average median income for all of Mississippi. The median household income for Tunica County is $23,270. This amount represents more than a $13,000 increase from 1990. The counties within the study area have a median household income that ranges from $22,338 to $24,970. All four counties in the study area have a median household income that is below the state median. The per capita income levels for the four-county study area are also lower than that for Mississippi ($15,853). The per capita incomes range between $11,365 and $12,558 for the counties within the study area (see **Table 3-9**).

Table 3-10 presents economic data on poverty level, median household income, and per capita income for each of the 2000 Census tracts within the study area. **Figures 3-4** and **3-5** show the

median household income and percent population below poverty level in the study area by 2000 Census tract. **Table 3-10** displays the economic data for each census tract.

Table 3-9
Income Data for Study Area

State/County	Total Population	1990 Median Household Income[a]	2000 Median Household Income[a]	Percent Change	1990 Per Capita Income[a]	2000 Per Capita Income[a]	Percent Change	Percent Below Poverty Level
Mississippi	2,844,658	$20,136	$31,330	55.6%	$9,648	$15,853	64.3%	19.9%
Bolivar	40,633	$14,020	$23,428	67.1%	$6,889	$12,088	75.5%	33.3%
Coahoma	30,622	$13,780	$22,338	62.1%	$7,197	$12,558	74.5%	35.9%
Sunflower	34,369	$14,431	$24,970	73.0%	$7,067	$11,365	60.8%	30.0%
Tunica	9,227	$10,965	$23,270	112.2%	$6,449	$11,978	85.7%	33.1%

[a] Census estimates were based on the one-in-six sample of housing units that received the long form. Median household income and per capita incomes were based on 1989 data for the 1990 Census and 1999 data for the 2000 Census.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau SF3 Summary Data, 1990 and 2000.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

As shown in Tables 3-9 and 3-10, most of the census tracts within the study area have a higher percentage of population below the poverty level than the state as a whole, and at or above the countywide percentages.

Table 3-10 Income Data by 2000 Census Tract						
County	Census Tract	Total Population	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	Below Poverty Level	
					Population	Percent
Bolivar	9501.00	5,145	$17,763	$10,015	2,382	46.3
	9502.00	4,296	$19,776	$9,122	1,830	42.6
	9503.00	4,366	$19,111	$9,480	1,729	39.6
	9504.00	5,757	$21,035	$14,415	2,257	39.2
	9505.00	5,352	$26,969	$19,021	1,231	23.0
	9506.00	7,453	$44,229	$9,665	701	9.4
	9507.00	8,264	$19,335	$10,474	3,124	37.8
Coahoma	9501.00	5,120	$17,718	$10,474	2,166	42.3
	9502.00	2,791	$36,818	$17,598	544	19.5
	9503.00	3,707	$23,775	$13,619	1,257	33.9
	9504.00	4,828	$32,600	$15,836	869	18.0
	9505.00	5,715	$25,080	$12,327	1,834	32.1
	9506.00	1,917	$14,207	$8,993	1,164	60.7
	9507.00	6,544	$14,933	$10,302	3,108	47.5
Sunflower	9501.00	9,607	$22,666	$8,242	3,065	31.9
	9502.00	5,073	$24,597	$12,332	1,593	31.4
	9503.00	3,135	$22,226	$14,498	1,019	32.5
Tunica	9501.00	4,253	$26,465	$12,193	1,272	29.9
	9502.00	4,974	$18,780	$11,795	1,786	35.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau SF3 Summary Data, 1990 and 2000.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

3.4.3 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 requires federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects of federally funded projects on minority and low-income populations as part of the environmental justice (EJ) analysis. To determine the impacts of this section of the I-69 corridor on the four-county study area, two parameters were investigated. These parameters are as follows:

- **Minority population**; Minority population refers to any readily identifiable group of *minority persons* (Black, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and other non-white populations). The EJ analysis used the definitions from the 2000 Census collectively as a comparison between white and non-white population.

- **Low-income population**; Low-income population can be based on several indicators. For the EJ analysis in this **FEIS**, the low-income threshold was based on *percent below the poverty level* from the 2000 Census. The 2000 Census questionnaires identified income levels from 1999.

To determine potential environmental justice impacts, 2000 Census data were reviewed at the state, county, and Census Tract level. To ascertain whether a Census tract would pose a potential EJ concern, the 2000 Census tract data in the four-county study area were compared to the data for the county in which they reside. For minority populations, potential EJ concerns exist if the percent minority for the Census tracts is *at least 20 percent greater* than (1.2 times) the percent minority at the county level. For calculating the percent below poverty level, a potential EJ concern would exist if the percent below the poverty level for the Census tracts were *at least 20 percent greater* than (1.2 times) the percentage at the county level. **Table 3-11** provides the results of this analysis.

With exception of two Census tracts in Tunica County, all the Census tracts in the study area have potential EJ concerns related to either percentage minority population and/or percentage of population below the poverty level. To address potential EJ concerns related to the proposed project, an Environmental Justice Outreach Plan was implemented and is discussed in **Chapter 4**.

Table 3-11
Potential Environmental Justice Concerns for Minority Populations and Income Levels

	Unit	Total Population	Minority			Poverty Level	
			Population	Percent	Potential EJ Concern	Percent Below Poverty Level	Potential EJ Concern
State and Counties	Mississippi	2,844,658	1,078,538	37.9	- -	19.9	- -
	Bolivar County	40,633	27,126	66.8	Yes	33.3	Yes
	Coahoma County	30,622	21,657	70.7	Yes	35.9	Yes
	Sunflower County	17,815	11,925	66.9	Yes	30.0	Yes
	Tunica County	9,227	6,686	72.5	Yes	33.1	Yes
Bolivar County	Tract 9501.00	5,145	4,333	84.2	Yes	46.3	No
	Tract 9502.00	4,296	3,617	84.2	Yes	42.6	No
	Tract 9503.00	4,366	3,927	90.0	Yes	39.6	Yes
	Tract 9504.00	5,757	4,413	76.7	No	39.2	Yes
	Tract 9505.00	5,352	2,539	47.4	No	23.0	Yes
	Tract 9506.00	7,453	842	11.3	No	9.4	Yes
	Tract 9507.00	8,264	7,229	87.5	Yes	37.8	Yes
Coahoma County	Tract 9501.00	5,120	4,372	85.4	Yes	42.3	Yes
	Tract 9502.00	2,791	1,347	48.3	No	19.5	Yes
	Tract 9503.00	3,707	2,379	64.2	No	33.9	Yes
	Tract 9504.00	4,828	2,286	47.4	No	18.0	Yes
	Tract 9505.00	5,715	2,769	48.5	No	32.1	Yes
	Tract 9506.00	1,917	1,898	99.0	Yes	60.7	No
	Tract 9507.00	6,544	6,421	98.1	Yes	47.5	Yes
Sunflower County	Tract 9501.00	9,067	6,259	69.0	No	31.9	Yes
	Tract 9502.00	5,073	3,612	71.2	No	31.4	Yes
	Tract 9503.00	3,135	2,001	63.8	No	32.5	Yes
Tunica County	Tract 9501.00	4,253	3,127	73.5	No	29.9	No
	Tract 9502.00	4,974	3,490	70.2	No	35.9	No

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

3.5 Community Facilities

Schools, churches, cemeteries, and public, recreational, and correctional facilities were identified within the study area. Due to the length of this project, some of the figures for the study area, such as the community facilities figure, required two separate pages. **Figure 3-6** shows how these Figures are divided.

Figures 3-7A and **3-7B** identify community facilities located within the study area. Due to the scale, some of the facilities near the alternatives may appear to be within the alignment. A discussion of impacts to community facilities is included in Chapter 4.

3.5.1 Schools

There are 75 public and private elementary, middle, and high schools in the study area. There are also three institutions of higher learning, including the Coahoma Community College north of Clarksdale, Delta State University in Cleveland, and the Joe Barnes Vocational/Technical Center in Rosedale. In addition, there are 43 schools listed as "historical," indicating that the school is no longer operational. In those cases, the unused school buildings may have fallen into disrepair, or may have been demolished since the school was deactivated.

3.5.2 Churches and Cemeteries

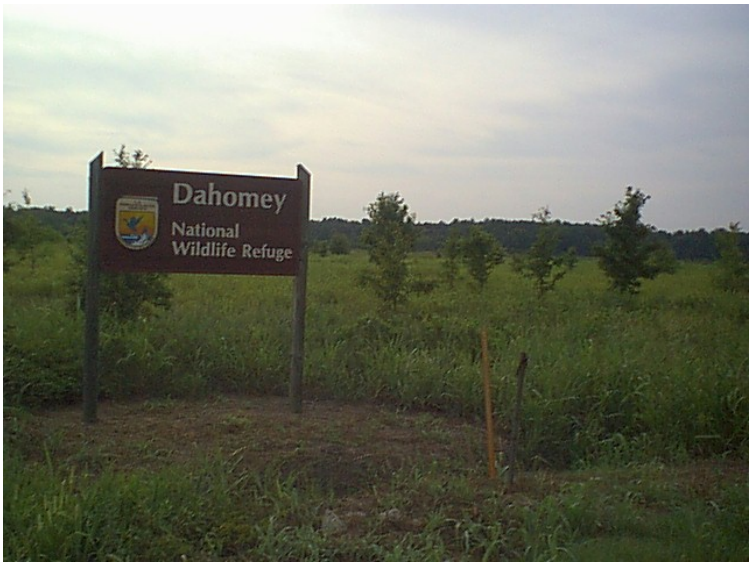
There are 341 churches and 124 cemeteries in the study area. While some are clustered in the cities and towns, the majority are scattered throughout the rural areas. Most of the rural churches are small frame structures, many of which serve African American congregations.

3.5.3 Public Facilities

Public facilities in the study area include city and government buildings such as the Cleveland City Hall, the Clarksdale City Hall, the Bolivar County Courthouse in Cleveland, the Coahoma County Courthouse in Clarksdale, and the Tunica County Courthouse in Tunica. The Western Bolivar County Courthouse in Rosedale is immediately adjacent to the study area. Other important public facilities include the Carnegie Library and the Delta Blues Museum, which are both in Clarksdale. The Walter Sellers Coliseum is in Cleveland at Delta State University.

3.5.4 Parks and Recreation

There are five golf courses within the study area, with the course at Delta State University being the only public course. Three of the golf courses are in Bolivar County. The Cleveland Country Club and the Delta State University Golf Club are in the western part of Cleveland along SR 8. The Shelby Country Club is located southwest of Shelby along SR 32. There are two golf courses in Coahoma County, including the Clarksdale Country Club northwest of Clarksdale, and the Coahoma County Country Club southwest of Clarksdale along US 61.



The Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge is located in southwestern Bolivar County. It consists of agricultural fields, bottomland hardwood forested wetlands, and areas of reforestation. The Askew Wildlife Management Area is located in southeastern Tunica County and serves as a refuge for wildlife and as a floodway for Arkabutla Lake.

In addition to the recreational facilities mentioned above, there are numerous boat landings on the Mississippi River and nearby lakes as well as small public and private parks scattered throughout the cities and towns along the corridor.

The Great River Road State Park is just outside the study area. It is located along the Mississippi River south of Rosedale and north of the Rosedale Port. The park offers activities such as tent and trailer camping, fishing and other water sports, a Frisbee golf course, picnic facilities, a nature trail, and a viewing platform for observing the Mississippi River. Three other recreational

facilities are located immediately adjacent to the study area. The Walter Sellers Country Club is south of Rosedale along SR 1, and Cottonwoods at Grand Casino and the River Bend Links at Casino Strip Resort are in Robinsonville.

3.5.5 Correctional Facilities

The Mississippi State Penitentiary is immediately adjacent to the east of the study area. As shown in **Figure 3-7A,** the penitentiary is located in Parchman in northwestern Sunflower County. A correctional facility is also located in Bolivar County, approximately four miles west of the Cleveland city limits.

3.5.6 Emergency Medical Services

Emergency medical services are provided for each county through either private or county-run services. In Bolivar County, the emergency response service is provided by Bolivar Medical Ambulance Service with routes directly to the Bolivar County Medical Center in the City of Cleveland. Coahoma County uses the Emergystat Ambulance Service with service to the Northwest Regional Medical Center located in the City of Clarksdale. Sunflower County has two hospitals, North Sunflower County Hospital and South Sunflower County Hospital. The two hospitals in Sunflower County are not within the study area, but Medstat Ambulance Services provides service within the study area to both North Sunflower County Hospital and South Sunflower County Hospital. Tunica County has no hospitals in the county, but does have one medical center, Tunica County Medical Center located in the City of Tunica. Ambulance service from Tunica County to neighboring hospitals is provided by Rural Metro Ambulance Service. There are also two additional health centers located in the study area: the Aaron E. Henry Community Health Center in Clarksdale (Coahoma County) and the Delta Health Center in Mound Bayou (Bolivar County).

3.6 Transportation and Utilities

3.6.1 US Highways, State Highways, and County Roads

The transportation network within the study area consists of a combination of US highways, state highways, and county roads (see **Figure 3-8**). Three US highways—US 61, US 278/SR6, and US 49 run through the study area.

- US 61 generally runs north to south and serves communities, towns, and cities such as Boyle, Cleveland, Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, Duncan, and Alligator in Bolivar County; Clarksdale, Lyon, Coahoma, Rich, and Lula in Coahoma County; and Tunica and Robinsonville in Tunica County. With the exception of the segment between Shelby and Clarksdale, which is two-lane, US 61 within the study area is four-lane.
- US 278/SR 6 is concurrent with US 61 in the southern portion of the study area. US 278/SR 6 and US 61 then separate in the study area at Clarksdale, where US 278/SR 6 becomes concurrent with SR 6 and resumes its east-west orientation. Within the study area, the overlapping section of US 278/SR 6 and US 61 connects the cities of Cleveland and Clarksdale.
- US 49 joins the city of Clarksdale and the community of Rich in the study area. US 49 is out of the study area until it reaches Clarksdale where it joins US 61 and moves northeast towards Rich. Approximately one mile from Rich, US 49 separates from US 61 and travels northwest to cross the Mississippi River approximately five miles west of Lula.

Nine state highways run throughout the study area. SR 8 and SR 1 are the primary state highways within the study area. Each is described below.

- SR 8 begins at the intersection with SR 1 at Rosedale and extends east through the Town of Pace and the City of Cleveland. After exiting Cleveland, SR 8 continues east out of the study area.
- SR 1 (also called the Great River Road) extends along the western edge of the study area. It begins at Onward in central Mississippi and terminates at US 49 in northern Mississippi. Within the study area, SR 1 serves communities, towns, or cities such as Benoit, Beulah, Rosedale, Gunnison, Rena Lara, Sherard, Stovall, and Friars Point.
- In addition to SR 1 and SR 8, there are other state highways within the study area—such as SR 446, SR 32, SR 444, SR 322, SR 316, SR 4, and SR 304 that serve communities, towns, or cities such as Skene, Benoit, Shelby, Duncan, Sherard, Jonestown, Tunica, and Robinsonville. In addition, SR 161 (Old 61) travels through Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, and, Shelby.

Each county in the study area also contains a network of county roads. Generally, these roads follow a grid pattern.

3.6.2 Railroads

Railroad corridors occur throughout the study area (see **Figure 3-8**). One main rail corridor runs in a north-south orientation from the Southern Bolivar County Line to the Tunica/DeSoto County Line. However, most of this rail corridor is abandoned. The only active parts of the railway are the Mississippi Delta Railroad, which runs from the Tunica/Coahoma County Line to Clarksdale. Active spurs branch off of the Mississippi Delta Railroad and run from Lula to Jonestown in Coahoma County. Another active railroad line follows US 49 from Clarksdale to the southeast. The Columbus and Greenville Railway begins at Cleveland in Bolivar County and runs south out of the study area. Another railroad, the Great River Railroad, begins in Rosedale and runs southward through both Beulah and Benoit before leaving the study area. Its route parallels the route of SR1. The Rosedale–Bolivar County Port Commission operates the Great River Railroad.

3.6.3 Airports

Three airports are located within the study area (see **Figure 3-8**). All of these airports are general aviation facilities. The first airport is located in Tunica County. It is located approximately two miles east of Tunica. A new runway was recently completed at this airport. The second airport is located in Coahoma County just to the west of US 61 approximately seven miles north of Clarksdale. The third airport is in Bolivar County approximately two miles west of the junction of SR 8 and US 61 in Cleveland. Shelby Airfield also is located approximately one mile northwest of Shelby. Several landing strips for crop dusting aircraft are also located throughout the study area.

3.6.4 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

There are no designated bicycle routes located along existing US 61. Designated bike facilities located near the study area include the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) that follows SR 1 from Minnesota and ends in Louisiana.

3.6.5 Scenic Byways

There are no nationally designated Scenic Byways located within the study area. "The Great River Road," designated by the Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MRPC), is a system of

roads that follow the Mississippi River in 10 states. In Mississippi, the Great River Road follows US 61 north from the Louisiana state line through Natchez and Vicksburg to Onward, then proceeds on SR 1 north to US 49, US 49 to US 61, then north on US 61 to the Tennessee state line. While portions of the Great River Road in other states have been designated as National Scenic Byways, the portion in Mississippi has not received that designation. It is a goal of MRPC to have the entire length of the Great River Road designated as a National Scenic Byway.

3.6.6 Utilities

The study area contains both natural gas lines and transmission line corridors (see **Figure 3-9**). The transmission lines, which are owned by Entergy, enter the northern part of the study area west of US 61 and parallel US 61 through Tunica County to Clarksdale in Coahoma County. A transmission line corridor branches to the southeast of Tunica, and another corridor branches both to the west and the east just north of the Tunica County Line. South of Clarksdale, the transmission line corridor follows a southerly direction until it reaches Cleveland, where it turns to the southeast and leaves the study area. At Renova in Bolivar County, another transmission line corridor, which is also owned by Entergy, crosses the north-south corridor in an east-west direction. The corridor crosses US 61 approximately five miles south of Tunica and again approximately 10 miles south of Tunica. Another crossing of the US 61 corridor occurs just outside of Clarksdale in Coahoma County.

Several natural gas pipelines cross the proposed alternatives. Two pipelines owned by Texas Gas Transmission Company run through the entire length of the study area in a southwest to northeast direction. These pipelines cross US 61 both north and south of the Tunica County Line and then to the northeast of Clarksdale in Coahoma County. They cross the US 61 corridor again north of both Winstonville and Merigold before leaving the southern edge of the study area south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. Another pipeline owned by the Wisconsin Pipeline Company enters the study area to the northeast of the Mississippi State Penitentiary and crosses US 61 just north of Renova. Two other pipelines owned by the Tennessee Gas Transmission Company cross US 49W north of Ruleville and run to the southwest before leaving the study area approximately five miles east of Shaw.

3.7 Air Quality

The Clean Air Act directed the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to establish standards for clean air. As a result, the USEPA established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six atmospheric pollutants that affect the air quality of a region. These pollutants are carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, lead, particulate matter, ozone, and ozone precursors: hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen. Each pollutant is described below:

- *Carbon Monoxide* — Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas formed by the burning of fuels containing carbon. Motor vehicles are the principal source of CO emissions in urban areas. Maximum concentrations usually occur near intersections and other areas of traffic congestion, and they decrease rapidly with distance from the source.
- *Sulfur Dioxide* — Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2) belongs to the family of Sulfur Oxide gases (SO_x). SO_x gases are formed when fuel-containing sulfur, such as oil, is burned, and when gasoline is extracted from oil. SO_2 interacts with other gases and particulates in the air to form sulfates and other products that can be harmful to people and their environment.
- *Lead* — Levels of the pollutant "Lead" (Pb) in the air have decreased dramatically since 1978, primarily due to reductions in emissions from cars and trucks. Today, metal processing plants are generally responsible for most of the lead in the air.
- *Particulate Matter* — Particulate matter (PM) enters the air from industrial operations, vehicular traffic, and other sources, including fireplaces. Most of the particulate matter generated by motor vehicles consists of re-suspended road dust. Two common classifications for particulate matter are total suspended particulates (TSP) and particulate matter small enough to get in the lungs (PM_{10}), which only includes particles with a diameter less than or equal to 10 micrometers.
- *Ozone* — Ozone (O_3) in the lower atmosphere is a harmful air pollutant and contributes to the formation of smog. It is a secondary pollutant formed by the reaction of hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen in the presence of strong sunlight. Thus, ozone levels are reduced by minimizing emissions of those precursor pollutants.
- *Hydrocarbons* — Hydrocarbons (HC) are a key component in the formation of ozone. These organic compounds are emitted or evaporate into the atmosphere from a variety of sources, particularly the storage and combustion of fuels in motor vehicles.
- *Oxides of Nitrogen* — Oxides of nitrogen (NO_X) are another precursor to the formation of ozone. They are produced as the result of high-temperature fuel combustion and subsequent atmospheric reactions. Major sources of NO_X include diesel engines, power plants, refineries, and other industrial operations.

In addition to the above pollutants, individual states can establish standards that are equal to or more stringent than the national standards. The State of Mississippi has established criteria for Total Suspended Particulates (TSP). A summary of the national and state ambient air quality standards are shown in **Table 3-12**.

Table 3-12 Mississippi and National Ambient Air Quality Standards		
Pollutant	**Averaging Time**	**Mississippi and National Standards**
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	One Hour*	35 ppm
	Eight-Hour*	9 ppm
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.03 ppm
	Twenty-Four Hour*	0.14 ppm
	Three-Hour* Secondary	0.50 ppm
Lead (Pb)	Three-Month Arithmetic Mean	1.5 ug/m^3
Particulates (PM 10)	Annual Arithmetic Mean Primary & Secondary	50 ug/m^3
	Twenty-Four-Hour** Primary & Secondary	150 ug/m^3
Particulates (PM 2.5)	Annual Arithmetic Mean Primary & Secondary	15 ug/m^3
	Primary Twenty-Four-Hour	65 ug/m^3
Ozone	One Hour	0.12 ppm
	Eight-Hour	0.08 ppm
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.053 ppm
Total Suspended Particulates (TSP)	Twenty-Four-Hour*	150 ug/m^3

* Not to be exceeded more than once per year.
** Statistically estimated number of days with exceedances is not to be more than 1 per year.
*** Not more than one expected exceedance per year on a three year average.
ppm Parts of pollutant per million parts of air (by volume) at 25º C.
ug/m Micrograms of pollutant per cubic meter of air.

Sources: Code of Federal Regulations: Title 40 Part 50: Last amended July, 1987.
Mississippi Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Pollution Control; Regulation APC-S-4: Last amended June 22, 1988.

This project falls within the Mississippi Delta Intrastate Air Quality Control Region (AQCR #134). The National Air Monitoring System (NAMS) and State and Local Air Monitoring System (SLAMS) program conduct air monitoring for the above pollutants at various locations throughout the region and within Mississippi. The results of air quality monitoring data determine the state's ability to meet and maintain the NAAQS. The areas where air pollution levels persistently exceed standards may be designated “nonattainment.”

The EPA Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (OAQPS) manages EPA programs both to improve air quality in areas where the current quality does not meet air quality standards and to prevent deterioration in areas where the air is relatively free of pollution. According the EPA

OAQPS, Mississippi does not exceed air quality standards and is in attainment for all criteria pollutants. The regulatory citations and actions that determined this area is in attainment for the 1-hour ozone standard and other NAAQS, with the exception of the ozone and fine particular matter standards, is 40 Code of Federal Regulation Part 81. The reference announcing the determination of this area being in attainment for the 8-hour ozone and fine particulate matter standards is 69 FR23857 (published in the Federal Register on April 30, 2004), respectively.

3.8 Noise

3.8.1 Fundamentals of Sound and Noise

Ambient noise is the noise resulting from natural and mechanical sources, as well as human activity considered to be usually present in a particular area. The purpose of assessing ambient noise levels is to quantify the existing acoustic environment, thus providing a base for assessing the noise impact of the proposed project on residences and other noise-sensitive receptors. Differences in the measured noise levels are attributed to variations in site conditions and traffic volumes.

Traffic noise levels are commonly measured using the A-weighting curve. Expressed as dBA, this curve correlates very well with human response to noise, particularly from annoyances such as traffic and aircraft noise.

Equivalent Sound Levels (Leq) at all occupied facilities in the vicinity of the proposed project were made using the FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model. By definition, the Leq is the level of constant sounds which, in a given situation and time period, has the same energy as time-varying sound. In other words, the fluctuating sound levels of traffic noise are represented in terms of a steady noise level with the same energy content.

Typical sound levels for common indoor and outdoor activities are shown in **Table 3-13**. Illustrated sound levels range from the threshold of hearing at up to five dBA to a jet takeoff at 120 dBA. Typical urban sound levels range from 50 to 90 dBA.

Table 3-13 Typical Sound Levels		
Source	**Distance**	**Level (dBA)**
Jet takeoff	200 ft.	120
Jet takeoff	2,000 ft.	110
Jet landing	200 ft.	100
Heavy truck	50 ft.	90
Pneumatic drill	50 ft.	80
Freeway traffic	50 ft.	70
Air conditioning unit	20 ft.	60
Normal conversation	12 ft.	50
Light auto traffic	100 ft.	50
Library	----	40
Soft whisper	15 ft.	30
Threshold of hearing	----	0-5

Source: U.S. Noise Pollution, Environmental Protection Agency, 1972.

In the analysis, occupied facilities were defined as any facilities that either have regular human use or typically do so even if they are temporarily vacant. Occupied facilities were identified within 500 feet (measured from roadway centerline) of each alternative alignment. Based on the inventory conducted, 83 occupied facilities are located along the Eastern Alternative, 71 occupied facilities are located along the Central Alternative, and 51 occupied facilities are located along the Western Alternative. In addition, 128 occupied facilities are located along the existing (two-lane) SR 8 corridor.

3.8.2 Noise Impact Criteria

Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 772 (23 CFR 772) defines traffic noise impacts as "impacts which occur when the predicted traffic noise levels approach or exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC), or when the predicted traffic noise levels substantially exceed the existing noise levels."

A memorandum dated December 1, 1993, from the Director, Office of Environment and Planning, Federal Highway Administration says that, "effective from the date of this memorandum, all State Highway Administrators (SHA) must establish a definition of 'approach' that is at least 1 dBA less than the NAC for use in identifying traffic noise impacts in traffic noise

analysis." Therefore, the MDOT has defined "approach" to be 1 dBA less than the NAC. MDOT also has defined a substantial increase in traffic noise levels to be 15 dBA or more.

The FHWA established noise abatement criteria based on land use or activity category. These noise abatement criteria are listed in **Table 3-14** and are considered to be the absolute levels where abatement must be considered. The Category A criterion applies to tracts of land for which the preservation of serenity and quiet are of paramount importance. The Category B criterion is an exterior condition applied to schools, churches, residences, parks, and in some cases to institutional land uses. The Category C criterion also is an exterior condition applied to commercial and industrial activities. The Category E criterion is an interior condition which applies to noise sensitive activities such as schools, churches, and hospitals.

Table 3-14
Noise Abatement Criteria
Hourly A- Weighted Sound Level-Decibels (dBA)

Category	Leq(h)	Description of Activity Category
A	57 (Exterior)	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose.
B	67 (Exterior)	Picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals.
C	72	Developed lands, properties, or activities not included in Categories A or B above.
D	--	Undeveloped lands.
E	52 (Interior)	Residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, hospitals, and auditoriums.

Source: 23 CFR 772, Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise.

3.8.3 Existing Noise Levels

Field measurements were made at 33 locations (see **Figure 4-1**) using a Norsonic 116 precision integrating impulse sound level meter to determine ambient noise levels at receptors along the project. For the purpose of impact assessment, ambient noise levels were determined for each identified receptor. Ambient noise levels for all receptors were based on the noise levels at the monitored locations and adjusted based on distance from the roadway. A 4.5 dBA decrease in noise with each doubling of distance was assumed. Traffic counts also were taken during the sampling periods at available roadside sites. The noise measurement locations and ambient noise levels are listed in **Table 3-15**.

Table 3-15 Summary of Ambient Noise Levels			
Site[1]	**County**	**Location[2]**	**Existing Leq (dBA)**
01	Tunica	North Central and Western Alternatives	61.0
02	Tunica	North Eastern Alternative	59.4
03	Tunica	North Central and Western Alternative	52.4
04	Tunica	North Central and Western Alternatives	59.9
05	Tunica	North Western Alternative	51.0
06	Tunica	North Central and Eastern Alternatives	56.3
07	Tunica	North Central and Eastern Alternatives	51.5
08	Tunica	North Western Alternative	46.6
09	Tunica	North Western Alternative	48.5
10	Tunica	North Between Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives	49.6
11	Coahoma	Central Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives	49.6
12	Coahoma	Central Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives	52.4
13	Coahoma	Central Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives	56.6
14	Coahoma	South Central Alternative	53.4
15	Coahoma	South Central Alternative	N/A
16	Bolivar	South Central Alternative	52.9
17	Sunflower	South Eastern Alternative	49.4
18	Bolivar	South Central Alternative	52.7
19	Bolivar	South Western Alternative	45.3
20	Sunflower	South Eastern Alternative	58.9
22	Bolivar	South Central Alternative	56.5
24	Bolivar	South Western Alternative	N/A
25	Bolivar	South Eastern Alternative	58.2
26	Bolivar	South Western and Central Alternative	64.2
29	Bolivar	South Western and Central Alternatives	59.9
30	Bolivar	South Eastern Alternative	48.7
31	Bolivar	South Western Alternative	51.0
32	Bolivar	South Western Alternative	67.3
33	Bolivar	South Central and Eastern Alternative	56.4

[1]Some receptors (21, 23, 27, and 28) are not listed as they were associated with a preliminary alternative that has been eliminated.

[2]**Preferred Alternative is a modification of the Central Alternative with similar ambient noise levels.**

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

Field measurements were used to validate the noise model performance and calibration. Existing noise level estimates using the FHWA Traffic Noise Model (TNM 2.1) were developed for six receptors including 01, 04, 11, 30, 32, and 33. Existing noise levels at all six locations were estimated within an acceptable range (i.e., +/- 2 dBA). Therefore, the TNM model calibration was acceptable to be used for this analysis.

Eighty-three occupied facilities are located in the vicinity of the Eastern Alternative of the proposed project. These facilities consist of houses, mobile homes, churches, and businesses.

There are no occupied facilities having existing traffic noise levels approaching or exceeding 23 CFR 772 Noise Abatement Criteria Levels.

Seventy-one occupied facilities are located in the vicinity of the Central Alternative (Preferred Alternative) of the proposed project. These facilities consist of houses, mobile homes, churches, and businesses. There are no occupied facilities having existing traffic noise levels approaching or exceeding 23 CFR 772 Noise Abatement Criteria Levels.

Fifty-one occupied facilities are located in the vicinity of the Western Alternative of the proposed project. These facilities consist of houses, mobile homes, churches, and businesses. Only one (NRECP32) of these occupied facilities (near SR 1) has existing traffic noise levels approaching or exceeding 23 CFR 772 Noise Abatement Criteria Levels.

One hundred and twenty-eight occupied facilities are located in the vicinity of the SR 8 corridor. These facilities consist of houses, mobile homes, churches, and businesses. There are no occupied facilities having existing traffic noise levels approaching or exceeding 23 CFR 772 Noise Abatement Criteria Levels.

3.9 Geological Resources

3.9.1 Geology

The study area is a combination of Pleistocene alluvial terraces and Holocene (modern) floodplain features and depositional patterns which have resulted in valley trains, backswamps, point bars, abandoned channels, abandoned courses, and natural levees. This mosaic of features spans the project corridors. Valley trains are Pleistocene glacial outwash deposits from the Mississippi River with surface features that reflect braided-stream depositional regimes. Many of these features have been eroded away by lateral channel migration or buried by deep sediments during recent times. The buried channel systems on valley trains differ from abandoned channels within the Mississippi River meander belts in that the valley train channels tend to be filled with coarse sediment below the surface veneer of fine-grained material.

Backswamps are flat, poorly drained areas found between the various past and present meander belts of the Mississippi River. Backswamps are underlain by coarse glacial outwash with surface deposits comprised of fine-grained sediments that were slowly deposited in slack-water conditions. Backswamps have substrates of massive clays and are incompletely drained by small, sometimes anastomosing streams. These areas may not fully drain through channel systems but remain ponded well into the growing season.

Point bars are common features within the study area. They consist of relatively coarse-grained materials laid down on the inside (convex) bend of a migrating stream channel. The rate at which point bar deposition occurs and the height and width of individual deposits vary with sediment supply, flood stage, and other factors. The result is topography of low ridges separated by swales. Abandoned channels are the result of cutoff chutes where a stream abandons a channel segment either because flood flows have scoured out a point bar swale and created new main channel (chute cutoff) or because migrating bendways intersect and channel flow moves through the neck (neck cutoff). Chute cutoffs tend to be relatively small and fill rapidly with sediment often persisting as large depressions. Neck cutoffs often create oxbow lakes because the upper and lower ends of the abandoned channel quickly fill with coarse sediments.

An abandoned course is a stream channel segment left behind when a stream diverts flow to a new meander belt. Abandoned channels often become depressions with heavy soils; abandoned courses are more likely to be continuous with the point bar deposits of the original stream or to become part of the meander belt of a smaller stream. Natural levees form where the overbank flows and results in deposition of relatively coarse sediments adjacent to stream channels. The material is deposited as a continuous sheet that thins with distance from the stream resulting in a relatively high ridge along the bank and a gradual backslope that becomes progressively more fine-grained with distance from the channel.

3.9.2 Soils

Parent materials of soils of the Mississippi Alluvial Valley are fluvial sediments. Glacial outwash and subsequent development of multiple Mississippi River meander belts produced complex landforms. The sorting process based on the mode and environment of deposition has produced textural and topographic gradients that result in distinctive soils. Within a meander belt, surface substrates grade from relatively coarse texture well drained, higher elevation soils on natural

levees directly adjacent to river channels through progressively finer textured and less well drained materials on levee backslopes and point bar deposits to very heavy clay in closed basins within large swales and abandoned channels. Backswamp deposits between meander belts are also heavy clays.

Soil associations are classified as a group of defined and named taxonomic soil units occurring together in an individual and characteristic pattern over a general region. The soils within an association generally vary with depth, slope, stoniness, drainage, and other characteristics. Based on information obtained from the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the soils within the project study area are composed of four main associations: Alligator-Sharkey-Tunica-Dowling, Bosket-Dubbs-Dundee-Forestdale, Dexter, and Commerce-Robinsonville-Crevasse. The following is a brief description of each soil association located within the study area.

Alligator-Sharkey-Tunica-Dowling—This association consists of very deep, poorly drained, very slowly permeable soils that formed in clayey to loamy alluvium. They are found in backswamps, sloughs, and ponded oxbow depressions on the floodplains and low terraces of the Mississippi River. Most of the *Alligator* soils are used for growing soybeans, rice cotton, and wheat. Some are in bottomland hardwoods, dominated by bald cypress, ash, tupelo gum, swamp maple, oaks, hickories, sweetgum, and cottonwood. *Sharkey* soils are poorly drained and darker in color than the *Alligator* series. *Sharkey* soils are used mostly for cropland. Minor areas are in Pecan orchards, woodland, and pasture. Areas that are frequently flooded and ponded are mainly in bottomland hardwoods. Most of the *Tunica* soils are used for growing cotton, soybeans, small grains, corn, hay, and pasture. *Dowling* soils are essentially used for growing timber and wildlife habitat. The vegetation is usually dominated by bald cypress, water tupelo, and red maple.

Bosket-Dubbs-Dundee-Forestdale—This association consists of predominantly nearly level, poorly drained to somewhat excessively drained soils on old natural levees. The soils have formed from medium to moderately fine textured sediments that have been in place long enough for some profile development to take place. *Bosket* soils, which make up only a small portion of this association, occur nearest the old streambeds. They are the best-drained soils of the association. The *Bosket* series consists of very deep, well-drained, moderately permeable soils that formed in loamy alluvium. Nearly all of the soil has been cleared and used for growing cotton, corn, small grain, and other row crops. Few areas are used for pasture and hay. The *Dubbs* series occur next to the *Bosket* soils. They have developed from fine textured alluvium

and have well oxidized profiles. The *Dubbs* series consists of very deep, well-drained, moderately permeable soils formed in loamy alluvium. These soils are on nearly level to sloping areas on natural levees or low terraces of the Mississippi River. Most areas are cleared and used for growing cotton, corn, soybeans, and pasture. The *Dundee* series occur between *Dubbs* and *Forestdale* soils. These are somewhat poorly-drained to moderately well-drained and have mottles in the soil profile. The *Dundee* series consists of very deep somewhat poorly drained soils formed in loamy alluvium. These soils are level to gently sloping soils on natural levees and low terraces along the former channels of the Mississippi River. Most areas are cleared and used for growing row crops. The *Forestdale* series consists of very deep, poorly drained, very slowly permeable soils that formed in clayey and silty alluvium. These soils are on low terraces or natural levees bordering former channels of the Mississippi River. They are saturated in the winter and early spring. Water runs off the surface of theses soils very slowly. Slopes range from 0 to 8 percent. Most areas are cleared and used for cotton, soybeans, small grains, and pasture.

Commerce-Robinsonville-Crevasse—This association occurs on the eastern side of the Mississippi River levee. The principle soils are *Commerce, Robinsonville, and Crevasse*; all of which are on recent natural levees. The relief for this association is nearly level with some small gently sloping areas. The soils are neutral to alkaline. The *Commerce* series consists of deep, somewhat poorly drained, moderately permeable soils that formed in loamy alluvial sediments. These soils are on level to undulating alluvial plains of the Mississippi River and its tributaries. The slope is generally less than 1 percent but ranges up to 5 percent. *Commerce* series soils are used mostly for cropland; cotton, soybeans, corn, and wheat are the principal crops. The *Robinsonville* series consists of very deep well-drained soils with moderate to rapid permeability. These are level to gently sloping soils that formed in loamy alluvium on the floodplain of the Mississippi River. Slopes range from 0 to 5 percent. Most areas of the *Robinsonville* soils are cleared and used for growing cotton, corn, soybeans, hay, and pasture. The *Crevasse* series consists of very deep, excessively drained, rapidly permeable soils that formed in sandy alluvium. These levels to gently sloping soils are on splays and recent, sparsely vegetated point bar deposits on the floodplain of the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Slopes range from 0 to 5 percent. Most areas that are protected from flooding are cleared and used for growing pasture and hay.

The *Dexter* series consists of very deep, well drained, moderately permeable soils that formed in thin loess and underlying loamy and sandy sediments on terraces of Late Pleistocene Age. These

soils are on elongated, narrow convex ridges. Slopes range from 0 to 8 percent. Dexter soils are level to gently sloping and have formed in thin loess and underlying alluvium of mixed mineralogy. They occur mostly on low terraces of the Mississippi River or its tributaries.

3.10 Water Resources

3.10.1 Surface Water

The study area contains several major water bodies due to the topography of the lower Mississippi Delta (**Figures 3-10A** and **3-10B**). The Mississippi River has shaped the delta until recent times when levees and flood control structures were put in place to control the river. The water bodies in the study area are the result of the river meandering over time across the delta to create bayous and oxbow lakes.

The study area is within the Yazoo River Basin, Mississippi's largest basin, composed of 13,355 square miles which eventually drains into the Mississippi River. Major streams in the basin include the Coldwater, Little Tallahatchie, Tallahatchie, Yocona, Yalobusha, Sunflower, Big Sunflower, Bogue Phalia, and Yazoo Rivers. Streams in the study area are typically sluggish with silt bottoms. Many streams receive large amounts of sediment and other agricultural

contaminants resulting in high turbidity, elevated nutrients, and periodic elevated toxics. This results in fair to poor water quality.

Waters within Bolivar County include Lake Whittington, Lake Beulah, and Lake Bolivar, which are adjacent to the study area along the eastern bank of the Mississippi River. These lakes are "oxbow" lakes, which were formed when the Mississippi River changed course. The Bogue Phalia River also is located in southern Bolivar County and flows south out of Bolivar County into Washington County. The Sunflower River passes through both Bolivar and Sunflower Counties. Numerous tributaries to the various rivers are located throughout the study area. Many of these tributaries have been channelized in conjunction with agricultural activities.

Several small, unnamed water bodies as well as fish ponds are scattered throughout Bolivar County. These fish ponds are artificially created water bodies that are used typically to raise catfish.

Coahoma County contains several oxbow lakes, including De Soto Lake and Moon Lake. Also, other smaller oxbow lakes are located within Coahoma County. These are mainly within the northern portions of the county. The Sunflower River originates within Coahoma County. Tunica County has two major oxbow lakes: Tunica Lake and Flower Lake. Other oxbow lakes are located within the central portion of Tunica County. Furthermore, the Coldwater River runs through the extreme southern and southeastern portions of the county.

In the preliminary data collected for each of the alternatives, streams were identified using USGS topographic quadrangle maps for the study area. Solid blue lines were identified as perennial streams and dashed lines were identified as intermittent streams. Upon selection of the preferred alternative, additional field assessment was conducted to refine the USGS mapping; evaluate the flow regime of the streams; and collect additional qualitative stream data. This information is detailed in Chapter 4 (Section 4.11.1.2).

Segments of Harris Bayou, Hushpuckena River, and Coldwater River are 303(d) listed waters within the study area (**Figures 3-10A** and **3-10B**). A 303(d) listed water body is an impaired water defined in Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and the implementing federal regulations at 40 CFR 131. An impaired water body is one that does not meet water quality standards including designated uses, numeric and narrative criteria, and anti-degradation requirements. The

standards violation might be due to an individual pollutant, multiple pollutants, pollution, or an unknown cause of impairment.

3.10.2 Ground Water

The alluvial aquifer of the Lower Mississippi Valley is one of the largest and most exploited sources of shallow, fresh water in the United States. It is largely an uninterrupted mass of coarse-grained substratum deposits that overlies the eroded suballuvial surface and extends across the entire study area. It is an open hydrologic system with relative rapid recharge and discharge. The underlying aquifer is 125 feet thick. Water levels in the aquifer are generally less than 30 feet below the land surface except near wells, and seasonal fluctuations typically are about 20 feet. Wells within the study area average about 150 feet deep.

3.11 Wetlands

Introduction to Wetlands within the Project Study Area

The wetlands located within the project study area were created by the action of the Mississippi River and its tributaries. The historic natural hydrology and natural flooding regimes have been altered by the construction of the levee system along the Mississippi and some of the other rivers draining the Delta. Prior to European settlement**,** there were vast stands of bottomland hardwood forests. The Native Americans used the natural levees within the region for agriculture. By the 1880's, extensive agricultural fields were located on the natural levees adjacent to the Mississippi River. With improved flood control and farming equipment, the Mississippi Alluvial Valley forests were reduced 50 percent by 1937, and currently, less than 25 percent of the original area remains forested. Today's landscape is characterized by fragmented forest stands except for a few areas.

There are several different types of wetland systems located within the region which include flats, riverine overbank, riverine backwater, isolated depression, connected depression, isolated fringe, and connected fringe. Most of the wetlands in the project study area are flats, isolated and connected depressions, and isolated and connected fringe wetlands. Wetland flats are large shallow depressional areas typically found at point bar deposits. Depressions tend to occur in abandoned channels, abandoned water courses, and large point bar swales. They can sometimes

be found in wet flats. These areas tend to have standing water for extended periods of time. Isolated depressions tend to have overbank or backwater flooding. Hydrology is dominated by direct precipitation inputs. Connected depressions receive some overbank and backwater flooding. Fringe wetlands occur along the perimeter of water bodies that maintain a zone of open water. These areas occur along the shore of oxbow lakes. Isolated fringe wetlands do not have direct connection to a major stream system. The source of isolated fringe wetland hydrology is from groundwater and precipitation. Connected fringe wetlands have a connection to a major stream system.

The wetlands in the study area have several functions which include floodwater and precipitation detention, nutrient cycling, organic carbon export, element and compound removal, and fish and wildlife habitat. The wetlands within the project study have some floodwater detention but provide for more precipitation detention. Most of the wetlands are ecologically isolated or removed from major stream systems and have little to no direct effect on floodwater detention. However, the wetlands provide for slow runoff of rainfall to streams thus slowing the discharge of stormwater into streams. Wetlands also provide for nutrient cycling by converting nutrients from inorganic forms to organic forms and back through a variety of biogeochemical processes such as photosynthesis and microbial decomposition. Wetlands also provide organic carbon export which provides dissolved and particulate organic carbon to aquatic systems. Wetlands also function to remove permanently or temporarily immobilize nutrients, metals, and other elements and compounds thus reducing the amount of nutrients, heavy metals, pesticides and other pollutants in rivers and streams. Wetlands also provide for fish and wildlife habitat.

Wetlands Data Collection

During field reconnaissance, wetland boundaries along the alternatives were located using Global Position System (GPS) survey equipment. GPS points were taken approximately every 100 feet in the field. For comparison purposes, the estimated wetland acreage is equally accurate for each alternative. Upon selection of the preferred alternative, additional qualitative wetland data was gathered and is contained in Chapter 4 (Section 4.11.1.1).

The study area was evaluated for jurisdictional wetlands in accordance with guidelines for wetland delineation as outlined in the *1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual.* This approach incorporates three criteria in delineating wetlands: (1) the presence of hydrophytic vegetation, (2) the presence of hydric soils, and (3) evidence of wetland hydrology. All three criteria must be present in a given location for an area to be considered a jurisdictional wetland. Corridors along the alternatives were field reviewed for jurisdictional wetlands during March and April 2003. Areas identified as jurisdictional wetlands were located using GPS survey equipment and aerial photography. A total of 140 wetlands were identified in the alternative corridors during the field review. **Figure 3-2** shows current land use, including wetlands, in the study area.

3.12 Floodplains

Executive Order 11988 defines floodplains as the "lowland and relatively flat areas adjoining inland and coastal waters, including flood prone areas of offshore islands, including at a minimum, those that are subject to a 1-percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year" (i.e., the area inundated by a 100-year flood). The 100-year flood (1-percent annual chance) has been adopted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the base flood for floodplain management purposes. FEMA employs the 500-year flood (0.2 percent annual chance) to indicate additional areas of flood risk.

As discussed above, the study area for this section of the I-69 corridor is relatively flat with a levee protecting the land adjacent to the Mississippi River from flooding. The land between the Mississippi River and the levees is in the 100-year floodplain. Several floodplains occur throughout the study area. The most noticeable grouping of floodplains is in southern Bolivar County surrounding the Bogue Phalia River and its tributaries. The other floodplains within the

study area tend to follow the "oxbow" patterns that outline the meanders in the river. **Figure 3-11A** and **3-11B** show the locations of these floodplains.

3.13 Wild and Scenic Rivers

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (as amended) provides for the protection of rivers or river segments that are free-flowing and possess "remarkable physical attributes." The National Park Service (NPS) of the U.S. Department of the Interior is responsible for reviewing the possible impacts of proposed projects on rivers or river segments that are designated components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, are under the study for the inclusion in this system, or are listed on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI) as potential candidates for inclusion into the national system. This review also includes projects on tributaries to NRI rivers that could significantly impact water quality and flow. Federal agencies are required to avoid or mitigate any adverse impacts to rivers listed on the NRI that would diminish the outstanding remarkable values, or the free-flowing, undeveloped characteristics of the river.

Information obtained from the NPS indicated no rivers are present in the study area that are listed on the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and no rivers are present on the NRI as a potential candidate for the system.

3.14 Coastal Zones and Coastal Barriers

The Coastal Barriers Resources Act of 1982 prohibits or restricts federal funding of projects within the Coastal Barrier Resources System. This system includes undeveloped coastal barriers along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts. No coastal barriers are located within the study area.

The proposed study area is not located in a coastal zone area governed by the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972.

3.15 Vegetation and Wildlife

The study area is located entirely within the lower Mississippi River Alluvial Plain, which is commonly called the "Delta." The physical and biological environment has been altered by human activity associated with the isolation and stabilization of the Mississippi River which has stopped large-scale channel migration and overbank sediment deposition. Land use practices have affected the distribution and quality of the remaining forest communities. Historically, the area was a contiguous forested complex of bottomland hardwoods of bald cypress and water tupelo swamps (swamp forest) to more mesic area types of bottomland hardwoods. The area today is characterized by isolated bottomland hardwood stands in an agricultural dominated landscape. The dominant species of these forests vary depending on the hydroperiod and past disturbance history. The project alternatives would impact both agricultural land and areas of natural habitat.

3.15.1 Vegetative Communities

Farmland conversion has altered the landscape in the study area. Large tracts of former bottomland hardwoods have been made suitable for cultivation through clearing and intensive drainage. The study area land use classification is forested, water, disturbed, urban, and agricultural (**Figure 3-2**). Land use data was taken from Mississippi Automated Resource Information System. There are four natural vegetative communities in the study area excluding aquatic habitat, disturbed area, urban, and agricultural.

3.15.1.1 Forest Fringe Wetlands

The forested fringe wetlands are located along the shores of bayous and oxbow lakes. These areas are typically inundated year round, but may dry out during parts of the growing season. These forested stands are dominated by bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) and water tupelo (*Nyssa aquatica*) with a sparse understory of buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) and swamp privet (*Forestiera acuminate*).

3.15.1.2 Overcup Oak – Water Hickory Forest

This hardwood community is typically found in depressional areas and shallow bayous that are saturated for shorter periods of time than forested fringe wetlands. Water hickory (*Carya*

aquatica), water tupelo, bald cypress, and overcup oak (*Quercus lyrata*) are common canopy species along with buttonbush and swamp privet.

3.15.1.3 Hackberry – Elm – Ash Forest

This is a lower slope mixed hardwood forest often found associated clay to clay loam soils. This forested community is dominated by hackberry (*Celtis laevigata*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvan*ica), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), willow oak (*Quercus phellos*), and scattered persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*).

3.15.1.4 White Oaks – Red Oaks – Other Hardwoods Forest

This forested community is found on the well-drained sites typically located on low ridges with coarser grained soils. This forest is dominated by cherrybark oak (*Quercus pagoda*), swamp red oak (*Q. shumardii*), swamp chestnut oak (*Q. michauxii*), and nuttall oak (*Q. texana*).

3.15.2 Wildlife and Fisheries

The fauna of the study area has been impacted by the agricultural development of the Delta. The study area is characterized by numerous fragmented forested stands. The largest remaining stand of bottomland hardwood forested wetland in the study area is the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the aquatic habitat in the study area has been degraded by the removal of riparian zones and the dredging and straightening of natural channels to facilitate drainage. Many streams in the study area receive large amounts of sediment and other agricultural contaminants resulting in high turbidity, elevated nutrients, and periodic elevated toxics.

3.15.3 Terrestrial Habitat

The described forest communities provide food, shelter, and nesting resources for a relatively diverse population of wildlife. These areas may be particularly suited to “edge” wildlife when located adjacent to successional and maintained/disturbed areas, as they provide corridors for movement of wildlife as well as a variety of food and other resources. Canopy species are common in such areas, providing valuable materials for browser forage as well as materials for nesting, shelter, and cover.

Bottomland communities, including forests and shrub/scrub areas, provide prime habitat for wildlife due to their food, cover, and proximity to a water source. Species diversity and wildlife populations are often high in these communities. Mammals such as raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), beaver (*Castor canadensis*), and muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*) are known to occur in these habitats. Other mammals typically found in upland forested communities also may use these riparian areas as part of their home range.

Wildlife species typically found in forested habitats include white-tailed deer (*Odoroileus birginianus*), Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginia*), gray squirrel (*Scivrus carolinensis*), eastern cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), and gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*).

Disturbed areas and agricultural fields provide "edges" or "breaks" along forested communities. These open areas may be important feeding grounds for transient and migrant birds and for wildlife in adjoining vegetative communities. The ecotone between the different communities is considered optimum habitat for game species such as white-tailed deer and northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginiaunus*).

Common reptiles include Eastern ribbon snake (*Thamnophis sauritus*), common kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getulus*), rough green snake (*Opheodrys aestivus*), rat snake (*Elaphe obsoleta),* Southeastern five-lined skink (*Eumeces inexpectatus*), green anole (*Anolis carolinensis*), Eastern fence lizard (*Sceloporus undulates*), Eastern mud turtle (*Kinosternon subrubrum*), snapping turtle

(*Chelydra serpentina*), Eastern box turtle (*Terrapene carolina*), painted turtle (*Chrysemys picta*), slider (*Pseudemys scripta*), and the river cooter (*Pseudemys concinna*).

Common amphibians include the spotted salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*), marbled salamander (*Ambystoma opacum*), Eastern newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens*), American toad (*Bufo americanus*), Fowler's toad (*Bufo fowleri*), Northern cricket frog (*Acris crepitans*), spring peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*), green frog (*Rana clamitans*), pickerel frog (*Rana palustris*), and southern leopard frog (*Rana sphenocephala*).

The agricultural fields in the study area provide foraging areas in the fall and winter for migratory waterfowl. The lower Mississippi Delta is the most important area for mallards in the United States.

3.15.4 Aquatic Habitat

The aquatic habitat in the study area varies consisting of oxbow lakes, bayous, creeks, and ephemeral depressions. No fish or aquatic organism surveys were performed in the study area, but common fish species of the Delta include bowfin (*Amia calva*), green sunfish (*Lepomis cyanellus*), bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*), redear sunfish (*Lepomis microlophus*), largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), black crappie (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*), gizzard shad (*Dorosoma cepedianum*), golden shiner (*Notemigonus crysoleucas*), creek chub (*Semotilus atromaculatus*), yellow bullhead (*Ameiurus natalis*), channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*), and western mosquitofish (*Gambusia affinis*).

3.15.5 Threatened and Endangered Species

Federal law under the provisions of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (as amended) requires that any action likely to adversely affect a federally-protected species be subject to review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Other species may warrant protection under separate state laws.

3.15.5.1 Federally-Protected Species

Plants and animals with federal classifications of Endangered (E), Threatened (T), Proposed Endangered (PE), and Proposed Threatened (PT) are protected under provisions of Section 7 and Section 9 of the ESA. Federally listed endangered and threatened species for Bolivar, Coahoma, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, and Tunica Counties, based on the November 7, 2005 USFWS internet listing, are shown in **Table 3-16**. Listed species within the study area include the least tern *(Sterna antillarum)*, pallid sturgeon *(Scaphirhynchus albus*), pondberry *(Lindera melissifolia)*, and fat pocketbook *(Potamilus capax).*

Table 3-16
Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species in the Study Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal Status[a]	Location
Least tern	*Sterna antillarum*	E	Bolivar County Coahoma County Tunica County
Pallid sturgeon[b]	*Scaphirhynchus albus*	E	Bolivar County Coahoma County Tunica County
Pondberry	*Lindera melissifolia*	E	Bolivar County Sunflower County Tallahatchie County
Fat pocketbook	*Potamilus capax*	E	Coahoma County Bolivar County Tunica County Sunflower County Tallahatchie County

[a]T = Threatened
E = Endangered
[b]Historical record and/or possible occurrence in county.
Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2003.

"Critical habitat," as defined in the Endangered Species Act (ESA), is a term for habitat given special protection for the benefit of a listed species. Critical habitat, as defined by the USFWS, is

not designated for any species listed in Bolivar, Coahoma, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, and Tunica County, Mississippi. In addition, according to Mississippi's Natural Heritage Program (MNHP's) database, no federally threatened, endangered, or species of concern listed by the USFWS have been documented within the proposed project corridors.

Least tern (*Sterna antillarum*)

The least tern was listed as endangered in 1985 in Mississippi (Mississippi River). Least terns are small birds with a wing span of about 20 inches. Sexes are very similar in appearance. Breeding plumage is characterized by a black crown, white forehead, grayish back with dorsal wing surfaces, black wing tips, white under parts, orange legs, and yellow bill with a black tip.

The least tern is a migratory species with inland populations that historically bred along the Mississippi, Missouri, Arkansas, Red, and Rio Grande River systems and rivers of central Texas. The least tern continues to breed on these rivers systems but its distribution is generally restricted to less altered river segments, reservoirs, and refuges. On the Mississippi River, it occurs almost entirely in the lower valley. About one half of all least terns occur along 683 miles of the lower Mississippi.

The least terns nest in colonies on riverine sand and gravel bars and islands near shallow water feeding areas. Despite habitat instability and susceptibility to predators, least terns seem to be long-lived. Meandering rivers on broad flat floodplains offer the most suitable habitat for least terns. These rivers have high sedimentation and slow currents that result in the creation of sandbars and shallow water areas suitable for nesting and feeding. Many of the sandbars chosen for nesting in the Mississippi River basin are not connected to the shore and can be considered islands. Typical riverine nesting habitat consists of unvegetated or sparsely vegetated sand and gravel bars within a wide unobstructed river channel. An important feature of nesting habitat is the presence of large amounts of driftwood. As natural nesting sites become sparse, least terns have used dredge islands, dikefields, fly-ash lagoons, sandpits, and gravel levee roads as nesting sites. Primary foraging sites are considered to be the shallow waters of lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams with an abundance of small fishes.

A major threat to the survival of the least tern is the actual and functional loss of riverine sandbar habitat—specifically permanent inundation or destruction of nesting areas by reservoirs and channelization projects. Alteration of river and lake dynamics can cause unfavorable vegetation

succession on remaining islands. Twenty-five to forty percent of nest failures are due to coyote predation. Essential habitat includes the Mississippi River from Vicksburg, Mississippi, north to Missouri and Illinois.

There is no suitable least tern habitat within the project corridors; therefore, the proposed project should have no effect on this species.

Pallid sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*)

The pallid sturgeon is one of the largest fish found in the Mississippi River system. The species evolved from a group of fishes that were dominant during the late Cretaceous period 70 million years ago. The pallid sturgeon has a flat shovel shaped snout and bony plates and a long reptile-like tail. This species is a bottom dweller, found in areas of strong current and firm sand bottom in the main channel of large turbid rivers such as the Mississippi River. The pallid sturgeon is a member of a primitive family (*Acipenseridae*) which, like other sturgeon, has lengthwise rows of bony plates covering its body, rather than scales. Pallid sturgeons are slow-growing, late-maturing fish that feed on small fishes and immature aquatic insects. Spawning occurs from June through August. The pallid sturgeon is distributed from the headwaters of the Missouri River (Fort Benton-Great Falls, Montana) through the Mississippi River to New Orleans, Louisiana.

The pallid sturgeon was federally listed as an endangered species in 1990 and is found in the Mississippi, Atchafalaya, and Red Rivers. The pallid sturgeon co-occurs and even hybridizes throughout its distribution with the smaller and more abundant shovelnose sturgeon. Pallid sturgeons were once widely distributed throughout the Mississippi River. In the last 50 years, there has been a drastic decline in pallid sturgeon abundance over much of their former range. This decline has been coincidental with reservoir construction on the Missouri River for flood control and the development of a series of 24 locks and dams on the upper Mississippi River to improve commercial navigation. These construction activities have greatly altered the river by lowering flow velocities and greatly reducing turbidity levels. Virtually the entire range of the pallid sturgeon has been altered in some form. Normal movements have been blocked by dam construction. Populations of the pallid sturgeon are now so small that the big fish are rarely seen or caught by anglers. Historically, sturgeons have been harvested commercially for their flesh, but they are usually sought out for their valuable eggs, from which caviar is made.

There is no suitable pallid sturgeon habitat within the project corridors; therefore, the proposed project should have no effect on this species.

Pondberry (*Lindera melissifolia*)

Pondberry is a deciduous, aromatic shrub that spreads vegetatively by rhizomes and grows to approximately 2 meters. Pondberry has pale yellow flowers that appear in early spring and oval-shaped red fruits that mature in fall. Pondberry is distinguished from the two other, similar North American members of the genus (*Lindera benzoin* and *Lindera subcoriacea*) by its drooping, thin, and ovately to elliptically shaped leaves that have a strong, sassafras-like odor when crushed.

Pondberry is associated with wetland habitats such as bottomland hardwoods in interior areas, as well as the margins of sinks, ponds, and other depressions in the more coastal sites. The plants grow in the shaded understory of mature hardwoods. An essential feature of its habitat is a persistent wetland hydrology resulting from either a high or perched water table or some other source of seasonal flooding. The most significant threats to pondberry are drainage ditching and conversion of its habitat to other uses. Pondberry is a widely scattered species with small populations, making it vulnerable to local extinctions. There are only 37 known populations existing in six southeastern states. Mississippi has one documented population each in Bolivar, Sunflower, and Sharkey Counties.

Potential habitat exists for pondberry in the study area. A survey for pondberry has been conducted for the Preferred Alternative and discussed in Section 4.15.5 (Effects on Threatened and Endangered Species).

Fat pocketbook (*Potamilus capax*)

The fat pocketbook is a federally endangered species that is listed for all counties in Mississippi. It is a mussel with a rounded, greatly inflated shell, thin to moderately thick, s-shaped hinge line, tan or light brown, rayless, and shiny. It is found in large rivers in slow-flowing water (often near the bank). It can be found in a variety of substrata from mud and sand to fine gravel. Potential habitat for this species does not exist within the project corridor. Based on coordination with the USFWS, a survey for the Fat pocketbook mussel was not required.

In addition to the aforementioned federally protected species, the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) receives protection under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act) (16 U.S.C. 668-668d) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Removal of the Bald Eagle from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife became effective on August 8, 2007. Under provisions of the ESA, bald eagle populations will continue to be monitored at least until 2012. Habitat for the bald eagle primarily consists of mature forest in close proximity to large bodies of open water for foraging. Large, dominant trees are utilized for nesting sites, typically within one mile of open water.

Potential habitat for this species exists within the project corridor. A survey for bald eagles has been conducted for the Preferred Alternative and discussed in Section 4.15.5 (Effects on Threatened and Endangered Species).

3.15.6 Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are legal agreements entered into by a property owner and a qualified conservation organization such as a land trust or a government entity. The use of conservation easements is widely employed throughout the Delta to protect and preserve wildlife, wetlands, and agricultural land. Most conservation easements involve permanent restrictions on the use of the land whereas some are term easements. Terms and restrictions vary greatly for each agency or organization and easement type. Some examples of easements include:

- Wetlands Easements – USFWS
- Grassland Easements – USFWS
- Conservation Easements – USFWS
- Land Trust Conservation Easements – Ducks Unlimited (DU), The Nature Conservancy, et al.
- Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) Easements – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Farm Service Agency Easements (FMHA Easements) – USDA

Potential impacts to conservation easements are discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.16.

3.16 Cultural Resources

3.16.1 Historic Background

The I-69 corridor passes through the center of the Lower Mississippi Valley, an area with a long history of archaeological research and a rich heritage of historical resources. In order to minimize the impact of the proposed highway on those resources, information on recorded archaeological sites and historic structures was obtained early in the planning process and used in the selection of alternative routes for the roadway. At that time there were 835 archaeological sites and 432 historic structures recorded in the corridor. Over 29 percent of the archaeological sites are listed on or have been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Another 24 percent have not been evaluated, and the remaining 47 percent have been determined to be not eligible for the National Register. About 60 percent of the historic structures are listed or eligible, and most of the remainder have not been evaluated.

Despite the long history of archaeological research and the large number of known archaeological sites, only small portions of the corridor have been systematically surveyed. The great majority of the recorded sites are Native American occupations, ranging in size from small campsites to large multiple mound groups. Mound sites make up a substantial portion of this number (20 percent), due in part to their prominence in the flat landscape, but also to the density of late prehistoric settlement in this region. Multiple mound sites, which represent the largest late prehistoric settlements, account for 15 percent of the known mound sites.

The Native American sites range in age from the Paleo-Indian period (ca. 10,000-8,000 B.C.) to the Historic period. Paleo-Indian sites are few in number and restricted to areas where Late Pleistocene braided-stream or valley train deposits are present near the surface. Very little is known about the size of these sites or the length of their occupation since none have been excavated in the Lower Mississippi Valley. However, based on findings elsewhere in North America, they probably represent short-term occupations by small groups of mobile hunter-gatherers.

The following Archaic period (ca. 8,000-1500 B.C.) is characterized by a reduction in group mobility and the beginning of regional differentiation of cultures. Hunting and gathering continued to be the basis of the economy throughout the period, but site size and group size

almost certainly increased during this time. Circular or semi-circular site plans were present by the middle of the period, and mound construction began in other portions of the Lower Mississippi Valley during this time. Archaic sites are only slightly more numerous than those of the previous period, but they are more widespread, occurring not only on Late Pleistocene landforms, but on the earliest Holocene meander belts.

The next period in the sequence, the Poverty Point period (ca. 1500-800 B.C.), witnessed the establishment of a widespread trade in raw materials and the development of a few large sites that appear to have served as centers for this trade network. Large mounds and elaborate earthworks were constructed at some of these sites. The subsistence economy continued to be based on largely on hunting and gathering, although there is some evidence that plant cultivation had begun by this time. Poverty Point period occupations have been identified at only a few sites in the project corridor, but this is probably due in part to the difficulty of distinguishing them from Late Archaic period occupations.

The subsequent Tchula period (ca. 800 B.C.-A.D. 1) was marked by the first extensive use of pottery in the Lower Mississippi Valley. The widespread trade network and large centers that characterized the previous period apparently did not persist into this period. Mound construction continued, but on a reduced scale and now as a repository for the dead. Hunting and gathering remained the basis of the economy, although, as in the previous period, there are suggestions that plant cultivation was going on at this time. Two Tchula period cultures were present in the project corridor, Lake Cormorant in the northern part and Tchefuncte in the southern part. At present, the distinction between these two cultures is based largely on differences in the ceramics.

The next period in the sequence, Marksville (ca. A.D. 1-350), is noted primarily for the elaborate log tombs and exotic grave goods found in conical burial mounds dating to this time. These features have been interpreted as reflecting increasing social status differentiation and the spread of a religious-ceremonial complex known as the Hopewellian ceremonial complex. Hunting and wild plant gathering continued to be the mainstays of the economy, but in some areas they were supplemented by the cultivation of indigenous small seed plants, such as goosefoot and knotweed.

By the succeeding the Baytown period (ca. A.D. 350-800) involvement in the Hopewellian ceremonial complex had ended, as had the construction of conical burial mounds. In their place

one finds small platforms containing larger numbers of burials with little evidence of status differentiation. Some of these platforms also supported structures, the first evidence of mounds being used as bases for structures in this area. The economic base of these societies was apparently a mixture of hunting, wild plant gathering, and cultivation of the native small seed plants. Maize appears in the Lower Mississippi Valley during the early portion of this period, although it seems to have been only a minor element in the diet for some time.

During the Coles Creek period (ca. A.D. 800-1200) there were significant changes in site size and complexity, and presumably in the underlying sociopolitical organization as well. The small platforms built in the previous period increased in size and number. Typical Coles Creek mound groups consisted of two or three platform mounds arranged around a plaza. One of the mounds supported the residence of the village leader or chief, and a second was the location of the charnel house or temple. Larger sites also developed during this time, suggesting that a hierarchy of mound centers, and perhaps their ruling lineages, was also forming. Subsistence data indicate that maize remained a relatively insignificant part of the economy until late in the Coles Creek period.

The final period of prehistoric cultural development, the Mississippi period (ca. A.D. 1200-1720), witnessed the appearance of a new cultural tradition in the Lower Mississippi Valley. Referred to as Mississippian culture, this tradition was characterized by the development of a multi-tiered hierarchy of mound centers ruled over by a hereditary elite. In some regions these mound centers were fortified and had large resident populations, while in others they were surrounded by numerous small, dispersed farmsteads. The basis for this development was intensive maize agriculture. Other characteristics of this culture include the development of a new ceramic technology that allowed larger and more durable vessels to be made and the construction of large, subterranean pits for storage of the grain crop.

Initial European contact in the project corridor occurred in the 1540s when the De Soto expedition passed through the area on its way to the Mississippi River. European diseases such as smallpox and measles spread rapidly through the Native American tribes, resulting in dramatic population declines. As the indigenous groups disappeared the Yazoo Basin became a hunting territory for groups such as the Choctaw and Chickasaw whose main villages lay in the hills east of the valley. The first European settlement in the vicinity of the project corridor, the French *Poste de Arkansas*, was established in 1686; however, this post and the French mission and fort

established at the mouth of the Yazoo River remained the only European settlements in this region until after the French and Indian War. In the 1760s English traders established a small settlement called Concordia in present-day Bolivar County. This settlement lasted only until the American Revolution, and after that time the area remained the territory of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians for several decades.

The signing of the Treaty of Doak's Stand with the Choctaw in 1820 opened much of the southern part of the project corridor for settlement. The northern portions of the corridor became available after the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek with the Choctaw in 1830 and the Treaty of Pontotoc Creek with the Chickasaw in 1832. Once these areas had been surveyed by the U.S. Government, large tracts were purchased by cotton planters who possessed the slave labor to clear the land and construct levees for flood protection. Population growth in this area was slow in the 1830s and 1840s, but increased dramatically in the decade prior to the Civil War. The majority of this population consisted of black slaves, often with only a small minority white population. Much of the early settlement occurred along the Mississippi River to take advantage of the relatively high and fertile natural levee and the easy access to river transportation. The communities of Commerce in Tunica County, Friars Point in Coahoma County and Bolivar in Bolivar County were important early riverboat landings for this area.

The Civil War brought a halt to the booming plantation economy. Many of the young men joined the Confederate army and were sent east, the scene of much of the fighting. Most of the military operations in the project corridor focused on Union attempts to take control of the Mississippi River and to find a water route around the Confederate stronghold of Vicksburg. The best known of the latter was the Yazoo Pass Expedition of 1863.

After the war the plantation economy was slow to recover due to the loss of the slaves and many of the mules used to work the fields, the destruction of cotton gins, and the lack of capital. Many planters lost their lands due to their inability to pay their mortgages or taxes. Some tried to use immigrant labor to work their plantations, but in general this was not successful. Eventually most plantations adopted one of the forms of sharecropping or tenant farming.

The arrival of the railroads in the project corridor in 1884 brought about a major shift in transportation routes and ultimately the distribution of population. River traffic declined significantly over the next few decades, and river towns such as Commerce, Friars Point and

Rosedale lost population to newer towns such as Tunica, Clarksdale and Cleveland, all located on the railroad. Along with the railroads came northern timber companies, which were anxious to exploit the extensive stands of cypress and hardwoods in the interior of the Delta. These companies bought large tracts of swampland, and built sawmills in many of the towns along the railroad. Once the timber had been cut from an area the mills generally closed or moved on to another area. The cutover lands were then bought up by planters and put in cultivation.

The arrival of the automobile in the early twentieth century led to further dramatic changes in transportation within the Delta. Beginning in the 1910s roads that had been dirt were covered with gravel. Then in the mid-1920s the first paved roads, sections of U.S. Highway 61, were constructed. Increasing reliance on automobiles throughout the twentieth century led to further expansion and improvement of the road network and to a decline in railroad passenger service.

Cotton remained the mainstay of the Delta economy during the early twentieth century, and it continued to be cultivated largely by hand until World War II. The migration of large numbers of black workers from the Delta during the war and improvements in farm equipment led to an increasing reliance on mechanized agriculture during the 1950s and 60s. Mechanization also resulted in larger farms, termed agribusinesses, which could afford the new equipment, chemicals and field preparation techniques such as land leveling. During the latter part of the twentieth century, agriculture in the Delta became more diversified, with soybeans, rice, corn and catfish becoming important cash crops.

Historic period sites are not well represented in the existing archaeological database for the project corridor. This is due in part to low population densities during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; however, a more important reason is past bias against recording the numerous late nineteenth and early twentieth century sites that are present throughout the area.

The great majority of the recorded historic structures are located in towns rather than rural settings. Three National Register districts, in Cleveland, Rosedale and Friars Point, account for 58 percent of the total, and another 26 percent occur in other small towns throughout the area. The scarcity of rural historic structures is due to a variety of factors, but one important contributor was population flight from the rural areas after World War II and the subsequent loss of older structures to neglect and land clearing for agriculture. Most of the recorded structures are houses dating to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Only about one percent were constructed

prior to the Civil War. In addition to houses, the most commonly recorded structures are rural churches, schools and cemeteries. Other types of structures represented include barns, plantation commissaries, stores, cotton gins and bridges.

3.17 Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Considerations

The inventory of land uses included a review of public parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges of national, state, or local significance, or land of an historic site of national, state, or local significance. Such areas are protected under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, recodified as 49 USC 303.

There are two wildlife preserves within the study area. The Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge is located in southwestern Bolivar County and the Askew Wildlife Management Area is located within southeastern Tunica County. Land of an historic site of national, state, or local significance is discussed in the Cultural Resources Sections 3.16 and 4.17.

Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act (LWCA) prohibits recreational facilities funded under the LWCA from being converted to non-recreational use unless approval is received from the director of the National Park Service. There are no recreational features funded under the LWCA within the study area; therefore, Section 6(f) does not apply.

3.18 Hazardous Materials

3.18.1 Regulatory Agency Review

Latitude and longitude coordinates for a 1,000-foot radius encompassing the proposed alternative corridors were used to search federal, state, and local regulatory agency databases. A review of data available from regulatory agencies can provide useful information regarding the potential for contamination within or near the proposed study area. However, the databases are sometimes incomplete and can contain numerous inaccuracies. Therefore, findings during field reconnaissance are matched with file review information for confirmation. This search utilized the most recent update of each database. A printout of database information was received from

Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR). Listed below are the databases that were reviewed and the number of sites identified within the study area. The report also includes a summary of orphan facilities. These sites were not located by EDR due to inadequate address information. Further research determined that many of the sites identified but not located by EDR were well beyond the area of potential impact and thus they were excluded from further study. Sites that could be impacted by any of the alternatives were further evaluated, as documented in Chapter 4.

3.18.2 Federal Regulatory Review

National Priorities/Superfund List (NPL)

The National Priorities List, also known as the Superfund List, is a USEPA listing of uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites. These sites are typically targeted for long-term remedial action under the Superfund Act of 1980. The study area reconnaissance and regulatory file searches identified the presence of no such sites within a 1,000-foot search radius of the proposed alternatives.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS)

The CERCLIS database is a comprehensive listing of known or suspected, uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites. These sites have either been investigated or are currently under investigation by the USEPA for the release or threatened release of hazardous substances. The state's hazardous wastes site records are equivalent to CERCLIS. The study area reconnaissance and regulatory file searches identified the presence of no such sites within a 1,000-foot radius of the proposed alternatives.

No Further Remedial Action Planned Sites (NFRAP)

The NFRAP report, also known as the CERCLIS Archive, contains information pertaining to sites which have been removed from the USEPA's CERCLIS database. This report contains sites where, following an initial investigation, either no contamination was found or the contamination was not serious enough to require federal Superfund action. No such facility listed in the NFRAP report was identified within the initial 1,000-foot search radius of the proposed alternatives, although the Texas Gas site, originally shown as an orphan site, was located within this radius.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Information System (RCRIS) Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facilities

The RCRIS database contains information pertaining to facilities that treat, store, or dispose of USEPA-regulated hazardous waste. The database includes information regarding inspections and evaluations of such facilities by federal and state agencies, as well as reported facility violations or any corrective actions undertaken by the facilities. The study area reconnaissance and regulatory file searches did not identify any such facilities within the 1,000-foot search radius of the proposed alternatives.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Information System (RCRIS) Generators

The RCRIS report contains information pertaining to facilities which either generate USEPA regulated hazardous waste or meet other applicable requirements of RCRA. The report evaluates facilities classified as Large Quantity Generators (generating more than 1,000 kilograms of hazardous waste per month) and Small Quantity Generators (generating between 100 kilograms and 1,000 kilograms of hazardous waste per month.) According to the database report, no Large Quantity Generator facilities—which are regulated under RCRA—were identified within the 1,000-foot search radius of the proposed alternatives and no such facilities were identified as a Small Quantity Generator within the specified search radius.

Emergency Response Notification System (ERNS) (Target Property)

ERNS is a national database system used to store information concerning the sudden and/or accidental release of hazardous substances, including petroleum, into the environment. One such incident was identified within the 1,000-foot search radius of the alternative. The location of this site is included in **Figure 4-5**.

- *659 Highway 61*, approximately 10 miles southeast of Cleveland. These types of incidents are usually site specific and are responded to immediately by emergency response teams. For all I-69 alternatives, this study would provide an interchange in Bolivar County at the crossing of Highway 61, approximately two and a half miles north of the City of Shaw. Since it is approximately 11 miles between the cities of Cleveland and Shaw, there is a possibility that the incident site could be located within the proposed limit of the interchange.

Corrective Action Report (CORRACTS)

CORRACTS is an EPA database that identifies hazardous waste handlers with RCRA corrective action activity. No such facilities were identified within the search radius of the proposed alternatives.

3.18.3 State and Local Regulatory Review

State of Mississippi State Hazardous Waste Site (SHWS)

The State Hazardous Wastes Sites records are the states' equivalent to CERCLIS. Priority sites planned for cleanup using state funds (state equivalent of Superfund) are identified along with sites where cleanup will be paid for by potentially responsible parties. No such facilities were identified within the 1,000-foot search radius of the proposed alternatives.

State of Mississippi Solid Waste Facilities/Landfill Sites (SWF/Landfill)

The solid waste facilities/landfill sites records typically contain an inventory of solid waste disposal facilities or landfills in a particular state. The data comes from the Department of Environmental Quality's Solid Waste Landfill database. One such facility was identified within the 1,000-foot search radius of SR 8. The location of this site is included in **Figure 4-5**.

- *Tire Cutter Services*: This site is located at 45 Morrison Chapel Road in Cleveland. It is approximately 1.5 miles northwest of the Cleveland Municipal Airport. According to the database report it is currently an inactive waste tire processing plant. There are some abandoned trailers in a field to the north of the SR 8 / Cedar Road intersection in Bolivar County. The abandoned trailers are the only apparent signs of the site.

State of Mississippi Underground Storage Tank Report (UST)

The UST database contains information pertaining to all registered active and inactive underground storage tanks located in the State of Mississippi. UST's are regulated under Subtitle 1 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). Ten such facilities were identified within the specified search radius of the proposed alternatives. The location of each of these sites is included in **Figure 4-5**. The sites with reported leaking underground contamination are also listed in the following Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) section.

- *Phillips 66* is located at the intersection of Highway 61 and Highway 49 in Coahoma County. This site had five registered USTs that were permanently closed in 1988. This site no longer exists because it was acquired as MDOT right-of-way when the MDOT widened US 61 to four lanes and reconstructed the intersection.

- *Hayes Brothers House Moving, Inc*. is located 1.1 miles north of Route 6 in Coahoma County. All UST's were removed from this facility in 1992. The facility ID # for this location is 9520. The site is located on the east side of the four-lane section of US 61 north of Clarksdale between Lyon and the Clarksdale Airport.
- *Bruno's Food Mart* is located 1 mile south of Clarksdale in Alligator in Bolivar County, approximately two and a half miles south of the Coahoma County Line. This site currently has three 8,000-gallon tanks in use. The facility ID # is 2135.
- *Dunavent Inc.* is located on East Tallahatchie Street, southeast of Clarksdale. All UST's were closed at this facility in 1997. The facility ID # is 9373. Tallahatchie Street parallels Desoto Avenue (Old US 49) to the southwest between the US 61 Clarksdale Bypass and State Street (Old US 61). All I-69 alternatives for this study utilize the US 61 Clarksdale Bypass. At the Desoto Avenue crossing of the Bypass an interchange is provided. Improvements will eventually be needed on Desoto Avenue between the Bypass and State Street, but those improvements are not part of this study.
- *Tradeway, Inc*. is located at 5438 Highway 61, approximately 10 miles north of Cleveland. This site currently has one 8,000-gallon, one 6,000-gallon, and one 4,000-gallon tank in use. The facility ID # is 4963. Since the report was made, the four-lane section of US 61 has been opened to traffic. The Bolivar County site is located on the old two-lane section of US 61 in Mound Bayou.
- *Leo's Market* is located at 1310 South Main Street in Rosedale. This site currently has one 12,000-gallon and one 4,000-gallon tank in use. The facility ID # is 7826. At this Bolivar County site, the southern portion of the business has access to SR 1 directly opposite SR 8.
- *Nightrider Mart* is located at 1328 Highway 8 West in Pace. This site currently has one 10,000-gallon and two 9,700-gallon tanks in use. The facility ID # is 3473. The Nightrider Mart was located in the southeast quadrant of the Bishop Road / Ronaldman Road intersection on SR 8 in Cleveland, slightly east of the eastern terminus for the portion of this study that would widen SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland.

Mississippi Leaking Underground Storage Tank Report (LUST)

LUST is a comprehensive listing of all reported leaking underground storage tanks located within the State of Mississippi. Review of the *Mississippi Leaking Underground Storage Tank Report*, which contains a database listing maintained at the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, identified three leaking underground storage tank within the specified search radius of the proposed alternatives. All three sites have been issued a "No Further Action" designation and have been closed. The location of the sites is shown on **Figure 4-5**.

- *Bruno's Food Mart* is located one mile south of Clarksdale in Alligator Bolivar County, approximately two and a half miles south of the Coahoma County Line. There was a confirmed release in 1993. The site was properly remediated and a "No Further Action" status was assigned to the facility in 1994.

- *Dunavent Inc*. is located on East Tallahatchie Street, southeast of Clarksdale. There was a confirmed release in 1997. The site was properly remediated and a "No Further Action" status was assigned to the facility in 2000. Tallahatchie Street parallels Desoto Avenue (Old US 49) to the southwest between the US 61 Clarksdale Bypass and State Street (Old US 61). All I-69 alternatives for this study utilize the US 61 Clarksdale Bypass. At the Desoto Avenue crossing of the Bypass, an interchange is provided. Improvements will eventually be needed on Desoto Avenue between the Bypass and State Street, but those improvements are not part of this study.
- *Tradeway, Inc*. is located at 5438 Highway 61, approximately 10 miles north of Cleveland. This incident was closed in 1998. According to the database report, the release was never confirmed and a "No Further Action" status was given. Since the report was made, the four-lane section of US 61 has been opened to traffic. The Bolivar County site is located on the old two-lane section of US 61 in Mound Bayou.

Facility Index System (FINDS)

The Facility Index System contains both facility information and pointers to other sources of information that contain more detail. The source of this database is the U.S. EPA/NTIS. One such facility/incidence was identified within the specified search radius of the proposed alternatives. The location of the facility/incidence is shown on **Figure 4-5**.

- *Sunflower Food Store/Nightrider Market* located at 1321 Highway 8 West. This site contains two incidences according to the database report. The Sunflower Food Store and the Nightrider Mart were located on SR 8 at Cleveland in the southeast quadrant of the Bishop Road / Ronaldman Road intersection. This is slightly east of the eastern terminus of this study for widening SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland.

Federal Insecticide Fungicide Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)/Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA) Tracking System (FTTS)

The FTTS tracks administrative cases and pesticide enforcement actions and compliance activities related to Federal Insecticide Fungicide Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA), and Emergency Planning and Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) over the previous five years. One such facility/incidence was identified within the specified search radius of the SR 8 improvements. Some sites have been observed in the field and other unregistered pesticide contamination sites are likely to exist due to the prevalence of agriculture in the study area. These sites may need to be remediated prior to construction. The location of the facility/incidence is shown on **Figure 4-5**.

- *The Presbyterian Day School* located at 1100 Highway 8 West in Cleveland is listed in the database report as being inspected on October, 2001. No one at the school or the FTTS federal office could be contacted regarding this incidence at the time of this report. No violations have been reported regarding this site. The Presbyterian Day School is east of the eastern terminus of this study for widening SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland. The school is located on the north side of SR 8 approximately a half mile east of the Bishop Road / Ronaldman Road intersection.

Mississippi Industrial and Municipal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Facilities

This supplemental database records water discharge permits. There is one facility listed in the database report as having been issued an NPDES permits. The location of the facility is shown on **Figure 4-5**.

- *Texas Gas Transmission Corporation*, located at 3305 Highway 61 South in southern Clarksdale, is listed as an I Type facility with facility ID # MS0046566. The site is located on the east side of the four-lane section of US 61 between the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line and Clarksdale. It was one of the constraints that were used in the development of the I-69 alternatives.

Orphan Sites

The EDR report also provides a listing of "orphan sites." Due to poor or inadequate address information, these sites/incidences were not located initially. However, as discussed previously, additional research determined which "orphan" sites were within the area of potential impact and those sites were located. The following sites were identified as being within the study area and are shown on **Figure 4-5.**

- *Jim's Store*, located on the north side of Highway 8 west of Cleveland. This site is listed as having an underground storage tank (UST). The store no longer has active tanks and is located at one of two locations on the north side of SR 8 between the Bolivar County Correctional Facility and Cleveland. The possible western location is in the northeast quadrant of the Shaw-Skene Road intersection and presently serves as a farm headquarters. The possible eastern location is in the northwest quadrant of the Airport Grocery Road and presently serves as the Airport Grocery restaurant and club.
- *Rosedale Landfill*, located on the north side of SR 8 about four miles east of Rosedale (SWF/LF). The small landfill is inactive and located in the northeast quadrant of a minor side road intersection. For the widening of SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland involving the reconstruction of this intersection, it is assumed the landfill can be avoided by: relocating the intersection to the west; or, by leaving the intersection at its present location and installing guardrail on the east SR 8 approach to eliminate having to acquire additional right-of-way from the landfill frontage.

- *Coahoma County Landfill*, located on the east side of US 61 about three miles south of Clarksdale (SWF/LF). The active landfill has access to the east of Palmer Road approximately one mile south of the point where Palmer Road forms a side road intersection with US 61. The Palmer Road / US 61 intersection is between the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line and Clarksdale or slightly northeast of the Texas Gas Transmission Corporation access to US 61. The only I-69 alternative located near the landfill is the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section.
- *Texas Gas*, located on the east side of US 61 about four miles south of Clarksdale. This site was identified as potential hazardous waste site (CERCLIS), facility ID #MS985980556, with no further remedial action planned. It appears to be the same Texas Gas site identified previously at 3305 Highway 61 south of Clarksdale. The site is located on the east side of the four-lane section of US 61 between the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line and Clarksdale. It was one of the constraints that were used in the development of the I-69 alternatives.

Legend

- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties
- Study Area Boundaries

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

N W E S

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

DeSoto County
Robinsonville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Tunica
Coahoma
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Sherard
Clarksdale
Coahoma
Rena Lara
Coahoma
Bolivar
Alligator
Mattson
Dublin
Tallahatchie County
Duncan
Bolivar
Coahoma
Sunflower
Rome
Shelby
Gunnison
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Parchman
Mound Bayou
Rosedale
Merigold
Drew
Beulah
Pace
Renova
Sunflower
Cleveland
Dahomey NWR
Boyle
Ruleville
Skene
Doddsville
Benoit
Bolivar
Sunflower
Shaw
Sunflower
Askew WR
Tunica

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Study Area and Alternatives

Figure 3-1

Legend

- Agricultural
- Forested/Potential Wetland
- Disturbed
- Water
- Urban

N
W
E
S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Tunica
Coahoma
Coahoma
Bolivar
Coahoma
Sunflower
Bolivar
Sunflower

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Land Use/Land Cover

Figure 3-2

Legend

- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

Percent Minority Population

- 0 - 12
- 13 - 49
- 50 - 77
- 78 - 99

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

N W E S

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

DeSoto County
Robinsonville
9501.00
North Tunica
9502.00
Tunica
Dundee
Tunica
Coahoma
Lula
Rich
Askew WR
Tunica
Friars Point
9501.00
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Sherard
9504.00
Clarksdale
9502.00
9505.00
9507.00
9506.00
Rena Lara
Coahoma
Bolivar
Coahoma
Tallahatchie County
9503.00
Mattson
Dublin
Alligator
Duncan
9501.00
Coahoma
Sunflower
Rome
Bolivar
Shelby
Gunnison
Winstonville
State Penal Farm
Parchman
9501.00
Mound Bayou
9503.00
Rosedale
9502.00
Merigold
Drew
Beulah
Pace
Renova
9507.00
Cleveland
Dahomey NWR
9506.00
Boyle
Skene
Ruleville
9505.00
Doddsville
9502.00
Benoit
9504.00
Bolivar
Sunflower
Shaw
Sunflower
Sunflower

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Percent Minority Population by Census Tract

Figure 3-3

Legend

- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

Median Household Income

- $14,207 - $14,933
- $14,934 - $21,035
- $21,036 - $25,080
- $25,081 - $32,600
- $32,601 - $44,229

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

N W E S

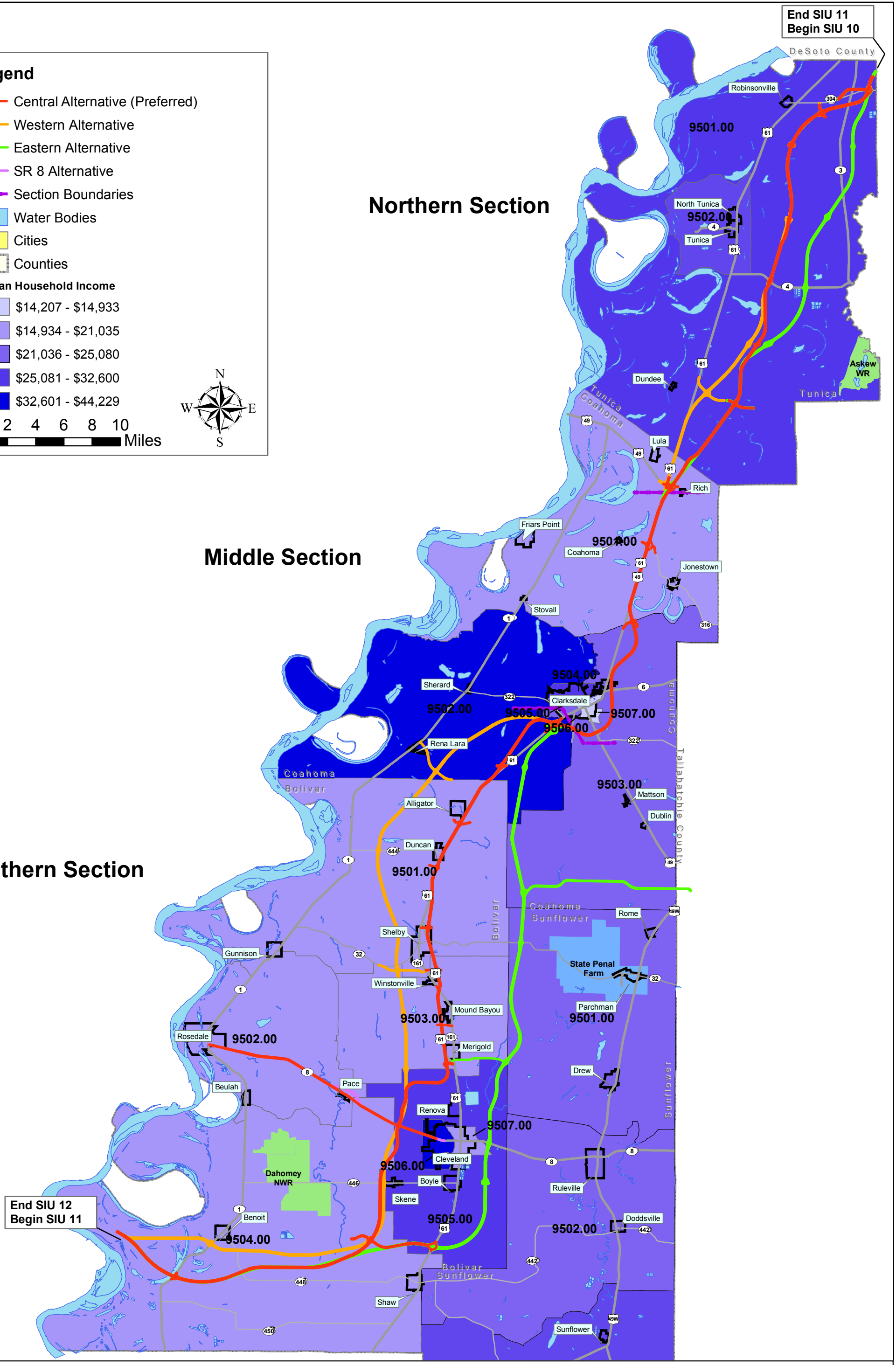
End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11



MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Median Household Income by Census Tract Figure 3-4

Legend

- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

Percent Population Below Poverty Level

- 0-9%
- 10-23%
- 24-34%
- 35-49%
- 50-61%

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

N W E S

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

DeSoto County
Robinsonville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Tunica
Coahoma
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Sherard
Clarksdale
Coahoma
Rena Lara
Coahoma
Bolivar
Alligator
Mattson
Dublin
Tallahatchie County
Duncan
Coahoma
Sunflower
Rome
Shelby
Bolivar
Gunnison
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Parchman
Mound Bayou
Rosedale
Merigold
Drew
Beulah
Pace
Sunflower
Renova
Cleveland
Dahomey NWR
Boyle
Ruleville
Skene
Benoit
Doddsville
Bolivar
Sunflower
Shaw
Sunflower
Askew WR

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Percent Population Below Poverty Level by Census Tract

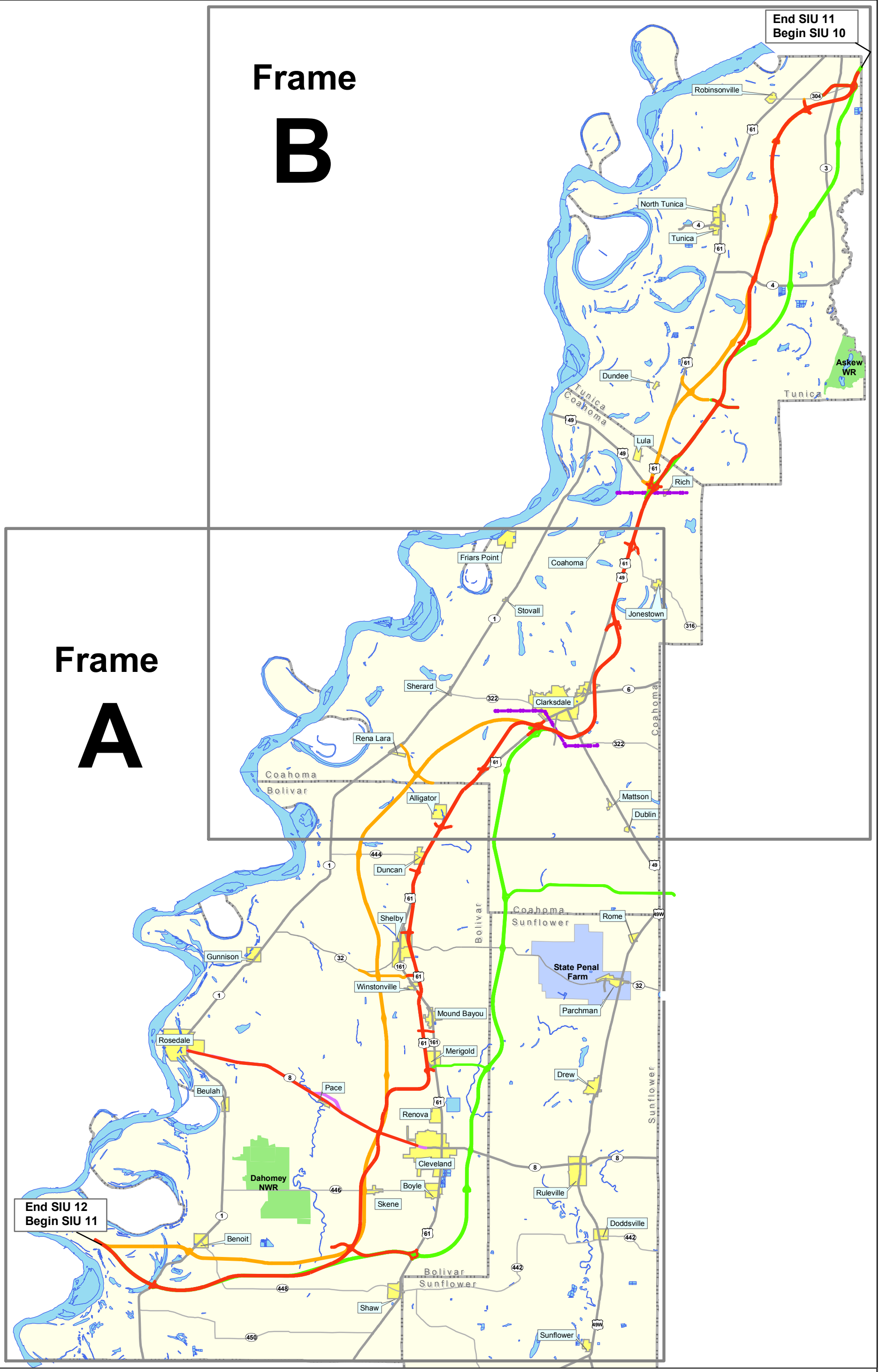
Figure 3-5

Frame

B

Frame

A



MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY

I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Figure Divisions

Figure 3-6

Legend

- School/College
- Church
- Cemetery
- City/Government Building
- Golf Course
- Hospital/Health Center
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Study Area Boundary
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Clarksdale
Sherard
Rena Lara
Coahoma
Bolivar
Alligator
Mattson
Dublin
Duncan
Bolivar
Coahoma
Sunflower
Gunnison
Shelby
Rome
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Parchman
Mound Bayou
Rosedale
Merigold
Drew
Beulah
Pace
Renova
Ruleville
Dahomey NWR
Cleveland
Boyle
Skene
End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11
Doddsville
Benoit
Bolivar
Sunflower
Shaw

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Community Facilities

Figure 3-7A

Legend

- School/College
- Church
- Cemetery
- City/Government Building
- Golf Course
- Hospital/Health Care
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- Study Area Boundary
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

Robinsville
304
61
3
North Tunica
4
Tunica
61
Tate Co.
Dundee
Askew WR
Tunica
Coahoma
49
Lula
49
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
61
49
Coahoma
Stoval
1
Clarksdale
Sherard
322
6
322
Rena Lara
Coahoma
Alligator
Mattson

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Community Facilities

Figure 3-7B

Legend

- Airports
- Railroad
- Abandoned Railroad
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- County Roads
- Water Bodies
- Cities

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

Robinsonville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Sherard
Clarksdale
Rena Lara
Alligator
Duncan
Mattson
Dublin
Shelby
Rome
Gunnison
Winstonville
Mound Bayou
Merigold
Rosedale
Beulah
Pace
Drew
Renova
Cleveland
Boyle
Skene
Ruleville
Doddsville
Benoit
Shaw
Sunflower
Dahomey NWR
State Penal Farm
Parchman
Askew WR
Tunica
Coahoma
Bolivar
Sunflower

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Transportation Facilities

Figure 3-8

Legend

- Transmission Lines
- Gas Pipelines
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

Robinsonville, North Tunica, Tunica, Dundee, Tunica, Coahoma, Lula, Rich, Friars Point, Coahoma, Jonestown, Stovall, Sherard, Clarksdale, Rena Lara, Coahoma, Bolivar, Alligator, Mattson, Dublin, Duncan, Coahoma, Sunflower, Rome, Shelby, Gunnison, Bolivar, State Penal Farm, Parchman, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Rosedale, Merigold, Drew, Beulah, Pace, Renova, Sunflower, Cleveland, Dahomey NWR, Boyle, Ruleville, Skene, Doddsville, Benoit, Bolivar, Sunflower, Shaw, Sunflower

Askew WR

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Utilities

Figure 3-9

Legend

- Perennial Streams
- Intermittent Streams
- 303 (d) Streams
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Moon Lake
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Mill Creek
Stovall
Dry Bayou
Sherard
Clarksdale
Rena Lara
DeSoto Lake
Coahoma
Bolivar
Alligator
Harris Bayou
Mattson
Duncan
Dublin
Mississippi River
Hushpuckena River
Coahoma
Sunflower
Rome
Shelby
Gunnison
Snake Creek
Winstonville
Bolivar
State Penal Farm
Black Bayou
Parchman
Quiver River
Mound Bayou
Rosedale
Bogue Phalia River
Merigold
Wild Bill Bayou
Big Sunflower River
Drew
Beulah
Pace
Renova
Lake Beulah
Cleveland
Big Sunflower River
Burrell Bayou
Dahomey NWR
Bogue Phalia
Boyle
Skene
Ruleville
Doddsville
End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11
Benoit
Bolivar
Sunflower
Shaw

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Water Resources

Figure 3-10A

Legend

- Perennial Streams
- Intermittent Streams
- 303 (d) Streams
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

N W E S

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

Robinsville
304
61
3
North Tunica
4
Tunica
61
Tunica Lake
Flower Lake
Beaver Dam Lake
Coldwater River
Tate Co.
Askew WR
Tunica
Dundee
61
Tunica
Coahoma
49
Lula
49
Rich
Moon Lake
Friars Point
Mississippi River
Coahoma
M.V.I. Creek
61
Jonestown
49
Swan Lake
Coahoma
Stoval
1
Dry Bayou
Sherard
322
6
Clarksdale
322
Rena Lara
DeSoto Lake
Coahoma
Alligator
Harris Bayou
Mattson

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Water Resources

Figure 3-10B

Legend

- 100-Year Floodplain
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Sherard
Clarksdale
Rena Lara
Coahoma
Bolivar
Alligator
Mattson
Duncan
Dublin
Bolivar
Coahoma
Sunflower
Shelby
Rome
Gunnison
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Parchman
Mound Bayou
Rosedale
Merigold
Drew
Beulah
Pace
Renova
Cleveland
Dahomey NWR
Ruleville
Boyle
Skene
Doddsville
End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11
Benoit
Bolivar
Sunflower
Shaw

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

100-Year Floodplain

Figure 3-11A

Legend

- 100-Year Floodplain
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

Robinsville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stoval
Sherard
Clarksdale
Rena Lara
Alligator
Mattson
Askew WR
Tunica
Coahoma
Coahoma
Bolivar
Tate Co.

304 61 3 4 61 61 49 49 1 322 6 322

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

100-Year Floodplain

Figure 3-11B

Chapter 4
Environmental Consequences

This chapter describes the potential beneficial and adverse social, economic, and environmental effects for the reasonable and feasible alternatives, including the Preferred Alternative, and describes the measures proposed to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts. The Western, Preferred Alternative (Central Alternative), and Eastern Alternatives are evaluated within the three sections of the study area. In addition, impacts are described for proposed improvements to State Route (SR) 8. Impact calculations include interchanges and spurs, but do not include upgrades. This chapter also includes discussion on measures proposed to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts.

4.1 Land Use

4.1.1 Consistency with Plans

Tunica County is the only county in the study area with a comprehensive plan. The construction of this section of I-69 **is** consistent with the Tunica County Comprehensive Plan. In addition, the proposed project will address economic development goals and will meet the projected traffic demand for the study area.

The Tunica County Comprehensive Plan states that Future Land Use and Transportation Plans already in place by the county are consistent with the proposed project's alternatives, including the Preferred Alternative. The Tunica County Chamber of Commerce has indicated plans to develop a new area for commercial and industrial development between already existing highways in the county and I-69.

A series of interviews were conducted with key public and private economic development officials in four Mississippi Delta counties (Bolivar, Coahoma, Sunflower, and Tunica). In addition, interviews were conducted with the Delta Initiatives officer of the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the co-chairman and executive director of the

Delta Regional Authority. Comments from these interviews encouraged convenient access to existing county airports, primary industrial concentrations, and growing retail areas. Most counties voiced concern about alternatives proposed through prime agricultural land. In addition, most counties wanted maximum exposure to the potential economic benefits that the proposed project will provide.

According to the Delta Council Annual Report in 2003, the Delta Council of Transportation has published literature on the positive effects that I-69 will have on the study area. Discussion includes I-69 as a foundation for economic development. The Congressional support placed on I-69 as a "high priority corridor," and the goal of having every citizen within the state and region having a four-lane highway within a 30-mile drive of their home.

4.2 Farmland

In order to determine farmland impacts, several resources were obtained including Geographic Information System (GIS) data and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Maps. Coordination with the NRCS was initiated to determine the approximate extent of prime farmland impacts for each county within the study area. Form NRCS-CPA-106 was distributed for completion to each county's local NRCS Service Center. A determination of prime farmland impacts has been received from each county. Responses included a county-by-county determination of the relative level of impact on prime farmlands. The Preferred Alternative would most nearly conform to the adopted land use plans and policies, based on serving existing development, minimizing impacts on the agricultural land, and maximizing economic benefit.

For each alternative within the study area, impacts to farmland were calculated using GIS and land use data provided by Mississippi Automated Resource Information System (MARIS). The MARIS data is based on aerial photography, field collection, and other land use data. **Table 4-1** shows approximate acreage of farmland that would be impacted during construction.

Table 4-1 Farmland Impacts	
Alternative	**Acres**
Southern Section	
Western	4,178
Preferred Alternative – Central	4,133
Eastern	4,117
SR 8	
Alternative B (Widening)	478
Alternative C (Bypass)	492
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)	463[1]
Middle Section	
Preferred (Only) Alternative	1,023
Northern Section	
Western	2,603
Preferred Alternative – Central	2,574
Eastern	2,440
Total (Preferred Alternative)	8,193

[1]Alternative D is a combination of segments previously studied.
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2003 using MARIS GIS land use data for cropland, pasture, and farmed wetland. Updated 2008.

After receiving each county's completed Form NRCS-CPA-106, the total point value for each county ranged from 200 to 216. None of the proposed alternatives exceeded the 260-point threshold; therefore, no additional coordination with the NRCS is required. Included in **Appendix E** are completed Forms NRCS-CPA-106 for all counties.

The proposed project would impact agricultural operations, primarily through loss of agricultural land and displacement of facilities such sheds and grain storage bins. Complete displacement of farm operations would be avoided by any of the alternatives. The proposed alternative corridors would cut off portions of several farms, which would affect access for equipment and livestock.

While a total of more than 8,000 acres of farmland would be converted by any of the alternatives, this amount represents less than 1.0 percent of either prime farmland or total farmable land in the study area. Mitigation measures will include minor alignment shifts where practicable, trading of uneconomical remnants of land for other adjacent and usable parcels. Farms that are bisected by

the proposed project will be evaluated during the design phase to determine if access between the bisected portions can be provided for livestock and machinery. Input from local farmers has been used in the alternatives development process. In particular, alternatives using portions of US 61 have been located near existing non-agricultural development.

Consistent with MDOT's acquisition and relocation policies (see Section 4.5.2), any purchase of land would be based on fair market value. Relocation assistance such as moving expenses would be available if required. The Eastern Alternative (both northern and southern sections) would have the least amount of farmland impacts. The Western Alternative's northern and southern sections would have the greatest impact on farmland.

4.3 Social and Economic

4.3.1 Economics

Construction of I-69 in northeastern Mississippi would provide a variety of economic benefits to the region, both short-term and longer-term. The short-term benefits are related primarily to highway construction, while the long-term benefits would relate to the economic development opportunities that would result from the highway providing increased accessibility and exposure to the Delta area.

Short-Term Economic Benefits

Construction of I-69 would generate a variety of benefits to the local economy. In terms of short-term benefits, the associated construction would provide employment opportunities at the construction sites as well as among the various suppliers and vendors who serve the construction industry. On-site employment opportunities would be provided for unskilled to skilled positions, including day laborers, heavy equipment operators, surveyors, inspectors, and project managers. Suppliers of construction materials, vehicle rental and maintenance, and food services also would benefit from the construction phase. In addition, there would be an increase in employment among the suppliers as well as added cash circulating through the local economy from payments for supplies and services and the associated payrolls. The increased flow of personal income to the construction workers would create a multiplier effect throughout the local economy as the cash flow is used to purchase food, lodging, and discretionary items.

Long-term Economic Development

Economic studies were performed to assess which potential transportation corridors would best benefit the study area from an economic development perspective. Population, employment, income, and potential environmental constraints were reviewed. Work sessions were held with staff of the Mississippi Development Authority, Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, and University Research Center. In addition, public and private economic development officials were interviewed to gain a greater understanding of the factors influencing economic development within the study area. Extensive coordination has been conducted with the smaller communities in the study area regarding local goals and potential benefits from I-69 (see **Appendix I**).

According to the report describing the results of one of the studies (*Stimulating Economic Development: Screening Analysis, I-69 Alternatives in Mississippi* (Neel-Schaffer, June 2002, appended by reference, updated October 2004)), there are many potential benefits relating to development of highways in non-metropolitan areas. Some of the benefits of new highway development include:

- Improved access to services and jobs for rural residents.
- Better access to customers for businesses.
- Reduction in travel time for motorists.
- Lower vehicle operating costs.
- Cost savings for local consumers as goods and services become more competitively priced.
- Growth in the local economic base may produce higher wages for workers and greater income for local businesses.
- Potential economic opportunities near the interchanges.

In addition to these positive benefits, some potential negatives exist as well. New highway investment would divert economic activity from an already existing road network within the region. This economic activity in the form of new development can have impacts on the environment, particularly in a previously undeveloped rural area, as discussed in Section 4.20.1. The additional highway maintenance costs can also be a financial burden on the responsible governmental jurisdictions.

The alternatives were developed to improve proximity to population centers, industrial parks, major employers, tourist development opportunities, airports, and river ports. As discussed in the *Stimulating Economic Development: Screening Analysis, I-69 Alternatives in Mississippi* (Neel-

Schaffer, June 2002, appended by reference, updated 2004), the research of the Delta Regional Authority as well as by others shows that economic development is likely to follow a "clustering" concept that involves concentrating public and private investment in key areas or clusters. This rationale holds that an economy of scale will be generated by concentrating development in a few strategic nodes, as opposed to dispersing scarce resources throughout the area. It is believed that existing development provides a base for additional development to occur in close proximity. The population centers and interchanges along I-69 would be candidate areas for economic clustering.

To best meet the purpose and need of improving economic development within the study area, two key cities and another key project were identified. According to 2000 census populations, Cleveland and Clarksdale are the two largest cities within the study area. Clarksdale has a 2000 census population of 20,645 and Cleveland has a population of 13,841 persons. All alternatives include an improved SR 8 connection between Cleveland and Rosedale, which addresses improved access to the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port from Cleveland and other areas of the Delta. These two key cities and the proposed SR 8 improvement are addressed further below:

Clarksdale (Coahoma County)

Clarksdale is the largest city within the study area. It is a regional center for commerce, medicine, and education. Clarksdale is in the heart of the Delta Blues Country and is home to the Delta Blues Museum. To the northeast of the city, there is a general airport with a 5,400-foot runway, which would be easily accessible from all project alternatives. Clarksdale would benefit from improved access to services and jobs and a potential growth in the local economic base.

Two main industrial parks serve the Clarksdale area: The Leonard Pharr Industrial Park and the Sunbelt Industrial Park. The 160-acre Leonard Pharr Industrial Park, located just west of the city on SR 322, has only two acres of remaining land to be developed. Some existing buildings are available in this park. The larger (285-acre) Sunbelt Industrial Park is located on US 49 near its intersection with US 61 By-Pass. Industry flanks both sides of US 49 adjacent to the Sunbelt Industrial Park. This corridor is the heaviest concentration of manufacturing and distribution businesses observed in the four-county analysis area. The area in the vicinity of Sunbelt Industrial Park will be the focal point of future industrial development. Strohm Manufacturing, Metso, Jim Dandy, a major beer distributor, and an electrical generation plant are all located near Clarksdale.

The major employers in the Clarksdale area include Cooper Tire & Rubber Company, located at the intersection of old US 61 and SR 6, is the county's largest industrial employer with a work force of 250. Other major employers include: Waterfield, Inc. (140 employees), Delta Wire Corporation (108 employees), KBH Corporation (110 employees), Metso (Svedala Industries, 95 employees), Strohm Manufacturing Company (83 employees). In addition, the 194-bed Northwest Mississippi Regional Center with 50 physicians on staff is located in Clarksdale. The Coahoma Community College is situated just northwest of Clarksdale. Its Skill/Tech Center occupies space in the Sunbelt Industrial Park.

Cleveland (Bolivar County)

Cleveland is the second most populated area within the study area, and has an airport, Delta State University, and most of Bolivar County's largest employers. Cleveland was home to many Blues musicians, which provides tourist opportunities. The proposed project alternatives all have the potential to provide better access and potentially higher wages for workers and greater income for local businesses.

The county's primary general aviation airport is located near SR 8 approximately ½ mile northwest of Cleveland. Delta State University, located along SR 8 in western Cleveland, offers degrees in commercial aviation and utilizes the facilities at the airport. Delta State University is the only four-year university in the analysis area. The 4,000-student university is renowned for its school of education, and employs 700 people. Bolivar County operates Voc-Tech Centers in both Cleveland and Rosedale.

Baxter Healthcare is located on the north side of Cleveland and is the county's largest employer, providing approximately 1,100 full time jobs. Bolivar County also has a 165-bed medical center along SR 8 in eastern Cleveland. Duo Fast, Jimmy Sanders, Inc, Needle Specialty Products, Inc, and Quality Steel Corporation are Cleveland area industries with 90 to 345 employees. Primary commercial concentrations in the county are located in the downtown Cleveland, along US 61 north of town, and along SR 8 east of town.

SR 8 Improvements – Connecting Cleveland and Rosedale (Bolivar County)

Within the study area, Bolivar County is the only county with a public port. The Rosedale-Bolivar County Port is the only public port along the Mississippi River between Memphis and

Greenville and provides access to the nation's largest and busiest waterway, the Mississippi River. Furthermore, the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port is the only port in the state of Mississippi located within a federal empowerment zone.

The port features a "T" dock, 150-ton crane, and more than 1,200 acres of developable land in close proximity. Three private companies maintain port facilities on adjacent sites. In Rosedale, Cives Steel Company and Jantran are the largest employers with approximately 165 employees each. A 1,000-acre industrial park is located at the Port. Improving SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland from two to four lanes is considered vital to the continued economic development of this port.

Economic Findings for Project Alternatives

An analysis to identify population, employment, and public facilities near the three proposed I-69 alternatives (see **Appendix I**) was undertaken based on the previously discussed methodology and approach. These data led to the conclusion that the Eastern Alternative is somewhat better than the others with respect to the probability of capturing economic development potential. The tables indicate that while the Preferred Alternative is closer to more population centers and public facilities than the other two alternatives, the Eastern Alternative is closer to more existing employment centers than the other two alternatives.

The key factor favoring the Eastern Alternative was the east side of Cleveland along SR 8. This area has the highest number of employees of any alignment within the interchange 2.5-mile radius impact area. This one area made the major difference in the employment data for the three alternatives since all three alternatives follow the same alignment through the Clarksdale area. Based on this factor, the economic study recommended a modified eastern alignment that would connect with existing US 61 at Merigold and basically utilize the Central Alternative from that point to the north. This modified alignment would be able to take advantage of the heaviest concentration of industrial employment in Bolivar County and also utilize all other existing resources to the fullest potential possible along US 61. The modified Eastern Alternative would best satisfy the objective set forth in the economic study, which was to utilize existing infrastructure in order to maximize economic development potential. Using this alternative, 41 percent of the existing reported four-county manufacturing employment would be located within the study boundaries of this corridor.

To further evaluate the potential economic effects of the alternatives and quantify relative long-term benefits, a study was conducted in 2005 on the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives and the modified version of the Eastern Alternative described previously in this section (*Evaluating Economic Benefits of I-69 in the Mississippi Delta Region*, Wilbur Smith Associates, 2005). The study included a review of social and economic trends in the region and an analysis of three categories of impacts:

- Savings in travel costs
- Transportation costs for agriculture
- Economic development potential

As shown in **Table 4-2**, the Preferred Alternative (Central Alternative) is estimated to provide the most long-term economic benefit. The travel efficiency category, as described in **Appendix J**, is shown with the Preferred (Central) Alternative as a future baseline and each other alternative as an incremental difference from the baseline. For each category, the economic effects related to income and employment are summarized.

Table 4-2
Long-Range Economic Impacts by Alternative

Alternatives	Travel Efficiencies		Agricultural Transportation Impacts		Business Attraction		Total Estimated Impact
	Inc	Emp	Inc	Emp	Inc	Emp	
Preferred – Central Alternative	NA	NA	-$2,032,564	-78	$69,448,830	2,757	$67,416,266
Western	-$6,200,000	-370	NA	NA	$30,807,370	1,223	$24,606,670
Eastern	-$9,921,170	-585	NA	NA	$65,871,850	2,615	$55,950,680
Modified Eastern	-$17,405,500	-1,030	NA	NA	$55,166,100	2,190	$37,760,600

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates, 2005.

While the Eastern Alternative had previously been considered to provide greater economic benefits from a qualitative analysis, the more quantitative study indicates the Preferred (Central) Alternative would have long-range benefits compared to the other alternatives by:

- Providing the greatest savings in vehicle miles traveled as a total throughout the study area, based on the transportation model used to project traffic volumes for the alternatives.
- Offering the most opportunities for attracting business development and diversifying the economy, with few competitive disadvantages.
- Offsetting potential job losses in the agricultural industry with the attraction of new businesses.

Local officials representing the jurisdictions outside the study area, including Indianola and Greenwood, have supported an alternative east of Cleveland so their towns could also benefit from I-69. The economic study suggests that the greatest economic benefits would be realized by locating the corridor and associated interchanges within close proximity (within 2.5 miles) of existing employment. Towns such as Indianola and Greenwood are both over 15 miles away from the Eastern Alternative and thus were not a determining factor in the calculation of direct economic potential for this study. The major economic factors for this study included how close this corridor could be located to existing employment, population, and public facilities. All of these factors, as well as the many other impacts and benefits of each alternative, were considered as part of the decision-making process.

In addition to the above considerations, Tunica County has assembled a mega-site of 2,221 acres south of SR 304 and east of US 61. This site would have good access to the I-69 Preferred Alternative at the planned interchange at Arkabutla Dam Road. The Eastern Alternative would not provide this level of access to the site. The Preferred Alternative thus would provide the benefit of serving planned economic development in Tunica County.

4.3.2 *Environmental Justice*

As described in Chapter 3, with the exception of two Census tracts, the entire study area has potential environmental justice (EJ) concerns related to either minority population or low-income populations. The EJ analysis included an assessment of how the potential impacts would affect those populations. An EJ outreach plan also was implemented early in the planning process.

4.3.2.1 Environmental Justice Outreach Plan

The outreach plan was coordinated by an EJ Outreach Team and involved the following elements:

- Identifying key community leaders and representatives from each county.
- Conducting initial one-on-one interviews with each identified individual, and use of a brief "questionnaire" or survey form to record some of the interview information.
- Facilitating the formation of a Citizen's Community Issues Committee in the three-county area, in order to have a local "sounding board" in the study process.
- Attending all public information meetings/hearings, in order to explain the concept and intent of Environmental Justice, as well as to review the Outreach Program.

- Attending special focused meetings on local community concerns as needed.
- Reporting all information which may impact project planning.

Since EJ issues/concerns focus primarily on low-income and minority communities, the targets of the community representation had to be carefully considered. The demographic analysis showed potential for EJ issues was high throughout the Mississippi Delta region. The Mississippi Delta region has substantially high concentrations of both minorities and low-income persons. Initially, individuals in each county were interviewed regarding the proposed project. To make the initial interview list "representative," a list of "interview types" was developed as shown in **Table 4-3**.

Table 4-3
Preliminary Interviewee List-EJ Outreach

Representative to Contact	Interviews per County		
	Bolivar	Coahoma	Tunica
Agriculture Extension Agents	1	1	1
Minority Farmer/Landowners	2	2	2
CDC Directors/Board Chairmen	2	2	2
Minority County Supervisors	2	2	2
Minority Mayors	4	2	N/A
Leading Church Pastors	2	2	2
Congressional (Local Office) Representatives	1	1	1
Chamber of Commerce Representatives	1	1	1
TOTAL INTERVIEWS: *(Minimum)	15	13	11

Source: Ken Weeden and Associates, 2003.

The list identifies major landowners and farmers (including minority landowners), representatives of human service programs with the low-income populace as their main constituents (such as low-income housing programs and/or anti-poverty programs), minority political/government leaders, leading religious community leaders, and representatives of constituent business and/or other social organizations.

This process began in summer 2001, and culminated in a round of public information meetings held in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties. By early 2001, a significant number of individuals had been identified and interviewed in each county. The initial rounds of interviews are shown in **Table 4-4**.

The meetings were conducted using a brief, six-question survey instrument, which asked basic questions about the proposed I-69 project. Also at each interview, the interviewees were asked to identify additional citizens to be interviewed later. Other individuals were added to the project mailing list. The interviews were conducted approximately two weeks prior to the first round of

public information meetings, which presented preliminary information on the EIS study. During the interviews, each interviewee was given an announcement card, inviting them and whomever they wanted to bring, to the meetings at the location most convenient to them. (The interview/ survey instrument is shown in the **Appendix D.**)

The first question on the survey asked whether the interviewee had heard anything about the I-69 project. Although nearly all interviewees had heard about the proposal project, the interview was the first time someone had come to discuss it personally with them. This process helped "spread the word" about the project and the EIS. Also, at each of the initial public information meetings held the week of September 24, 2001, a brief overview of Environmental Justice and how it applied to the EIS study was discussed. At each public information meeting, potential members of a Community Issues Committee, to be formed later, were identified.

Table 4-4
County Official Interviews

Name	Organization/Representative	Minority / Ethnicity
Benjamin F. Davis Jr.	HUD-Delta Initiative Program Representative	B/M
Don Respess	Bolivar County Agricultural Agent	W/M
Wanda Ray	Bolivar County Administrator	W/F
Richard Coleman	Bolivar Co. Supervisor	B/M
James McBride	Bolivar Co. Supervisor	B/M
Linda Balducci	Exec. Dir. Shelby Housing Authority and Southeast Opportunities, Inc.	W/F
Doretha Miller	Staff-Shelby Housing Authority-Citizen	B/F
Ruby Patton	Staff-Shelby Housing Authority-Citizen	B/F
Kennedy Johnson	Mayor, Mound Bayou	B/M
J.Y. Trice	Former Mayor, Rosedale.	B/M
Katherine Furr	Coahoma Co. Supervisor, Farmer-Landowner	W/F
Bennie Gooden	Businessman-Developer, Property Management-Clarksdale	B/M
Timothy Burrell	Pastor, Middle School Principal, Coahoma Co. Supervisor	B/M
Hugh Jack Stubbs	Administrator Coahoma County	W/M
Andrew Thompson	Coahoma County Sheriff	B/M
Henry Espy	Mayor, Clarksdale, Coahoma Co.	B/M
Ken Murphree	Tunica County Administrator	W/M
Anthony Bland	Tunica Co. Agricultural Agent	B/M
Henry Hargrow	Tunica Co.-Low-Income Housing Repair Program Administrator	B/M
James Dunn	President, Board of Tunica, Co. Supervisors	B/M
Freddie Brandon	Tunica Co. Low-Income Housing Program Staff	B/M
Minnie Carter	Tunica Co. Low-Income Housing Program Staff	B/F
James Colbert	Tunica Co. Low-Income Housing Program Staff	B/M

B= Black W=White M=Male F=Female

Source: Ken Weeden and Associates, 2003.

4.3.2.2 Summary of Survey/Interview Information

The initial survey information was useful to early project planners in several ways. The survey itself, through interviews, helped spread information about the project. Secondly, the information gathered showed that the proposed highway was generally viewed as a favorable, positive prospect for each county and for the entire region. Third, the initially perceived impact for minorities and low-income persons also was favorable and positive, especially if the development of the highway will be accompanied by initiatives to assist historically underutilized businesses take advantage of potential new opportunities. On the other hand, there were some concerns expressed that the proposed routing be carefully laid out so as to not disrupt low-income housing developments, churches and farming operations.

4.3.2.3 Community Issues Committee

Partly as a result of the initial surveys and public information meetings conducted during the summer and autumn of 2001, in early March 2002, a "Four County I-69 Community Issues Committee" was formed. This committee is composed of representatives and citizens of Bolivar, Coahoma, Sunflower, and Tunica Counties who have been asked to address and comment on specific environmental justice and community impact issues. The initial meetings were held to explain the proposed intent of the committees and how the citizens will help to provide insight into environmental justice and community impact issues for this important project. The comments and concerns of the public from initial and follow-up meetings were used in developing the project alternatives.

The EJ outreach team and other project representatives (including staff from the FHWA and MDOT) met with each County group the first week in March 2002. A total of 36 persons attended those meetings, including 15 at the Bolivar-Sunflower County meeting; ten at the Coahoma County meeting; and 11 at the Tunica County meeting. After receiving an update from project officials and a general discussion to explain the purpose of the meeting to the groups, attendees were given a questionnaire that asked them to complete the following statement:

> *"In our county/community, I think that the following community/social/economic issues need to be addressed during the early planning stages of the proposed route(s) for Interstate-69 in Mississippi:"*

Comments from the questionnaires are contained in **Appendix D**.

Later, at other public information meetings, members of the Issues Committee were helpful in identifying special features on the draft corridor maps and additional persons to interview.

4.3.2.4 Follow-Up Meetings

Subsequent to the initial formation of the Community Issues Committee, the EJ outreach team and other project team members kept in touch with them via mail, telephone calls, and face-to-face meetings (see **Table 4-5** for summary). Also, in the summer of 2002, another round of county-by-county public information meetings was conducted, with one each in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties. Prior to each meeting, a meeting of the Community Issues Committees was also conducted. At a public information meeting in Coahoma County in late summer of 2002, it was pointed out that one of the then-proposed alignments in Tunica County could possibly have an adverse impact on two predominantly Black rural communities, as well as a 125-year old Black church and cemetery. It was suggested that a special meeting be held in Tunica County, in the vicinity of both the communities and the church. This special meeting was publicized with project planners and engineers and was well attended by citizens in the Greater New Saint Paul Church in October 2002. Information was provided on the then-proposed alternatives and comments were taken from citizens, both at the meeting and some later through written comments. The end result was a shift in the alignment away from the church. The potential impact upon the two rural communities was determined to be not significantly adverse. A second, follow-up meeting was conducted in Tunica County in January 2003, to review and explain any alignment changes since the first meeting. Announcement flyers, which were disseminated both by mail and a display ad in the local, *Tunica Times* newspaper notified citizens of this meeting. (see **Appendix D**).

In January 2003, another round of meetings was held with the Community Issues Committee in Bolivar and Coahoma Counties. In addition, a special meeting was conducted in Bolivar County with the Mayors of Bolivar County Old Hwy 61 towns (i.e., Merigold, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Shelby, Alligator, and Duncan). One of the proposed I-69 alternatives would have significant economic impacts on those smaller towns because of the provision, or lack thereof, of direct access to the towns. Project staff and MDOT officials met with the mayors for a luncheon meeting, at which time direct input was provided from these elected officials to the project staff.

The project staff took their concerns into consideration when refining the preliminary alternatives. In reviewing all comments made by interested community officials attending the

meetings, the Central Alternative was favored due to it having less extensive impacts on already existing land use and community facilities.

The third set of public meetings was held the week of April 30, 2003. Locations of the meetings included both Cleveland and Clarksdale. Information was provided on the refined 450-foot-wide alternative corridors recommended for study in the DEIS. Also, steps were taken to explain to the public the process of deciding on a Preferred Alternative for the I-69 project.

Table 4-5
Community Meetings and Workshops Held Within Study Area

Date	Location and Format	Presented Topic	Outcome
Community Involvement Workshops			
September 24, 2001 through September 27, 2001	Community workshops held in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties.	Possible corridor segments presented and citizen questions addressed by project officials.	Comment sheets and letters reviewed on proposed corridors
July 16, 2002 through July 18, 2002	Community workshops held in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties.	Proposed 1,000-foot-wide alternative corridors presented, along with status, and purpose of I-69 project.	Comment forms given to citizens and the majority of the citizens preferred the Eastern or Central Alternative.
April 30, 2003 through May 1, 2003	Community workshops held in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties	Refined alternative corridors presented, along with project status	Comment sheets and letters reviewed and some changes were made.
December 13-16, 2004	Public Hearing held in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties	Information presented on the refined 450-foot-wide alternatives studied in the DEIS	Comment sheets and letters reviewed. Modifications to the Central Alternative were made and an Eastern Alternative variation in the Southern Section was eliminated.
Special Meetings			
October 2002	Special meeting held in Tunica County at the Greater Paul Church for citizens of the area.	Meeting covered possible impacts to two predominately Black communities, a 125-year old Black church and cemetery by possible I-69 alignments.	Citizen concerns were listened to, and the team received comments on the project and on their concerns.
January 2003	Second follow-up meeting held in Tunica County for citizens concerned about possible impacts to two predominately Black communities, a 125-year old Black church and cemetery.	A review and explanation to alignment changes to avoid two predominately Black communities, a 125-year old Black church and cemetery.	End result was that citizens were assured that the 124-year old Black church and cemetery would be avoided, and that earthen berms will be considered near the crossing of Verner Road and Bonds Road in Tunica County, subject to the feasibility of providing drainage. (see page 4-23)
January 2003	Community Issues Committee held in Bolivar and Coahoma Counties.	An update on project status	Preliminary alternatives were refined to address officials concerns. The Central Alternative was preferred by community officials.
January 2003	Special meeting held in the City of Benoit.	Discussions of possible alignments from SR 1 west to Section of Independent Study (SIU) 12.	Consultant team will review an alternative proposed by farmers that would cross SR 1 between Ray Brooks School and Lake Vista.
January 2003	Bolivar County Mayor's meeting.	An update for the Bolivar County Mayors on the status of I-69 and to obtain input on proposed alternatives.	Comments were provided by participants that favored the Central Alternative.
April 2003	Follow-up Meeting held in Benoit for both the project team and government officials.	Provide an opportunity to ask questions, express concerns, and makes comments prior to the public meeting.	Comment forms were provided and suggestions were made to the consultant team.

Table 4-5
Community Meetings and Workshops Held Within Study Area

Date	Location and Format	Presented Topic	Outcome
April 2003	Special Rosedale Meeting with representatives from government agencies, project team, and local citizens.	Due to Rosedale being an important Port to the Delta's economy, a discussion was made to widen SR 8 to improve travel between Rosedale and Cleveland.	Comment forms received were supportive.
May 2003	Luncheon meeting for Tunica County Chamber of Commerce on behalf of several landowners and casino owners in the Robinsville area.	Casino representatives and landowners wanted to make sure that I-69 will provide good access to and from the Memphis area.	Casino representatives were satisfied that SR 304 would be improved west of the interchange for the Western Alternative, as in the same manner for the Eastern and Central Alternative.
May 2003	Aguzzi Family meeting with two MDOT officials in Cleveland, Mississippi.	Aguzzi Family had concerns on how the Central and Western Alternatives divided their farmland.	After the third series of public meetings, the Aguzzi family provided written comments opposing the Western and Central Alternatives crossing SR 8 west of Cleveland. Aguzzi Family does however, support the Eastern Alternative.
June 2003	City of Cleveland and Bolivar County officials requested a meeting. The meeting was held at the MDOT Third District Office in Yazoo City.	The meeting was held to address how to properly respond to complaints made by landowners, who would have impacts to their property by the proposed project.	The Western and Central Alternative were explained in further detail to help provide information for officials to relay to landowners. The possibility of having a future meeting with landowners that might be impacted was discussed as well.
December 2004	Meeting with the Aguzzi Family at the Bolivar County Expo Center Annex. This meeting was held during the afternoon prior to the Public Hearing on December 14, 2004.	The Aguzzi Family owns and farms a large amount of land and presented the project team with a sketch on aerial photography identifying an alternative alignment they wanted the team to consider.	The project team discussed possible advantages and disadvantages of the modified alignment with the Aguzzi Family and the project team agreed to study the suggested medication to the degree necessary to provide the Aguzzis a response to their request.
January 2005	Meeting with the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce	The purpose of the meeting was to listen to the Chamber's concerns and comments and to brief the Chamber officials on the modifications that were made in the shared portion of the Central and Western alternatives.	The Chamber representatives were satisfied with the modifications the project team had made to lessen farmland impacts, and advised that they wanted to discuss the possibility of reconsidering the previously dropped alternative that would loop around Cleveland to the east and join US 61 at Merigold. It was agreed the project team would study the Chamber's request.
January 2005	Meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Antici. Held in the MDOT Environmental Division Conference Room.	Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange Concept for Central Alternative in Middle Section.	It was agreed that the project team would develop a new concept for presentation to Archives and History and their approval that would minimize the impacts to archaeological sites and align the crossroad at this interchange location. The project team made no promises to the Anticis that Archives and History would approve the modified interchange.
January 2005	Meeting with Mr. Lawrence Murphy at the Neel-Schaffer offices in Jackson.	The purpose of the meeting was to assure Mr. Murphy that the Pace Bypass alternative was no longer an option.	Mr. Murphy was provided a copy of an aerial photography map depicting the Preferred Alternative for widening SR 8 through Pace on existing alignment at the end of the meeting.
March 2005	Meeting with Mr. Ray Smith at Mr. Smith's Farm Headquarters at Mr. Smith's request.	The purpose was a follow-up to Mr. Smith's attendance at the public hearing in Tunica, to discuss his concerns about the Central Alternative's division of his farmland.	Messrs. Walker and Shirley advised Mr. Smith his request appeared to have merit and they advised him the project team would take the same actions to address his request as those that were taken to address the requests made by the landowners in the Cleveland area.

* Meetings Minutes provided in Appendix Sections
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2005

4.3.2.5 Analysis of Potential Impacts

Because most of the study area meets the threshold to be considered an EJ area of concern, the potential impacts were reviewed in the context of how they would affect the minority and low-income populations. A review of potential adverse impacts was based on analyses of each relevant impact category in the FEIS. In keeping with the project's purpose and need, the review of impacts also included the potential for minority communities to gain or lose intended benefits from I-69.

Specific details of impact categories are discussed within each section of Chapter 4. Those categories relevant to the EJ analysis are summarized in **Table 4-6**. Adverse impacts were evaluated with the demographic data in the study area to determine whether they may have the potential to disproportionately affect minority and/or low-income populations within the EJ areas. Two categories were identified for closer review from an EJ perspective: relocations and opportunity for economic benefits.

Table 4-6
Evaluation of Factors for Potential Disproportionate Impacts

Factor	Potential for Disproportionately Adverse Impacts	
	No-Action	Build
Air Quality		
Forest/Wildlife Habitat		
Construction Impacts		
Energy Supply/Natural Resources		
Farmlands		
Floodplains		
Hazardous Materials		
Historic/Archaeological Resources		
Land Use		
Noise		
Relocations/Community Cohesion		X
Economic	X	X
Solid Waste		
Surface Transportation		
Threatened and Endangered Species		
Water Quality		
Wetlands		

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2004, and Ken Weeden & Associates, 2003.

Relocations and Community Cohesion

Relocation of residences and businesses would be unavoidable with any of the construction alternatives, as discussed in Section 4.5. Within the EJ areas identified in Section 3.4.3, additional analysis was conducted to estimate the potential displacement of minority or low-income residences. The estimated displacements of minority or low-income residents are summarized in **Table 4-7**.

Table 4-7
Estimated Minority and Low-Income Relocations

Alternative	Relocations						
	Total	Minority	Percent of Total	Typical Minority Percentage	Low-Income	Percent of Total	Typical Low-Income Percentage
Southern Western	16	7	43.8	47.4-90.0	6	36.7	19.5-46.3
Preferred Alternative – Central	25	18	72.0	47.4-90.0	12	48.0	19.5-46.3
Eastern	16	4	25.0	47.4-64.2	5	30.0	23.0-39.2
SR 8 Alternative B	18	7	38.9	76.2-84.2	14	77.7	76.2-84.2
Alternative C	13	4	30.8	76.2-84.2	5	38.5	76.2-84.2
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)	18	7	38.9	76.2-84.2	14	77.7	76.2-84.2
Middle Preferred (Only) Alternative	3	2	66.7	64.2	1	33.3	33.9
Northern Western	7	7	100.0	73.5	2	28.5	29.9
Preferred Alternative – Central	8	7	87.5	73.5	3	37.5	29.9
Eastern	20	16	80.0	73.5	6	30.0	29.9
Total Western	44	23	52.3	47.4 – 90.0	23	52.3	19.5 – 46.3
Preferred Alternative – Central	54	34	63.0	47.4 – 90.0	30	55.6	19.5 – 84.2
Eastern	54	29	53.7	47.4 – 84.2	26	48.1	23.0 – 39.2

Note: Relocations are based on revised alignments for the Central Alternative as Preferred Alternative. Percent of Minority and Low-Income Relocations is based on US Census, 2000, Census Tract Data. Some relocations qualify as both minority and low-income.
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. and Neel-Schaffer, Inc., October 2005; May 2008.

Within the Southern and Middle Sections, the relocations would affect minority and low-income residences with percentages that are consistent with the surrounding population characteristics. The percentage of minorities relocated would be higher, but the total would be relatively small (5 to 12 relocations). Low-income relocations within the Northern Section also would be consistent with population characteristics in this portion of the study area. Based on observations in the relocation survey and a review of the Census data for the tracts that would be affected, none of the alternatives would disproportionately relocate minority or low-income residents.

While the Preferred Alternative would have minority and low-income relocations (see **Table 4-7**). The relocations impacts would not be disproportionately adverse. As further described in Section 4.5.2, MDOT will provide relocation assistance to all relocatees. The relocation program for the proposed project will be conducted in accordance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646).

Throughout the development of alternative alignments, the public input process enabled planners to avoid impacts that would dissect neighborhoods or otherwise be disruptive to community services. Therefore, no disproportionately adverse impacts would occur related to community cohesion.

Economic Opportunity for Minority and Low-Income Communities

For centuries agriculture has been the primary source of the region's economy, the richness of the soil in the Delta perfect for crop production. Beginning with the industrial revolution in the early decades of the 1900s and continuing with the trend of larger corporate-owned agribusiness farming, improved technological advances have reduced the need for manual labor and the numbers of smaller family farms. These trends have contributed to the high levels of unemployment in the area, forcing communities to search for new sources of income.

As described in Section 4.3.2.2, an extensive public involvement program has been conducted for the proposed project. Input has been considered from local citizens, elected officials, and economic development representatives. An integral purpose of the I-69 corridor through Mississippi, as described in Chapter 1, is to bring the interstate through the delta region as a means to encourage economic development. Many small communities are located within the study area, typically having a high concentration of minority and lower income residents. The key to enabling the intended economic benefits from I-69 construction will be the degree of access provided through interchanges and connectors to the smaller communities. For example, improvements to SR 8 are included with each alternative; SR 8 will serve minority and low-income populations, particularly those in Rosedale.

Within the Census tracts that exceed the EJ thresholds, the total population in 2000 was 85,395. As a means to estimate the access provided by the proposed alternatives, population clusters located within these EJ areas of concern were identified. Populations of towns and smaller communities located within two miles of I-69 access were estimated and then compared to the

total population. The result, shown in **Table 4-8**, is an indication of how well the proposed alternatives would serve the EJ areas through convenient access and potential for economic development. The number of interchanges provided near the EJ areas is indicated by alternative and section.

Table 4-8
Minority and Low-Income Population Served in Study Area Communities Within 2 Miles of I-69 Interchange

Alternative By Section	Communities Within EJ Areas	EJ Population Served	Number of Interchanges
Southern Western	Benoit, Shaw, Skene, Cleveland, Shelby, Alligator, Rena Lara	20,923	5
Preferred Alternative – Central	Benoit, Shaw, Skene, Cleveland, Renova, Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, Duncan, Alligator	24,130	10
Eastern	Shaw, Boyle, Cleveland	16,573	2
Middle Preferred (Only) Alternative	Clarksdale, Coahoma, Rich	20,970	2
Northern Western	Lula	370	1
Preferred Alternative – Central	Lula	370	1
Eastern	Lula	370	1
Alternative Totals			
Western Alternative		42,263 (50.2%)	8
Preferred Alternative – Central		45,470 (54.0%)	13
Eastern Alternative		37,913 (44.3%)	5

Source: 2000 Census Data, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

As indicated in **Table 4-8**, any of the build alternatives would serve the same minority and low-income communities in the Middle and Northern Sections of the study area. The Southern Section includes most of the minority and low-income communities that have provided input into the alignment studies for I-69. Based on local input, alignment segments have been modified and the Preferred Alternative was developed to use existing US 61 and bring I-69 access near the established communities. Accordingly, the Preferred Alternative would serve the greatest percentage of minority and low-income population and provide the most interchanges within two miles of these communities.

4.3.2.6 Findings of EJ Analysis

Minority and low-income populations were identified, essentially throughout the study area. The overall impacts of the I-69 alternatives were then reviewed in the context of how they would affect those populations. Based on the potential impacts, proposed mitigation, and level of local support among community leaders, the project would have no disproportionate impacts. This finding is based on the following:

- Disruption to local neighborhoods and community facilities has been minimized through the development of preliminary alignments, incorporating input from citizens.
- Relocations are unavoidable but will be mitigated through payments in accordance with federal policy. Dislocated families will receive assistance with moving expenses and relocation payments in addition to the fair market value of the property. The alignments have been developed to minimize relocations, and they do not concentrate on minority or low-income population groups.
- Farmland and natural resource impacts are unavoidable for any alternative. Appropriate mitigation will be implemented, and the affected resources represent a very small percentage of the total within each county.
- Noise and visual impacts will be unavoidable in some locations. These impacts do not concentrate on minority or low-income population groups. Abatement measures are being incorporated into the design.
- The common message from local community leaders has been that they want to share in the benefits of I-69, especially for the prospect of better economic conditions for future generations in their communities. The project alignments have been developed to provide access to the proposed interstate and offer opportunities for future development. The overall study area is expected to share in those economic benefits from the project.
- The Preferred Alternative provides access to the greatest percentage of the population and uses the highest percentage of the existing US 61 corridor south of Clarksdale. This alternative addresses concerns from local residents and officials that the I-69 corridor and the opportunity for economic growth need to be located near existing communities.

4.3.2.7 Accomplishments of the Environmental Justice Process

The I-69 Environmental Justice Outreach Program has been successful in helping to accomplish the following:

- Disseminated information about the project, through personal interviews, mailings, personal meetings, general public meetings, special community/targeted meetings, to a segment of the public who easily could have been left out otherwise.
- Reduced or eliminated adverse comments. The biggest concern seemingly expressed by the majority of persons, including low-income and minorities, is “Please make sure it comes our way…” There have been very few adverse comments about the project itself.

- Made Environmental Justice a priority concern from the beginning of the study. Based on the level of outreach provided during the study, MDOT has determined that all concerns related to environmental justice have been addressed adequately.

4.4 Public Facilities and Community Cohesion

4.4.1 Schools or Colleges

No schools or colleges would be displaced or adversely impacted by any of the project alternatives.

4.4.2 Churches and Cemeteries

No churches or cemeteries would be displaced or adversely impacted by any of the project alternatives. Two former church buildings currently used for storage would be impacted. A portion of the frontage from one church would be needed for right-of-way (ROW) to connect the south end of the Clarksdale Bypass to the Central and Western Alternatives of the Middle and Southern Sections.

4.4.3 Public Facilities

No government buildings or other public facilities would be displaced or adversely impacted by any of the project alternatives.

4.4.4 Parks and Recreational Facilities

No publicly owned recreational or park facilities would be adversely impacted by any of the project alternatives.

4.4.5 Correctional Facilities

No correctional facilities would be displaced or adversely affected by any of the proposed project alternatives.

4.4.6 Hospitals and Emergency Medical Services

No hospitals or emergency medical facilities would be adversely impacted by any of the proposed project alternatives. Transportation to these medical facilities by emergency response services might be improved by the construction of the proposed project due to a more direct route being available from rural areas.

4.4.7 Neighborhoods

The alternative corridors were located along the outskirts of the built-up areas. This approach provided a means of promoting economic development for the nearby municipality while minimizing the disruptions to nearby homes or businesses.

The only community impacts in Bolivar County are in the vicinity of Cleveland. Prior to the Public Hearing, one neighborhood west of Cleveland and one east of Cleveland would have been impacted by alternatives. Neither of these two developments identified an established community. The neighborhood west of Cleveland is being developed by selling lots adjacent to an existing county road. The Western Alternative in the Southern Section would have impacted several of these residences. One of these residences would have been impacted by the Preferred Alternative. However, adjustments made following the Public Hearing enabled the residences west of Cleveland to be avoided.

The neighborhood east of Cleveland also is new, has one entrance off a county road, and has one home completed and one under construction. New ROW from the western portion of this subdivision would be needed for the East Alternative. At both of these subdivision locations, a grade separation bridge would be provided at a nearby county road for access over the interstate. A vegetated earthen berm was considered through the limits of the subdivision east of Cleveland to lessen the aesthetic concerns and noise impacts; however, since the Eastern Alternative is not the Preferred Alternative, a berm would not be provided at this location.

In the Middle Section of the study area, the alternatives are located within or near the built-up limits of the City of Clarksdale. Because the US 49 – US 61 Clarksdale Bypass is being constructed as a fully controlled access facility, with access only allowed at interchange locations, the Bypass could be easily converted to I-69. Therefore, it is the only alternative undergoing

study around Clarksdale. The Bypass goes around the built-up area of Clarksdale, and there are no community or neighborhoods impacts in this area.

In the Northern Section of the study area, the alternatives bypass the City of Tunica. A neighborhood along Verner Road and Bonds Road north and east of Tunica is impacted by the Western Alternative and Preferred Alternative. At a special meeting held with residents of this community, the study team indicated that improvements would be made to minimize the noise and aesthetic impacts of the corridor. Verner Road would be bridged over the Interstate to reduce truck noise. Subject to the feasibility of providing drainage, a vegetated earthen berm would be provided along the ROW of the corridor through the area of the community in order to minimize the aesthetic and noise impacts.

Several other small communities are located near one or more alternatives:

- Hannah, Lake Vista, Litton, Skene, and Zumbro in Bolivar County
- Bobo, Beverly, and Rich in Coahoma County
- Dubbs, Banks, and Little Texas in Tunica County

The study alternatives have minimized community impacts by passing on the outskirts of Hannah, Beverly, Rich, and Banks. Some impacts would occur at Lake Vista, Litton, Skene, Bobo, Zumbro, Dubbs, and Little Texas. In each of these cases, the route was developed to pass on or near the outer edge of the community, with a grade separation or interchange to maintain the community's access.

4.4.8 Travel Patterns and Accessibility

Within the study area, there are numerous isolated communities, scattered pockets of residences, and single-family residences that are mostly located along a highway or county road near farming operations. To maintain access for the people living and working in these locations, the following approach was taken when developing and refining the study alternatives:

- The alternative corridors were generally placed at the fringe of these communities and a grade separation bridge or interchange was placed at a nearby US highway, state highway, or important county road to provide access for the local traffic to cross the interstate.

- To the extent allowed on natural and human environment constraints, alternatives were located near existing roads. This approach maintains existing access patterns, reduces the need for frontage roads, and lessens the impact to farming operations.
- The typical spacing between interchanges or grade separations was kept to no more than two miles when a property owner's access to the other side of the highway was impacted. Farms that are bisected by the proposed project will be evaluated during the design phase to determine if access between the bisected portions can be provided for livestock and machinery. In addition, the locations of changes in property ownership and primary drainage ditches were considered. Following the drainage ditches would limit impacts to existing access points for local use.

Interchanges are proposed near Hannah, Lake Vista, Litton, Skene, Bobo, Rich, Dubbs, Banks, and Little Texas. Therefore, alternatives near any of these communities would increase economic development opportunities for the community. Grade separations are proposed at other locations in order to avoid cutting off access to smaller communities.

4.5 Relocations

4.5.1 Displaced Residences and Businesses

The build alternatives would require the relocation of between 44 and 54 residences, from five to six businesses, and other land uses within their respective ROW limits. Some impacts would occur to storage buildings, trailer yards, equipment lots, and grain bin buildings.

To compare the relative impact of the studied alternatives, an evaluation was made of the number and type of displacements and other demographic data for each alternative. This information is summarized in **Table 4-9A** for the alternatives.

Table 4-9A
Residential and Business Relocations

Alternative	House	Mobile Homes	Multi-Family	Businesses	Business Descriptions	Other	Other Descriptions
Southern Western	16	0	0	1	Junkyard	4	Grain storage bins (2), storage buildings, storage shed
Preferred Alternative – Central	17	8	0	1	Junkyard	6	Grain storage bins (12), farm equipment shed, farm lot, storage building
Eastern	12	1	3	2	Furniture Store, 4-Wheeler Sales/Service	8	Grain storage, vacant commercial building, usery supply, mini storage buildings, farm equipment shed, farm equipment shop and shed, abandoned building, partially standing/ vacant buildings
SR 8 Alternative B (Widening)	13	5	0	3	Vehicle Repair Shop, Two Convenience Stores (One Closed)	10	Abandoned partially finished house, fuel tanks, abandoned equipment storage lot, forest service tower, grain storage bins (3), farm equipment repair shop, farm operations building, equipment shop/shed
Alternative C (Bypass)	9	4	0	2	Vehicle Repair Shop, Two Convenience Stores (One Closed)	9	Abandoned partially finished house, fuel tanks, abandoned equipment storage lot, grain storage bins (3), farm equipment repair shop, farm operations building, equipment shop/shed
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)	13	5	0	3	Vehicle Repair Shop, Two Convenience Stores (One Closed)	10	Abandoned partially finished house, fuel tanks, abandoned equipment storage lot, forest service tower, grain storage bins (3), farm equipment repair shop, farm operations building, equipment shop/shed
Middle Preferred (Only) Alternative	2	1	0	1	Old gas station converted to dance club	2	Storage shed, collapsing equipment shed
Northern Western	1	6	0	0	N/A	2	Large propane tank, abandoned concrete building
Preferred Alternative – Central	2	6	0	0	N/A	4	Storage building sites, barn, partially standing concrete block building; abandoned church building
Eastern	6	14	0	0	N/A	3	Storage building sites, barn, partially standing concrete block building
Total for Project (Preferred Alternative)	26	19	0	5	---	22	---

Note: Relocations for Central Alternative are based on revised alignments for the Preferred Alternative.
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., and Neel-Shaffer, Inc., 2005; May 2008.

To determine the likely availability of comparable and adequate replacement housing, a sample review of real estate listings was conducted in May 2004. As summarized in **Table 4-9B**, it appears that adequate replacement housing is available for relocated and displaced homes within each alternative section. Based on the very small number of residential relocations for a project of this length, historic residential development patterns in the study area, and the assumption that I-69 would be constructed in five projects over a period of eight years or more, it is anticipated that replacement housing will be available during the course of the project as needed.

Table 4-9B
Available Housing

Alternatives	Relocation		Sample of Available Single Family Housing ($1,000's)					Available Mobile Homes
	SF	MH	$0-25	$25-50	$50-100	$100-200	$200+	MH
Southern	12-17	0-8	35	10	7	2	1	10+
SR 8	5-9	4-5	-	-	-	-	-	10+
Middle	0-2	0-1	3	32	58	22	11	10+
Northern	1-6	6-14	4	12	8	9	5	10+

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., and Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2005.

In addition, up to four businesses would require relocation. The sample of listed commercial real estate indicated a minimum of 12 available properties. Based on the anticipated economic development objectives in the I-69 Corridor, additional commercial property is expected to be available in the future, far exceeding the number of relocated businesses.

4.5.2 Relocation Assistance

It is the policy of the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) to ensure that comparable replacement housing will be available prior to construction of state and federally-assisted projects. Furthermore, the MDOT has the following three programs to minimize the inconvenience of relocation:

- Relocation Assistance Advisory Services
- Relocation Moving Payments
- Relocation Replacement Housing Payments or Rent Supplement

With the Relocation Assistance Advisory Services Program, experienced MDOT staff will be available to assist relocatees with information such as availability and prices of homes, apartments, or businesses for sale or rent, as well as financing or other housing programs. The Relocation Moving Payments Program, in general, provides for payment of actual moving expenses encountered in relocation. Where displacement would force an owner or tenant to purchase or rent property of higher cost or to lose a favorable financing arrangement (in cases of ownership), the Relocation Replacement Housing Payments or Rent Supplement Program will compensate owners or tenants who are eligible and qualify.

The relocation program for the proposed project will be conducted in accordance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646). The program is designed to provide assistance to displaced persons in relocating to a replacement site in which to live or do business. All relocatees will be informed of the name, location, and telephone number of the Relocation Assistance Agent. At least one Relocation Assistance Agent will be assigned to contact relocatees and inform them of their rights and benefits available through the Relocation Assistance Advisory Services Program.

Because this project is expected to be divided into five construction segments that are currently proposed to be implemented over eight years, adequate replacement housing should be available for all relocatees.

Last Resort Housing is a program used when comparable replacement housing is not available, or when it is unavailable within the relocatee's financial means and the replacement payment exceeds the federal/state legal limitation. The purpose of the program is to allow broad latitudes in methods of implementation by the state so that decent, safe, and sanitary replacement housing will be provided. Although adequate opportunities for relocation appear to be available within the area, Last Resort Housing will be used if needed.

The few business structures that will be taken by the alternatives are varied and include a motor vehicle repair shop, one open convenience store, a junkyard, and a nightclub. None of the businesses that will be relocated are critical for overall service and none have more than 50 employees. There will be ample areas to relocate. The overall impact of I-69 for most businesses in the study area will be positive, because of the ability to serve increased traffic and the increased access to the northern Mississippi Delta.

4.6 Transportation and Utilities

4.6.1 Railroads

As described in Chapter 3, active and inactive railroads are located throughout the study area. Several grade-separated rail crossings would occur with any of the alternatives. Details of the crossings would be coordinated with rail line representatives during the course of the planning and design of the selected alternative. No other existing or proposed rail facilities would be impacted by the proposed project alternatives.

4.6.2 Airports

None of the airports located near the study area would be adversely impacted by the proposed project alternatives. The construction at the Tunica County Airport was coordinated with the development of the I-69 alignments, particularly the access interchange at Prichard Road for the Preferred Alternative, as well as the other alternatives in the Northern Section. An interchange near the improved airport would be compatible with the Tunica County Land Use Plan.

4.6.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

No existing or planned pedestrian or bicycle facilities would be adversely impacted by the proposed alternatives. While no designated pedestrian or bicycle facilities are proposed along I-69 due to access restrictions, a 6-foot shoulder is proposed on each side of the frontage roads for the East and West Alternatives, as illustrated in **Figure 2-10A**. Intersections and interchanges will be designed to accommodate pedestrian or bicycle travel on intersecting streets in locations where such activity is anticipated.

The proposed alternatives for I-69 do not directly impact the Mississippi River Trail (MRT), which is designated along SR 1 in the project area. However, the widening of SR 8 has a western terminus on the MRT at the SR 1 intersection in Rosedale. Over the approximate 35 miles between the City of Greenville in Washington County and the SR 8 intersection at Rosedale in Bolivar County, the MRT uses SR 1. The MRT also uses SR 1 over the approximate 54 miles between the SR 8 intersection at Rosedale and the US 49 intersection in Coahoma County near the Mississippi River Bridge, where the MRT crosses into the State of Arkansas. The two feet of

shoulder adjacent to the existing outside travel lane on SR 1 is paved, and signs are installed designating this section of SR 1 as part of the MRT. These two features are the primary provisions for bicyclists on the portion of the MRT along SR 1 between Greenville and the US 49 Mississippi River Bridge. Since the widening of SR 8 proposed under this study has a western terminus at the SR 1 intersection in Rosedale, this study would have minimal impact on the MRT.

Each I-69 alternative would provide an interchange in a rural environment at the crossing of SR 1 between Greenville and Rosedale. Therefore, traffic flow and safety along SR 1 should be improved. There also is little pedestrian activity that would take place on any proposed alternative in the study area.

4.6.4 Utilities

The proposed project alternatives would cross both transmission and gas lines. All transmission lines within the study area are owned by the Entergy Corporation. Gas pipelines are owned by several different companies. Two pipelines in the study are owned by the Texas Gas Transmission Company. These pipelines run the length of the entire study area in a southwest to northeast direction. The ANR Pipeline Company owns one gas pipeline in the study area. Two other pipelines, owned by the Tennessee Gas Transmission Company, also run west through Ruleville and then southwest before leaving the study area approximately five miles east of Shaw. Transmission and gas line crossings are shown in **Table 4-10** and on **Figure 3-9**. The costs of crossing these facilities have been included in the cost estimates for each of the alternatives. As shown in the table, the Western Alternative in the Southern Section would have the least impacts on transmission lines, while the Preferred Alternative would have the least impact on gas lines in that section. In the Northern Section, the Western Alternative would have the least impacts to both gas and electric transmission lines.

Table 4-10 Transmission and Gas Line Crossings		
Alternative	**Transmission Line Crossings (Feet)**	**Gas Line Crossings (Feet)**
Southern Section Western	2 (955)	8 (19,030)
Preferred Alternative – Central	2 (1,470)	8 (13,050)
Eastern	6 (3,140)	10 (16,595)
SR 8 Alternative B (Widening)	1 (300)	3 (3,330)
Alternative C (Bypass)	1 (300)	3 (3,330)
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)	1 (300)	3 (3,300)
Middle Section Preferred (Only) Alternative	2 (310)	3 (16,860)
Northern Section Western	4 (1,115)	12 (38,825)
Preferred Alternative – Central	4 (1,130)	11 (61,985)
Eastern	4 (1,450)	8 (44,090)
Total for Project (Preferred Alternative)	9 (3,210)	25 (95,225)

Note: The length shown above for the electric transmission lines is length of a single transmission line located in the estimated right of way corridor for I-69 and the connecting roads. Any needed relocation would be accomplished by adjusting pole locations supporting these lines. The length for the natural gas pipeline shown above is the length of pipe that would require adjusting for I-69 and its connecting roads. There are normally several lines of various size pipes at each of these crossing locations, which are included in the lengths shown above.

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2004. Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004; 2008.

4.7 Air Quality

The purpose of this section is to address future air quality conditions for the project alternatives, to identify potential regional and local air quality impacts and mitigations, and to address conformity with regional air quality implementation plans.

This project is located in a region designated as being in attainment for all criteria pollutants; therefore, the State Implementation Plan (SIP) to achieve and maintain the air quality standards does not contain any transportation control measures and the conformity procedures of 23 CFR 770 do not apply. All proposed alternatives within the I-69 study area are in conformance with the SIP and would not cause violations of the air quality standards and would not interfere with any transportation control measures. In addition, no localized violations of any air quality standards, including carbon monoxide, are anticipated for the project alternatives. Based on MDOT air quality analysis guidelines, no microscale analysis is required.

4.8 Noise

To address FHWA requirements for assessing noise impacts of transportation projects, a noise study was conducted for the proposed project. The objectives of the study were to:

- Predict the effects of the proposed project related to noise.
- Point out sites where noise impact is likely to occur.
- Determine if there are any feasible noise abatement measures which would eliminate or reduce expected noise impact.
- Satisfy the requirements of Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 772 (23 CFR 772).

4.8.1 Future Noise Level Estimates

4.8.1.1 Design Year (2030) No-Build Alternative Noise Environment

Based on discussions with MDOT Planning Division, the Leq noise levels at the occupied facilities located along the route of the Eastern, Central, and Western Alternatives are expected to be an average of 3 dBA higher than the existing noise levels in the year 2030 if the proposed project is not constructed. This is mainly due to expected marginal growth within the study area. As a result, highway traffic noise impact is not expected to occur at occupied facilities for the No-Build Alternative.

4.8.1.2 Design Year (2030) Build Alternative Noise Environment

Year 2030 noise levels were projected for 291 occupied facilities or *receptor locations*, including residences and businesses. This total number of receptors analyzed in the 2030 design year excludes buildings within the proposed ROW and abandoned buildings which would be displaced due to construction of the highway. No buildings would be relocated because of noise impacts. Assumptions for the proposed alternatives included the following:

- Projected 2030 peak-hour volumes
- All traffic on center-line of lanes for each direction
- High traffic volume on receptor side
- Seven percent heavy trucks, three percent medium trucks (in the peak-hour)
- 65 mph operating speed (free-flow) and 70 mph design speed
- Topography/terrain area assumed relatively flat

The peak-hour or one-hour equivalent (Leq) noise level is used for highway noise analysis.

Table 4-11 below compares the existing measured noise levels and modeled 2030 noise levels at specific locations along the proposed I-69 alternatives. Only four receptor locations are shown because others either were taken along alternatives that are no longer being considered or are not within 500 feet of the project centerline. Most of the sites at which noise levels were monitored were for the purpose of establishing ambient noise levels in general areas crossed by the alternatives, specifically along cross streets, where traffic and noise would be similar for more than one alternative.

Table 4-11
Existing Measured and Future (2030) Modeled Receptors

Alternatives	Site	County	Measured Leq (dBA)	Future (2030) Modeled Leq (dBA)
Middle Western, Central, and Eastern	NRECP11	Coahoma	49.6	62.4
Middle Western, Central, and Eastern	NRECP12	Coahoma	52.4	60.6
Middle Western, Central, and Eastern	NRECP13	Coahoma	56.6	59.6
South Central	NRECP15	Coahoma	41.5	54.2

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2004.

Appendix F identifies the receptor location (by alignment) and facility type. Projected noise levels at these receptors are also shown in **Appendix F**. Locations with substantial increase included all receptors with an increase over the ambient noise level of 15 dBA. **Table 4-12** summarizes the receptors that would either approach the NAC or experience a substantial increase.

The Eastern Alternative (Southern Section) would have two receptor locations with a substantial noise increase (i.e., 15 dBA or more). With the Western Alternative (Southern Section), one receptor location would exceed NAC thresholds and one would exceed the substantial noise increase criterion.

Table 4-12 Number of Receptors That Approached/Exceeded FHWA NAC		
Alternative	**NAC**	**Substantial Increase**
Southern Section Western	1	1
Preferred Alternative – Central	4	1
Eastern	0	2
SR 8 Alternative B **(**Widening)	0	0
Alternative C (Bypass)	0	0
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)	0	0
Middle Section Preferred (Only) Alternative	0	0
Northern Section Western	0	0
Preferred Alternative – Central	0	0
Eastern	0	0
Total for Project (Preferred Alternative)	4	1

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004; 2008.

In the Southern Section, the Preferred Alternative would have five receptor locations that would exceed specified threshold criteria. Four of these locations would exceed NAC thresholds and one would exceed the substantial noise increase criterion. Thus, while all of the alternatives studied have little noise impact considering the length of the project, the Preferred Alternative would have the greatest impact. For all alternatives, no structures would be relocated based on noise impacts.

4.8.2 Noise Abatement Measures

4.8.2.1 Barrier Evaluation

Noise barriers reduce noise levels by blocking the sound path between roadways and noise-sensitive areas. This measure is typically used on high-speed, limited-access facilities where noise levels are high and adequate space for barriers is available. Noise barriers may be constructed from a variety of materials, including concrete, wood, metal, earth, and vegetation. Noise reduction criteria outlined in the *MDOT Highway Traffic Noise Policy* (June 18, 1996) were used for the barrier evaluation. For a barrier to be recommended, it must be feasible and reasonable. The following applicable criteria were considered in order to determine feasibility:

- Each barrier should reduce the noise level by at least 5 dBA at four or more residences that are expected to receive noise impact.
- The residences were constructed or the building permits were issued before the date of public knowledge of the proposed highway project.
- The abatement measure must be cost effective. Cost effectiveness is defined as $20,000 per effectively protected (5 dBA or more reduction) residence.

Based on the preceding criteria and due to the low population density of the study area, further barrier analysis is unnecessary. The nine receptor locations — those exceeding the noise abatement criteria — are in isolated locations. Barriers of suitable height and length providing substantial noise reduction are cost-prohibitive due to a high cost per dwelling unit and are therefore not reasonable.

4.8.2.2 Other Noise Abatement Measures

When the noise levels of a proposed roadway approach or exceed Noise Abatement Criteria, the FHWA requires that various noise abatement measures be considered. The following discussion addresses the applicability of measures other than noise barriers for the proposed project.

Transportation system management (TSM) measures which speed limit, vehicle type, volume, and time of operations are not considered appropriate for noise abatement due to their effect on the capacity and level-of-service on the proposed roadway. A reduction in speed limit of 10 MPH would result in a noise level reduction of approximately 1 to 2 dBA — barely perceptible to the human ear while increasing travel time and user cost. Therefore, TSM is not considered a viable noise abatement measure.

The use of *vegetation* for noise barriers is not considered to be reasonable or feasible for reducing noise levels for this project due to the substantial amount of ROW necessary to make vegetative barriers effective. FHWA research has shown that vegetative barriers should be composed of closely-spaced, densely foliated trees and shrubs approximately 100 feet wide to provide a 3-dBA reduction in noise levels. The cost to acquire the ROW and to plant that amount of vegetation is estimated to exceed the $20,000/unit cost-effectiveness requirement. However, a narrower vegetative barrier is often desirable from a visual perspective.

The *acquisition of property* as buffer zones to minimize noise impacts is not considered a feasible abatement measure for this project. The cost to acquire impacted residences for buffer zones would exceed the MDOT's abatement threshold of $20,000 per residential unit. The use of buffer zones to minimize impacts to future sensitive areas is not recommended because this could be accomplished through land use controls.

One of the most effective noise abatement measures is *land use controls* to minimize future impacts. Local jurisdictions with zoning control could use the information contained in the final noise evaluation to develop policies limiting the growth of noise-sensitive land uses adjacent to the freeway. These policies could include setback requirements, building codes, and zoning.

Earthen berms may be effective in some locations, especially where parallel barriers could be used to protect impacted areas on both sides of the proposed freeway. While earthen berms generally provide more cost-effective noise attenuation than other barrier materials, they are limited by ROW and other engineering considerations (e.g., drainage, access, and future development).

While most of the above measures have been considered and dismissed as not practical noise abatement for this project, an earthen berm would be provided in one location in Tunica County**,** subject to the feasibility of providing drainage (see Section 4.4.7). This berm would mitigate community impacts and provide context-sensitive design, while mitigating noise impacts to some degree.

4.8.2.3 Land Use Development and Future Noise Abatement

The Federal Highway Administration will not normally participate in noise abatement measures unless there is construction or reconstruction of a highway section (or portion thereof). However, the Federal Highway Administration may participate in noise abatement measures on an existing highway where land development or substantial construction predated the existence of any highway. The granting of a building permit, filing of a plat plan, or a similar action must have occurred prior to ROW acquisition or construction approval for the original highway.

4.8.2.4 Impending Development

Four residential developments are approved and being developed near one or more alternatives: two in Tunica County and two in Bolivar County. The first development in Tunica County is located in the Verner Road/Bonds Road area, just north of Prichard Road in the vicinity of the Northern Section. Several homes would be taken in this section, and other existing homes or lots that have not yet been developed would be impacted by noise. These homes are all being built on acre lots on existing Verner Road or Bonds Road, with no new subdivision streets planned. A second subdivision is located in southern Tunica County on Dubbs Road. This development also consists of brick and modular houses on 1-acre lots. Some undeveloped lots remain that may be impacted by noise from the Eastern Alternative in the Northern Section.

There are two ongoing residential developments in Bolivar County. The first development is located in the Township Road area north of SR 8 and west of Cleveland in the Southern Section. This development also is being built on large lots using existing roads. The second development, located east of Cleveland along White Street south of SR 8, is the only true subdivision with new streets built or planned. This development would be impacted by the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section. A golf-course community is planned to the north of it. An extensive effort has been conducted to inform county and local officials of the alternative corridors through meetings and newsletters.

4.9 Geological Resources

The Geotechnical Branch of the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) prepared a summary report concerning potential geotechnical problem sites along the three alternatives for proposed I-69 SIU 11 corridor. The report investigated potential settlement and stability problems along the proposed alignments and at proposed structure locations such as bridges and overpasses. The investigation was completed using a general review of historical data in the areas of interest. It is important to note that no borings or soil samples were recovered from any site and that a complete subsurface survey along the alignment will be completed during the design of the alignment. The Western Alternative was found to cross numerous meanders that

could result in settlement and stability problems. The Preferred Alternative and Eastern Alternative were essentially the same concerning potential subsurface problems. MDOT found that the Eastern alignment encountered smaller meanders between Dubbs Road Interchange and S.R. 3; therefore it is less likely to have settlement problems in the future. **Table 4-13** summarizes the MDOT's investigation findings and recommendations.

Table 4-13
Potential Subsurface Problem Areas

Alignment	Problem Areas
Southern West	East of S.R. 1 Interchange and West of S.R. 448
	North of S.R. 32 to U.S. 61 South Clarksdale Interchange
Preferred Alternative – Central	Potential problem at S.R. 1 Interchange
	North of Duncan Interchange and South of U.S. 61 S. Clarksdale Interchange
East	North of Merigold Interchange to North of Parchman Interchange
	Potential problem at S.R. 1 Interchange
Middle Preferred (Only) Alternative	Between S.R. 6 and Coahoma/Tunica Co. Line
Northern West	North of Dubbs Road Interchange
Preferred Alternative – Central	North of Dubbs Road Interchange
East	Between Dubbs Road Interchange and S.R. 3

Source: MDOT Geotechnical Report, 2004.

4.10 Water Resources

The majority of the streams located within the project area are first and second order tributaries to the Coldwater, Little Tallahatchie, Tallahatchie, Yocona, Yalobusha, Big Sunflower, and Yazoo Rivers. These rivers have been classified by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality as "use streams", which include recreation and fish and wildlife. Recreation waters are suitable for recreational purposes. Fish and wildlife waters are intended for fishing and for propagation of fish, aquatic life, and wildlife. Because of these designations, construction measures will be incorporated into the design of the selected alternative to minimize water quality impacts to the streams and their tributaries. Such measures include minimizing the number of stream crossings, length of impact, and amount of fill, limiting segments where roads lie close to streams, maximizing the distance from roads to streams using appropriate soil erosion and sediment control measures during construction, and controlling storm water associated with road runoff.

4.10.1 Surface Water

Each proposed alternative would have some degree of impact on water quality because of the large amount of surface water including ponds, lakes, streams, and tributaries in the study area. The alternative that minimizes stream crossings and other surface water impacts would result in the least potential impact to water resources in the project area. Project impacts are described as either short-term construction related impacts or long-term operational impacts.

Water quality impacts related to construction activities could include increased sediment loads and subsequent higher turbidity levels in surface waters. These increased loads could result from runoff from ROW areas undergoing clearing and earth moving and from construction activities at stream crossings. Disturbance of stream sediments at crossings could cause short-term decreases in oxygen levels in the immediate area from suspension of oxygen demanding organic material. This may result in increased impact to sensitive, less mobile organisms such as arthropods, mollusks, and other benthic organisms. In addition, fish species may be temporarily displaced in an avoidance response to the increased turbidity. Also, spillage and dispersion of fuels, lubricants, and other toxic materials during construction can impact water quality.

These impacts will be minimized by adherence to applicable federal and state construction guidelines and proper erosion control techniques during design. A detailed sediment and erosion control plan will be developed for the selected alternative. In addition, construction materials will be stored and disposed of such that they are not discharged into or alongside of streams and other water bodies.

This sediment and erosion control plan will be subject to approval by the appropriate state agencies prior to construction. The plan will include measures to minimize construction impacts and will be implemented during highway construction. Sedimentation and erosion will be controlled and reduced by use of erosion control measures such as retention/detention basins, discharging storm water over vegetated areas, hay bales or straw dams, turbidity curtains, water flow diversion, and rip/rap. Cut and fill areas should be appropriately and promptly graded and vegetated. Stockpiling and staging sites will be re-vegetated with herbaceous cover after construction to reduce runoff and lessen sediment loadings.

Long-term operational impacts involve storm water discharge from the highway. The most common contaminants in highway runoff are heavy metals, inorganic salts, aromatic hydrocarbons, and suspended solids that accumulate on the road surface as a result of regular highway operation and maintenance activities. Ordinary operations and the wear and tear of vehicles also result in the dropping of oil, grease, rust, hydrocarbons, rubber particles, and other solid materials on the highway surface. These materials are often washed off the highway during precipitation events. Receiving surface and ground waters are susceptible to contamination from all these sources.

Proper design of the highway drainage systems, include vegetated retention and setting ponds, elimination of curbing, velocity reduction devices, and proper placement of outfalls can minimize potential water quality impacts from surface runoff. Additional measures to minimize impacts to surface water quality include phasing construction, shifting alignments to avoid streams, and locating drainageway crossings as far upstream as practical, or at narrow crossing points. Bridge construction, as opposed to culverts or fill of streams and associated wetlands, can also be employed to reduce impacts to the streams.

4.10.2 Section 303 (d)

Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act requires that states identify impaired water bodies. Excess sediments, nutrients, and harmful microorganisms are leading reasons for impairment. In an effort to restore the water bodies, total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for all impaired 303(d) listed water bodies are developed by the states. TMDL reports present the maximum amount of pollutant that can enter a water body so that the water body will meet or continue to meet state water quality standards. TMDLs serve as a planning tool for developing specific controls needed to meet water quality standards.

Every two years, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) prepares a Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies report. The report identifies impaired water bodies and establishes a priority ranking for such waters, taking into account the severity of the pollution and the uses made of the water bodies. For water bodies identified as impaired in the report, a TMDL due date is established. The report also lists water bodies with developed TMDLs that have not been finalized. These waters have TMDLs that were either proposed by the EPA Region 4 that have not yet been finalized or were developed by the MDEQ and have not been

through the public notice process for approval by the EPA. TMDLs that have been finalized are not contained in the report.

The historical water body identification number for each water body listed in the Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies report contains a reference to the watershed of its location. The USGS hydrologic unit code 8-digit (HUC) is also given for segments identified as having impaired water bodies in the report. Mississippi's nine river basins contain 482 watersheds. The entire study area for this section of I-69 is located in the Yazoo River and Upper Mississippi River Basin. The MDEQ document NRCS State Watershed and Tables (MDEQ, 2006) contains the historical map showing the 482 watersheds. The 2006 MDEQ document also lists the names and HUCs sorted alphabetically and numerically for all of the historical watersheds.

In 2001, the USGS, in cooperation with the MDEQ, NRCS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service (USFS), and the Mississippi Automated Resource Information System (MARIS) began a project to develop a statewide hydrologic unit map known as the Watershed Boundary Dataset (WBD), including 10-digit watershed and 12-digit subwatershed boundaries, codes, names, and areas. The project would provide information on Mississippi's water resources in the form of USGS hydrologic unit boundaries for 2-digit regions, 4-digit subregions, 6-digit basins (formerly called accounting units), 8-digit subbasins (formerly called cataloging units), 10-digit watersheds, and 12-digit subwatersheds.

In the 2002 and 2004 Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies reports, MDEQ used a numbering system based on identification of the river basin and the USGS HUC system. The project area for this I-69 study includes segments of the Harris Bayou, Hushpuckena River and Coldwater River, which are 303(d) listed waters according to Mississippi 2004 Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies Report. Using that report, **Table 4-14** shows the total number of streams that are listed as 303(d) within alternative corridors by section.

Table 4-14 303(d) Listed Waters within the Alternatives	
Alternatives	**Number of Streams**
Southern Section Western	7
Preferred Alternative – Central	10
Eastern	11
SR 8 Alternative B (Widening)	0
Alternative C (Bypass)	0
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)	0
Middle Section Preferred (Only) Alternative	1
Northern Section Western	11
Preferred Alternative – Central	11
Eastern	12
Total for Project (Preferred Alternative)	22

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004. 2008.

During 2003-2004, the USGS subdivided the 8-digit subbasins in the Delta containing the Yazoo Basin into 10-digit watersheds. The Delta was further subdivided into 12-digit subwatersheds when part of a watershed was located in the Hills or Coastal Plains Uplands. In 2004, the USGS, in cooperation with the MDOT continued work on the WBD project as part of the existing cooperative program between these two agencies. MDEQ and USGS completed work on the new 12-digit delineation of Mississippi watersheds in 2005. The new delineated 1,294 watersheds and subwatersheds are smaller in size that the 482 watersheds formerly used. All of the data, including the watershed and subwatershed boundaries, hydrologic unit codes and names, and drainage-area information are stored in a GIS database which is available at http://www.ncgc.nrcs.usda.gov/products/datasets/watershed.

For the project study area, **Figures 4-2A** and **4-2B** depict the Preferred Alternative, the 16 watersheds or subwatersheds, the names of the 16 watersheds or subwatersheds, the boundaries of the 16 watersheds or subwatersheds, and the HUCs. Each HUC depicted on **Figures 4-2A** and **42B** has 12 digits. It is common practice in Mississippi for the 10-digit HUC watersheds to be shown in 12 digits with the last two digits being two zeros (00). **Figures 4-2A** and **4-2B** depict the HUC watersheds and subwatersheds in 12 digits. Each of the 16 watersheds or subwatersheds within the study area of the Preferred Alternative has one or more impaired water bodies for which TMDLs of at least one pollutant type have been finalized or pending.

Table 4-15 was developed based on **Figures 4-2A** and **4-2B** to provide a summary of the watersheds, subwatersheds and their HUCs for the Preferred Alternative. During the design phase, the MDOT will contact the MDEQ and determine what pollution control measures would be adopted to advance the state's non-point source management plans in the project area. Construction measures that will be incorporated into the design will also be determined for minimizing water quality impacts at locations with impaired or monitored water bodies. The status of development of TMDLs for any waterways in the study area will be identified and an evaluation will be made to determine how the proposed project could affect implementation of restoration efforts in these watersheds.

Section 230(c) prohibits discharges that cause or contribute to significant degradation of waters of the United States. Significant degradation can include individual or cumulative impacts to human health and welfare; fish and wildlife; ecosystem diversity, productivity and stability; and recreational, aesthetic or economic values. Non-point source pollution associated with project construction can often cause erosion or sedimentation problems downstream. Consequently, appropriate steps should be taken to address potential impacts to water quality within streams and wetlands and to not adversely impact the continued existence of critical habitat for endangered or threatened species in accordance with 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 230.10(b).

MDOT is working to reduce the impact of highway construction on water quality in a variety of ways. It is an active participant in the MDEQ statewide basin study of impaired waters. MDOT is currently reviewing and updating its Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Construction inspectors are being trained in the proper implementation and maintenance of Best Management Practices (BMPs) in effort to prevent further degradation of the watersheds and to address TMDL concerns.

Table 4-15
Preferred Alternative Impacted Watersheds/SubWatersheds

SUBBASIN	WATERSHED	SUBWATERSHED	USGS HYDROLOGIC UNIT CODE (HUC)					
			REGION	SUBREGION	BASIN	SUBBASIN	WATERSHED	UBWATERSHED
COLDWATER RIVER			08	03	02	04		
	Lake Cormorant Bayou-Coldwater River		08	03	02	04	07	00
		Upper Lake Cormorant Bayou	08	03	02	04	07	03
		Buck Island Bayou	08	03	02	04	07	04
		Lower Lake Cormorant Bayou-Coldwater River	08	03	02	04	07	05
	White Oak Bayou-Coldwater River		08	03	02	04	08	00
	Phillips Bayou-Yazoo Pass		08	03	02	04	09	00
	Muddy Bayou-Coldwater River		08	03	02	04	10	00
TALLAHATCHIE RIVER			08	03	02	02		
	Cassidy Bayou		08	03	02	02	05	00

Table 4-15
Preferred Alternative Impacted Watersheds/SubWatersheds

SUBBASIN	WATERSHED	SUBWATERSHED	USGS HYDROLOGIC UNIT CODE (HUC)					
			REGION	SUBREGION	BASIN	SUBBASIN	WATERSHED	UBWATERSHED
BIG SUNFLOWER RIVER			08	03	02	07		
	Lake Bayou-Big Sunflower River		08	03	02	07	01	00
	Hushpuckena River		08	03	02	07	02	00
	Harris Bayou-Big Sunflower River		08	03	02	07	03	00
	Mound Bayou-Big Sunflower River		08	03	02	07	04	00
	Porter Bayou-Big Sunflower River		08	03	02	07	05	00
	Snake Creek-Bogue Phalia		08	03	02	07	11	00
	Shell Lake-Clear Creek		08	03	02	07	12	00
	Bogue Hasty-Bogue Phalia		08	03	02	07	13	00
	Rolling Fork Creek-Upper Deer Creek		08	03	02	07	18	00

Source: Mississippi Department of Transportation, 2010

4.10.3 Groundwater

Historically, contamination of the alluvial aquifer has not been a significant problem. Recently groundwater contamination has been localized to areas near industrial complexes. Some herbicides and pesticides that are present in the surface water may enter the aquifer in areas of recharge. It also is possible for contaminants to enter the aquifer from improperly plugged wells or abandon wells.

Shallow aquifer systems may be disturbed by excavation within the construction limits of the project or be damaged by the weight of the construction materials and equipment. Private wells within the project area could be impacted in the short-term during road construction. However, long-term impacts to groundwater are not anticipated within the study area. Precautions will be taken so that groundwater may not be contaminated. All fuel and chemicals will be contained and properly handled as intended.

4.11 Wetlands and Streams

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires regulation of discharges into "Waters of the United States." The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the principle administrative agency of the Clean Water Act; however, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has the responsibility for implementation, permitting, and enforcement of the provisions of the Act. The USACE regulatory program is defined in 33 CFR 320-330.

Wetlands, streams, and open waters are regulated by the USACE pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Wetlands, defined in 33 CFR 328.3, are those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Any action that proposes to place fill into these areas falls under the jurisdictional of the USACE under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1344).

Wetlands provide many important functions including controlling floodwater, replenishing groundwater, filtering contaminants and excess nutrients, protecting municipal water supplies, and providing habitat for a variety of plant and animal species. Highway construction would

have a degree of impact on wetlands and their function. Construction impacts consist of both temporary impacts during the construction phase, and long-term and permanent impacts caused by construction or through operation of the roadway.

Temporary impacts include potential water quality degradation during land clearing activities and access or encroachment into wetland areas. Staking the construction limits prior to construction and developing a plan for access will help minimize encroachment into the wetland area through avoidance of the wetlands. When avoidance is not possible, best management practices (BMPs) for bridge and road construction will be employed. During land clearing activities, turbidity and sedimentation from surface water runoff and erosion will be minimized by the use of beams, sediment basins, traps, or revegetation with plant species indigenous to the area. An erosion control plan consisting of BMPs will be developed for the Preferred Alternative during design.

Long-term impacts include partial clearing of riparian vegetation associated with steam crossings and the loss of habitat where streams are crossed on fill. The degree of impact depends largely on the highway structures and construction techniques employed. Box culverts will be used to minimize filling the wetlands, while maintaining original surface flow patterns. An additional technique for minimizing the amount of full is the use of bridges for crossing streams. Following the initial avoidance and minimization measures, a compensatory mitigation plan for unavoidable wetlands impacts will be developed for the Preferred Alternative during permitting. The proposed alternatives have been developed to minimize construction within wetland areas to the extent possible. Aside from the wetland habitat directly affected by construction, the proposed improvements should not severely impact the stability or quality of the wetland resources in the study area.

4.11.1 Determination of Wetland and Stream Impacts

During the development of the 17 preliminary one-mile-wide alternative corridors, initial wetland areas were determined with the aid of USGS topographic maps, National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps, and aerial photography. Field reconnaissance was conducted in the winter of 2002 to verify the wetland areas and to identify any additional wetlands crossings that may occur within the study area. This field information was used to assist in further refining the corridors to nine 1,000-foot corridors and ultimately for the development of the alternatives carried forward for detailed study. Wetland scientists conducted additional field investigation of each wetland

area in April and May 2003 in order to better assess the wetland impacts for each study alternative and identify opportunities for preliminary design modifications to further minimize encroachment into the wetlands. Each wetland area identified within the alternative corridors was evaluated to confirm the presence of hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, and wetland hydrology. Global Positioning System (GPS) survey points were taken at key locations along the outer limits of the wetland areas.

4.11.1.1 Wetlands

Impacts to wetlands, for each proposed alternative, were calculated electronically using ESRI ArcView software by overlaying the GPS wetland delineations with the preliminary design plans showing ROW limits. The wetland encroachment/impact acreage was calculated for each site based upon the portion of the site location within the proposed corridors of the alternatives. A total of 108 wetlands were identified in the alternative corridors during the field review. This number was reduced from the 140 wetlands identified by shifting the alignment to avoid wetlands. **Table 4-16** shows the total number of wetland acres identified within the ROW of each alternative. **Figures 4-3A** and **4-3B** show the wetland locations within each alternative.

Table 4-16
Jurisdictional Wetlands within the Alternatives

Alternatives	Wetland Acres
Southern Section Western	122
Preferred Alternative – Central	18
Eastern	63
SR 8 Alternative B (Widening)	2
Alternative C (Bypass)	1
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)	2
Middle Section Preferred (Only) Alternative	20
Northern Section Western	61
Preferred Alternative – Central	28
Eastern	32
Total for Project (Preferred Alternative)	68

Note: Wetland impacts in this table are based on the original Central Alternative prior to alignment shifts
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2004; 2008.

Temporary impacts to wetland resources may occur as a result of construction access within the project corridor. Methods of access to each wetland will be determined on an individual basis during the final design and construction phases. Impacts to wetlands will be avoided to the greatest extent possible by using BMPs for road and bridge construction.

Wetland Assessment of the Preferred Alternative

Additional field assessment of the wetland impacts within the ROW limits of the Preferred Alternative was conducted in September and October 2005. This assessment included verification of the initial wetland work completed in 2003 as well as gathering additional data regarding wetland quality. Some minor shifts of the Preferred Alternative had occurred since the previous wetland delineation in April and May 2003 which changed the impact numbers given in **Table 4-16** for the Preferred Alternative.

The total number of wetlands and impact acreages were revised based on the additional field work in the fall of 2005. There are fifty-two wetlands totaling 107.11 acres located within the ROW limits of the Preferred Alternative. Wetlands were characterized as jurisdictional or isolated. Jurisdictional wetlands are wetlands that are hydrologically connected or adjacent to waters of the U.S. The USACE will make the final determination of jurisdictional status of each wetland during permitting. A jurisdictional determination by the USACE has not been completed for the Preferred Alternative. Isolated wetlands are wetlands that are not hydrologically connected to Waters of the U.S. and therefore, the USACE does not have jurisdiction. Forty-eight wetlands totaling 105.89 acres are jurisdictional with four wetlands totaling 1.12 acres being isolated. Wetland quality was also evaluated on the wetlands located in the Preferred Alternative. **Table 4-17** shows the total wetland acres impacted along with the quality of the wetland habitat.

Table 4-17
Wetland Impacts for the Preferred Alternative

Wetland Quality	Number of Wetlands	Jurisdictional Acres	Isolated Acres	Total Acres[1]
High	30	84.27 (30)	0 (0)	84.27
Medium	18	20.50 (15)	0.93 (3)	21.43
Low	4	1.12 (3)	0.19 (1)	1.31
Total	52	105.89 (48)	1.12 (4)	107.11

[1]Estimate does not distinguish potential differences between SR 8 Widening (Alternative B) and Preferred Alternative (Alternative D); relative values are anticipated to be similar based on analyses previously conducted.
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2005; 2008.

Wetland quality was assessed based on a number of factors which included overall wetland size, vegetation type, landscape position, hydrology source, wildlife habitat (including connectivity to adjacent habitat), and the extent of wetland alteration. Wetlands that were small in size and not part of a larger system were considered lower quality while higher quality wetlands were large and/or part of a larger system. Wetland vegetation that provided for a diversity of habitat and food source were considered higher quality than wetlands that contained little vegetation/habitat diversity. Wetland landscape position was also considered from a water quality benefit as well as a habitat benefit. Wetland areas that receive agricultural runoff and contribute to pollutant removal were considered higher quality than wetland systems that did not provide high water quality benefits. In addition, wetlands that were part of a riparian area were considered higher value. Hydrology source was also assessed due to potential flood attenuation and water quality benefits. Potential wildlife habitat including connectivity to terrestrial as well as aquatic communities was also considered. Wetland areas that provided transition zones between terrestrial and aquatic communities were considered to have a higher value.

Due to the "extensive" wetland/landscape alterations that have occurred in the delta, all wetland areas within the Preferred Alternative have been altered or affected by human activity. The type of human alteration includes ditches, clear cutting, and habitat alternations. Wetlands with little evidence of alteration were considered higher quality. A technical memorandum summarizing the wetland assessment of the Preferred Alternative, including a qualitative assessment data form of each wetland area, is available from MDOT upon request.

4.11.1.2 Streams

Land clearing activities during construction may result in temporary impacts to the water quality of streams, open waters, and wetland habitats. These activities may increase surface water runoff and erosion, causing short-term increases in turbidity and sedimentation. To minimize these impacts, a sediment and erosion control plan consisting of BMPs will be developed for the Preferred Alternative. Methods to limit erosion and water quality impacts will include the use of berms, mats, silt screens, hay bales, sediment basins, and revegetation.

Table 4-18 shows the numbers of perennial stream crossings and impact length**s** within the ROW of each alternative. Stream impacts were approximated using ArcView and MARIS data.

Table 4-18 Perennial Stream Crossings within the Alternatives		
Alternatives	**Number Perennial Stream Crossings**	**Linear Feet**
Southern Section Western	12	7,300
Preferred Alternative – Central	10	5,165
Eastern	14	9,880
SR 8 Alternative B (Widening)	5	570
Alternative C (Bypass)	5	570
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)	5	570
Middle Section Preferred (Only) Alternative	4	3,240
Northern Section Western	13	3,775
Preferred Alternative – Central	13	3,970
Eastern	8	3,585
Total for Project (Preferred Alternative)	27-36	12,560-17,660

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2004; 2008.
Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2004.

Intermittent stream crossings would also occur with any of the build alternatives. Impacts to intermittent streams by the Preferred Alternative have been determined based on more detailed studies and field verification conducted in October 2005.

Stream Assessment of the Preferred Alternative

A detailed stream assessment of the Preferred Alternative was conducted during September and October 2005 of all potential jurisdictional drainage features. Potential features were located on aerial photography in conjunction with MARIS data. Each identified feature was assessed in the field and channel characteristics were recorded. Data for 90 channels was recorded during the field assessment. **Table 4-19** shows a total of 93 channel features due to three channels crossing the alignment in two different locations.

Data collected during the field assessment included channel dimensions, geomorphic characteristics, riparian buffer characteristics, wildlife use, and overall quality. Channel dimension data included channel width, channel depth, water depth, wetted width, water clarity, and flow presence. Geomorphic characteristics included presence of a continuous bed and bank, persistent pools, and the presence of riffle-pool/ ripple-pool complexes. Riparian buffer characteristics included presence of a vegetative buffer, species composition of the buffer, and

buffer width. Wildlife use included the presence of fish and evidence of wildlife use. Overall quality was a subjective classification determined by best professional judgment based on overall condition and functionality of the channel. A technical memorandum summarizing the channel assessment for the Preferred Alternative, including qualitative data forms for each channel, is available from MDOT upon request. **Table 4-19** summarizes the results of the channel assessments along the Preferred Alternative.

Table 4-19
Channel Impacts for the Preferred Alternative

Channel Quality	Number of Channels	Mitigatable Channel Length (Linear Feet)	Total Linear Feet of Jurisdictional Channel
High	22	6,405	9,929
Medium	42	7,103	24,408
Low	29	7,211	23,402
Total	93 (90)	20,719	57,739
* The Vicksburg District USACE currently requires mitigation for perennial stream channels as indicated on USGS topographic mapping.			

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2007.

Channels crossing the Preferred Alternative have been impacted by human activity. It appears that most of the channel impacts were made to facilitate drainage for agriculture. The majority of the channels only had a narrow, fringe of herbaceous riparian vegetation. Smaller channels appeared to have been channelized and straighten. These smaller channels contained minimal aquatic habitat. The larger channels tended to have a floodplain along with riparian vegetation and contained better aquatic habitat. The larger drainage features will likely be bridged due their size and associated floodplain.

Proposed stream crossings include pipes, box culverts, and bridges. Adherence to design and construction techniques and implementation of temporary erosion control methods will aid in reducing potential stream impacts.

4.11.2 Wetland and Stream Mitigation

In accordance with Executive Order 11990, this project has been designed to avoid new construction in wetlands and open waters (streams) to the extent possible and use all practical measures to minimize impacts to wetlands and open waters. Measures were taken in the initial planning of this highway project to minimize probable impacts through route location

(avoidance), design (such as the use of bridge crossings instead of fill embankment), and construction practices.

Construction activities that minimize impacts to wetlands and open water (stream) habitat include minimizing the clearing of the construction area, reducing the amount of fill placement, implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs,) and establishing an erosion and sedimentation control plan. Protective measures will be used to minimize the impacts to public water supplies, wetlands, and high quality aquatic habitats by minimizing the number of stream crossings, wetland impacts, and where roads lie close to streams and wetlands and maximizing the distance from roads to streams and wetlands.

The USACE has adopted, through the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), a mitigation policy which embraces the concepts of "no net loss of wetlands" and project sequencing. The purpose of this policy is to restore and maintain the chemical, biological, and physical integrity of "Waters of the United States," specifically wetlands. Mitigation of wetland impacts has been defined by the CEQ to include: avoidance of impacts (to wetlands), minimizing impacts, rectifying impacts, reducing impacts over time, and compensating for impacts (40 CFR 1508.20). Each of these aspects (avoidance, minimization, and compensatory mitigation) must be considered in sequential order.

Avoidance mitigation examines all appropriate and practicable possibilities of averting impacts to "Waters of the United States." According to a 1990 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the EPA and the USACE, in determining "appropriate and practicable" measures to offset unavoidable impacts, such measures should be appropriate to the scope and degree of those impacts and practicable in terms of cost, existing technology, and logistics in light of overall project purposes. Some unavoidable impacts to wetlands and surface waters may result from project construction.

Wetlands were avoided during the initial selection process by avoiding areas with large wetlands. After the initial corridors were located, the alternatives were further refined to avoid wetlands within the corridors. In areas where wetlands are unavoidable, measures were taken to lessen the impact, including shifting the alignment to take the edges of wetland areas rather than the main portion and to impact smaller rather than larger wetlands.

Minimization includes the examination of appropriate and practicable steps to reduce the adverse impacts to "Waters of the United States." Implementation of these steps will be required through project modifications and permit conditions. Minimization typically focuses on decreasing the footprint of the proposed project through the reduction of median widths, ROW widths, fill slopes, and/or road shoulder widths. The following methods are suggested to minimize adverse impacts to "Waters of the United States":

- Strictly enforce Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control sedimentation during project construction.
- Clearing and grubbing activity should be minimized.
- Reestablishment of vegetation on exposed areas with judicious pesticides and herbicide management.
- Minimization of "in-stream" activity.
- Minimization of roadway footprint width.
- Bridge lengthening in environmentally sensitive areas.

Compensatory mitigation is not normally considered until anticipated impacts to "Waters of United States" have been avoided and minimized to the maximum extent possible. It is recognized that "no net loss of wetlands" functions and values may not be achieved in each and every permit action. Appropriate and practicable compensatory mitigation is required for unavoidable adverse impacts that remain after all appropriate and practicable minimization has been required. Compensatory actions often include restoration, creation, and enhancement of "Waters of the United States," specifically wetlands. Such actions should be undertaken in areas adjacent to or contiguous to the discharge site.

Mitigation will be required for unavoidable impacts within the Preferred Alternative. The USACE requires compensatory mitigation for the replacement of aquatic resource functions unavoidably lost or adversely affected by the project (USACE, RGL 02-**2**). Watershed and ecosystem approaches are recommended when determining compensatory mitigation requirements, which often include a mix of habitats such as open water, wetlands, and adjacent uplands which often provide a greater variety of ecological functions. The determination of the level of mitigation deemed "appropriate" to offset environmental losses resulting from authorized activities is based on the aquatic functions lost or adversely affected. Mitigation strategies that focus on the replacement of the functions provided by wetlands, rather than only calculations of acreage impacted or restored, often provide a more accurate and effective method of

environmental function. The USACE may require on-site, off-site, or a combination of both on-site and off-site mitigation to maintain wetland functional levels within watersheds depending on which options provide greater watershed benefit and ecological importance to the region of impact.

MDOT has conducted mitigation site searches for potential wetland restoration and enhancement areas. As recommended by the National Research Council, mitigation site selection should consider sites that are and will continue to be resistant to disturbances from the surrounding landscape, such as preserving large buffers with connectivity to other wetlands. It is also recommended, when possible, to locate mitigation sites to take advantage of refuges, buffers, green spaces, and other preserved elements of the landscape (National Research Council, June 2001). The areas adjacent to Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) have been reviewed to determine their potential as mitigation sites. Currently, the 9,548-acre area, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), consists of bottomland hardwoods, agricultural fields, fallow fields, and shrub swamps. Dahomey NWR is the only remaining significant tract of woodland in the Mississippi Delta north of U.S. Highway 82. The USFWS goal is to expand Dahomey NWR in Bolivar County by the acquisition of 12,000 acres west of the existing refuge. This expansion would link Dahomey NWR to the Mississippi River batture woodlands located within the floodplain of the Mississippi River. The linkage would provide expanded habitat and protection for the black bear (*Ursus americanus*) which are currently facing high mortality rates along roads between the refuge and the river. In addition, the expanded refuge would provide and increased woodland block size critical for interior sensitive species such as neotropical birds.

As part of the evaluation of potential mitigation sites, GIS layers were obtained from the MARIS, the USFWS, the EPA, and Ducks Unlimited (DU). Layers obtained during this evaluation included the following:

- USGS digital maps (MARIS)
- Aerial photography (MARIS)
- 10-meter Digital Elevation Model (DEM) (MARIS)
- Hydrologic layers (streams and lakes) (MARIS)
- Refuge and wildlife management area boundaries (MARIS, UFSWS)
- Land use/land cover (EPA)
- EPA Delta Framework (EPA)
- Parcel boundaries (Digital estimation of 2001 paper boundaries)
- Existing conservation easements (DU, USFWS)

GIS data layers were evaluated in order to select areas likely to contain potential wetlands or stream restoration sites. Field site selection was based on the following criteria:

- Links identified in the EPA Delta Framework
- Large parcels of land (greater than 50 acres) located in topographically low areas
- Parcels adjacent to a topographic low area exhibiting relict topography
- Potential stream sites identified on USGS digital maps

Field evaluations of the Dahomey expansion area took place the week of March 18th and 25th, 2002. Existing wetlands identified during the GIS analysis were visited for a comparison of vegetation and soils types since a majority of the Dahomey expansion area has been converted to farmland. Based upon an evaluation of hydrology and soils, seven sites were identified as having wetland mitigation potential. A site evaluation report for each site detailing the mitigation potential of each tract was provided to MDOT (*Preliminary I-69 Wetland/Stream Mitigation Assessment and Site Search, Dahomey NWR Expansion Area*, July 2002). Each site or combination of sites presents opportunities for wetland restoration, enhancement, and possibly preservation, as well as upland buffers which could add to the protection and management of the area as well as refuge expansion. MDOT has prioritized the seven potential mitigation sites and is in the process of contacting the identified property owners to determine their willingness to negotiate either selling their land to MDOT or have MDOT purchase a permanent conservation easement on their property.

Another mitigation option MDOT is evaluating for mitigation potential for the I-69 project are two existing wetland mitigation bank sites comprising 280 acres located in Quitman County within and immediately adjacent to the O'Keefe Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The O'Keefe WMA covers approximately 5,919 acres and consists of bottomland hardwoods, agricultural fields, and fallow fields. In 2002, MDOT developed a wetland mitigation plan consisting of 1) the reforestation of 100 acres of agricultural land, 2) creation of 47 acres of moist soil units, and 3) creation of 25 acres of wildlife openings (*Preliminary I-69 Wetland/Stream Mitigation Assessment and Site Search, O'Keefe WMA*, July 2002).

In addition, MDOT established a wetland mitigation bank in 1997 in Tallahatchie County. The mitigation bank originally had 1,656 wetland mitigation credits and has up to 1,000 credits remaining. MDOT is also actively negotiating with property owners, state and federal regulatory

and resource agencies, and private conservation groups to acquire three or more stream restoration banks in Panola, Lowndes, Jackson, George, and Hancock Counties. MDOT's ultimate goal is to acquire stream restoration banks within each watershed of the state.

Once wetland and stream impacts and specific mitigation requirements are determined, MDOT, with guidance from the regulatory agencies, will pursue the acquisition of one or more of the Dahomey NWR expansion parcels and develop a mitigation plan which will replace the aquatic functions impacted by the I-69 project, or will fulfill mitigation requirements utilizing the existing O'Keefe Wildlife Management Area or the Tallahatchie Wildlife Refuge.

4.11.3 Permitting

Impacts to "Waters of the United States" come under the jurisdiction of the USACE. Permits will be required for highway encroachment into jurisdictional wetlands and streams. A final permitting strategy cannot be developed until a final design alternative is completed. Final determination of permit applicability lies with USACE. MDOT will coordinate with the USACE after the completion of final design to obtain the necessary permits. Impacted streams will be mitigated as part of the 404/401 permit process.

4.12 Floodplains

As discussed in Chapter 3, the study area is relatively flat with a levee protecting the land adjacent to the Mississippi River from flooding. Most of the land between the Mississippi River and the levees is in the 100-year floodplain. Other floodplain areas within the study area are primarily in southern Bolivar County and along streams and existing or former oxbow lakes.

All alternatives would encroach on a portion of the 100-year floodplain. GIS was used to calculate acres of impact to the 100-year floodplain. Flood Insurance Rate Maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency were digitized for portions of the study area that did not have Q3 digital floodplain data available. Impacts were then quantified by comparing the areas of floodplain and the areas of proposed ROW for the alternatives. The Southern Section of the study area would have the most floodplain impacts. During development of the alternatives,

perpendicular crossings of the streams were located where practicable. **Table 4-20** documents floodplain impacts by section within the study area.

Table 4-20
Floodplain Impacts

Alternative	Acres	Linear Feet
Southern Section		
Western	1,103	112,786
Preferred Alternative – Central	1,002	105,428
Eastern	847	89,119
SR 8		
Alternative B (Widening)	25	6,406
Alternative C (Bypass)	22	3,194
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)[2]	25	6,406
Middle Section		
Preferred (Only) Alternative	88	8,998
Northern Section		
Western	162	16,565
Preferred Alternative – Central	567	57,978
Eastern	334	34,153
Total for Project (Preferred Alternative)	1,682	178,810

[1] The 100-year floodplain consists of area in Zone A on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps and Q3 data.
[2] Alternative D (Preferred Alternative) impacts estimated based on previous analysis.
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2005, 2006; 2008.

Construction of new roadway embankments across floodplains may increase the flood elevation and the potential for property damage upstream of the roadway if not properly designed. To minimize potential flooding, the design of drainage structures will consider upstream/ headwater elevations and flood studies will be performed as required. Flood studies will be utilized for the design of bridges, pipes, and box culverts in accordance with FHWA floodplain impact requirements.

Floodplain crossings will be as close to 90 degrees as practical to minimize floodplain encroachments. The dimensions of the drainage structures and the roadway grades will be adjusted and designed to limit increases to the flood hazards in the project area. In addition, methods to minimize harm will include minimizing fill and grading requirements, preserving the free natural drainage wherever possible, maintaining vegetation buffers, controlling urban runoff, and minimizing erosion and sedimentation during construction.

The greatest impact to floodplains would be in the Southern Section. The Western Alternative would impact the greatest amount (1,103 acres) of floodplain, whereas the Eastern Alternative in

the Southern Section would only impact 847 acres of floodplain, while the Preferred Alternative would impact 1,002 acres. In the Northern Section, the Western Alternative has fewer floodplain impacts (162 acres) than the Eastern Alternative (334 acres) or the Preferred Alternative (567 acres).

4.13 Wild and Scenic Rivers

There are no rivers in the study area that are listed on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory. There are no rivers that are potential candidates for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Based on information obtained from the National Park Service, none of the proposed alternatives including the Preferred Alternative would impact a Wild and Scenic River.

4.14 Coastal Barriers and Coastal Zones

There are no coastal barriers or coastal zones in the study area. Therefore, none of the proposed alternatives including the Preferred Alternative would impact any coastal barrier or coastal zone resources. No further analysis or mitigation is necessary.

4.15 Vegetation and Wildlife

Portions of the project that would involve construction on new ROW and would impact terrestrial and aquatic natural communities directly through ROW acquisition and indirectly through habitat fragmentation and habitat modification. Indirect impacts relate to the reduction in size of residual blocks and the resulting modification of habitat caused by this fragmentation. Species with narrowly defined habitat requirements are often displaced, while other species adapt and continue to maintain breeding populations.

4.15.1 Effects on Vegetative Communities

Vegetative (plant) communities and their associated wildlife in the project area are described in Section 3.15.1 of this report. The plant communities within the project area include bottomland

hardwood forest communities, agricultural lands, urban/disturbed lands, and open water. Impacts to plant communities would consist largely of community modification resulting from clearing, filling, paving, and creation of borrow area. **Figure 3-2** shows the general distribution of plant communities. Forested areas shown include deciduous, mixed pine/hardwood, evergreen, and riparian forest communities/land use cover. **Table 4-21** shows the various land uses within each of the alternatives.

Agricultural areas comprise the largest portion of the project area. In general, forest communities, including deciduous, mixed pine/hardwood, evergreen, and riparian forests, have been the least disturbed and provide important foraging and nesting habitat for a variety of wildlife species. Therefore, greater biological diversity may be expected to occur in these areas.

The degree of impact on vegetation is dependent on the extent of the construction area. While the complete removal of vegetation within these limits may not be necessary, the limits of construction will be posted and enforced to minimize impacts. Long-term impacts to vegetation from highway runoff will be minimized by using retention/detention basins and grassed swales in the construction design. Detention and retention ponds for stormwater run-off will be considered for locations where they would achieve a measurable difference in water quality, function without mechanical components, and require reasonable maintenance. Additionally, for existing bridges that require modifications, considerations will be given for eliminating the use of scuppers. Scuppers will not be used in new bridges except where they are the only practical way to safely handle the drainage.

The natural vegetation would be impacted primarily by activities involved in preparing the ROW for construction. The vegetation is often windrowed and disposed of on site. Natural vegetation may be further impacted by loss of topsoil and soil compaction from construction equipment. Construction limits will be posted and enforced to minimize impacts to vegetation and wildlife. Exposed surfaces will be promptly re-vegetated during construction.

Table 4-21
Land Use Cover (Acres)

Alternative	High Density Urban	Low Density Urban	Transportation	Cropland	Pasture/ Grassland	Upland Scrub/ Shrub	Freshwater	Aqua-Culture	Farmed Wetland	Freshwater Scrub/ Shrub	Riverine Swamp	Bottom Hard-Wood Forest
Southern Section Western	0	0	25	4,052	124	20	30	16	2	8	9	182
Preferred Alternative – Central	0	3	32	4,000	116	2	43	8	17	1	16	101
Eastern	0	0	25	3,949	155	7	27	19	13	2	1	109
SR 8 Alternative B **(**Widening)	6	1	0	411	67	23	1	0	0	2	0	31
Alternative C (Bypass)	6	1	0	420	70	19	1	0	2	3	0	34
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)[1]	3	1	0	405	62	16	1	0	0	2	0	31
Middle Section Preferred (Only) Alternative	0	0	223	988	35	4	2	0	0	0	0	1
Northern Section Western	0	0	0	2,571	32	0	4	0	0	2	0	29
Preferred Alternative – Central	0	0	0	2,499	75	0	4	0	0	2	0	15
Eastern	0	0	0	2,356	74	0	4	0	10	1	2	15
Total for Project (Preferred Alternative)	3	4	255	7,892	288	29	50	8	17	5	16	148

[1]Alternative D impacts estimated based on previous analysis.

Source: Mississippi Automated Resource Information System (MARIS) GIS data. Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2003-2008.

4.15.2 Habitat Fragmentation

Habitat fragmentation occurs when parcels of otherwise suitable habitat are isolated and rendered less suitable for wildlife, adversely affecting faunal diversity and richness. The degree of impact on wildlife and species diversity depends on the size and isolation of the parcels being fragmented and sensitivity of the species.

The construction of large transportation projects typically result in habitat fragmentation. Habitat fragmentation reduces the amount of habitat available to wildlife in the landscape and thereby diminishes population sizes and the number of species that can live in the landscape. There is a reduced quantity of the original habitat and an increase in "edge" habitat. The remaining small patches may cause increased predation, increased vulnerability, increased insularity (separation from other populations), and decreased dispersal success.

Neotropical birds are a wildlife group that is particularly vulnerable to habitat fragmentation. Neotropical migratory birds winter in southern climates and either migrate or nest in the temperate mid-latitudes. These birds include such species groups as swallows, cuckoos, flycatchers, thrushes, orioles, and warblers. Migratory species use forested areas for feeding and nesting. Habitat requirements for nesting birds vary from upland deciduous forest tracts to riparian areas. In addition, these species require contiguous forest ranges up to twice the size of their nesting habitat. Some species require as much as 500 acres in which to forage. Several neotropical migratory birds are known to visit the project area including the prothonaotary warbler (*Pronataria citrea*), wood thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), red-eyed vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), and northern oriole (*Icterus galbula*).

Alternatives that do not follow existing roadways have the greatest potential for habitat fragmentation because the proposed roadway divides the deciduous forest between the existing road and the proposed road. The greatest fragmentation areas are in the bottomland forested communities. Impacts to habitat fragmentation would, therefore, be the same as impacts to forested communities as identified in Section 4.15.1. The Western Alternative would have the greatest impact on habitat fragmentation for both the Southern and Northern Sections of the project. The Preferred Alternative and Eastern Alternative would have similar impacts within the Southern and Northern Sections.

Mitigation for habitat fragmentation is best accomplished by avoiding suitable habitat areas. Where practical, avoidance was included in the alternative development strategy. In areas where habitat fragmentation is unavoidable, measures to reduce the impact of the loss contiguity may be employed. These measures could include, but not be limited to:

- Purchasing additional ROW within forested areas.
- Purchasing adjacent forested upland habitat in conjunction with land selected for wetland mitigation to be managed for conservation.
- Establishing a nonvegetated clear zone which isolates the edge of the highway from the habitat area. This zone, if established within the highway influence zone, will not lead to any further reduction of available habitat.
- Purchasing additional forested land in areas for habitat where access to a property will be lost.
- Purchasing land for habitat conservation.

4.15.3 Effects on Wildlife

Loss of wildlife is an unavoidable aspect of development. Habitat modification would occur with any of the proposed alternatives and would result in the displacement or loss of wildlife in these areas due to clearing of vegetation within the ROW. Temporary fluctuations in populations of animal species that utilize these natural communities are anticipated during the course of construction. Slow-moving, burrowing, and/or subterranean organisms would be directly impacted by construction activities, while mobile organisms would be displaced to adjacent communities. Competitive forces in the adapted communities would result in a redefinition of population equilibrium. Human activities and elevated noise levels during construction also may disturb breeding or other activities of nearby species. However, impacts from construction activity would be temporary and only within the immediate vicinity of the project construction area.

Direct loss of wildlife and further habitat destruction outside the immediate construction may occur. This could result from equipment and construction crew trafficking, erosion, siltation, spillage and dispersion of fuels, lubricants, and other toxicants and wildlife disturbance through generation of noise, dust, and air pollutions. Destruction of habitat also could occur at borrow, fill, and other areas peripheral to the project.

During design and construction, BMPs will be incorporated to reduce impacts to the vegetation and associated wildlife. Oil, grease, fugitive dust, and other pollutants will be minimized by such measures as watering of haul roads, ramps, and pits during dry periods; application of asphalt emulation to road surfaces; traffic control; and timely re-vegetation and stabilization of disturbed areas. In addition, segmentation of large forested tracts will be avoided to the extent possible.

In general, forested communities that are less disturbed provide greater habitat value for wildlife than highly altered or maintained areas. The Preferred Alternative traverses an area characterized by fragmented, altered forested stands. Wildlife crossings were considered in the initial analysis of the alternatives and would have been beneficial in areas near the batture woodlands including the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. These wildlife crossings would have provided a forested connection to the batture woodlands with large forested tracts like Dahomey. Because the alignment avoids large forested tracts, the Preferred Alternative does not have large connected forested areas that allow for a travel corridor to direct wildlife crossing. The landscape along the Preferred Alternative contains forested islands with no direct connection. Potential wildlife crossing will exist along the Preferred Alternative where bridges will be constructed over riparian areas associated with large drainage ways which will provide some means of passage for wildlife. In particular, the Preferred Alternative crosses through three areas identified by NRCS as priorities for black bear conservation. In the vicinity of the conservation zones, the Preferred Alternative already is planned to include extended bridge crossings that would maintain adequate access for black bears and other wildlife along the drainage ways. If feasible, other wildlife crossings will be incorporated during final design, in coordination with USFWS and state agencies.

4.15.4 Effects on Fisheries/Aquatic Habitats

Aquatic habitat is important to the maintenance of diverse macro benthic invertebrate populations. They contribute to secondary production and maintain complex trophic interactions. These invertebrate populations support game fisheries which include largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmonides*), bream (*Lepomis* spp.), and catfish (*Ameiurus* spp. and *Ictalurus* spp.).

The primary sources of water-quality degradation in rural areas are non-point-source discharges and stormwater runoff. Precautions should be taken to minimize impacts to water sources in the project vicinity. Aquatic organisms are very sensitive to discharges and inputs from construction.

Appropriate measures must be taken to avoid petroleum spillage and control runoff. Potential impacts associated with construction of the proposed project include the following: increased sedimentation resulting from the clearing of streams and in-stream construction activities, soil compaction, loss of shading due to vegetation removal, and fertilizers and pesticides used in revegetation. Measures to minimize these potential impacts include formulation of an erosion and sedimentation control plan, provision for waste material and storage, stormwater management measures, and appropriate road-maintenance measures. BMPs and Sedimentation Control guidelines should be strictly enforced during the construction stages of the project. Limiting in-stream activities and revegetating stream banks immediately following the completion of grading would further reduce impacts.

Aquatic organisms are acutely sensitive to changes in their environment and environmental impacts from construction activities may result in long-term or irreversible effects. Impacts typically associated with in-stream construction activities include alterations to the substrate and impacts to adjacent streamside vegetation. Such disturbances within the substrate lead to increased siltation, which can clog the gills and/or feeding mechanisms of benthic organisms, fish, and amphibian species. Siltation may also cover benthic macroinvertebrates with excessive amounts of sediment that inhibit their ability to obtain oxygen. In order to facilitate wildlife movement and migration that might otherwise be potentially impacted by the project, installation of culverts will include inverted designs.

The removal of streamside vegetation and placement of fill material during construction enhances erosion and possible sedimentation. Quick revegetation of these areas helps to reduce the impacts by supporting the underlying soils. Erosion and sedimentation may carry soils, toxic compounds, trash, and other materials into the aquatic communities at the construction site. As a result, bars may form at and downstream of the site. Increased light penetration from the removal of streamside vegetation may increase water temperatures. Warmer water contains less oxygen, thus reducing aquatic life that depends on high oxygen concentrations. These impacts will be minimized through the use of approved erosion and sedimentation control structures, phasing construction activities, and the prompt revegetation of exposed surfaces.

4.15.5 Effects on Threatened or Endangered Species

Federally listed threatened and endangered species were compiled from information provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The protected species that were determined to potentially exist in the study area include the pondberry and bald eagle. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Bald Eagle is no longer considered endangered but receives protection under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act) (16 U.S.C. 668-668d) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Under provisions of the ESA, bald eagle populations will continue to be monitored at least until 2012. Qualified biologists conducted field surveys for pondberry and bald eagle in September and October 2005 within and adjacent to the ROW of the Preferred Alternative.

Two reference populations of pondberry which are located in the Delta National Forest were observed to confirm the condition of the plants in the field prior to the survey for pondberry along the Preferred Alternative. The leaves of the pondberry were beginning to change color. One population of pondberry was located along the Preferred Alternative in Coahoma County south of the Tunica County line and west of the town of Rich (**Figure 4-4**). A shift in the Preferred Alternative alignment was made to avoid the population of pondberry. The new shifted location was also surveyed for pondberry. No additional pondberry populations were found within the ROW of the shift of the Preferred Alternative. For the protection of all Federally Listed Species, consultation with the USFWS and the Mississippi Natural Heritage Program will occur prior to construction.

Suitable foraging and limited nesting habitat for the bald eagle exists within a portion of the Preferred Alternative. No eagle nests or individual eagles were observed during field surveys. Eagles are more likely to utilize the larger water bodies near the Mississippi and oxbow lakes for nesting habitat. Eagles could potentially use areas along the Preferred Alternative for foraging habitat. A biological conclusion of no effect for the bald eagle is appropriate due to the limited amount of suitable nesting habitat and the large areas adjacent to the Preferred Alternative for foraging habitat.

"Critical habitat," as defined in the Endangered Species Act (ESA), is a term for habitat given special protection for the benefit of a listed species. Critical habitat, as defined by the USFWS, is not designated for any species listed in Tunica, Bolivar, Coahoma, and Sunflower Counties. In addition, according to Mississippi's Natural Heritage Program database, no federally listed

threatened, endangered, or species of concern listed by the USFWS have been documented within a 1-mile radius of the proposed alternatives.

MDOT has been conducting informal discussions with USFWS throughout the development of this project. Based on these informal discussions, formal Section 7 consultation with USFWS is not anticipated. A "No Effect" determination for all Federally protected species within the project study area has been determined.

4.16 Conservation Easements

Mapping information for conservation easement types was obtained from the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMVJV) in May 2002. The LMVJV, located in Vicksburg, Mississippi, is a private, state, and federal bird conservation partnership conceived in 1988 in response to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP). The LMVJV was established as a voluntary, non-regulatory partnership focused on increasing coordination of waterfowl and wetland habitat conservation in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley (MAV). Part of its mission has included the development of Geographical Information System (GIS) decision support models and mapping.

In addition to the Conservation Easements, Conservation Agreements are used to aid in the preservation of wildlife. These agreements, which unlike easements are not permanent contracts, include various tax benefits, last typically 10 to 15 years, and usually provide habitat for wildlife.

GIS mapping information obtained from the LMVJV in May 2002 was used to identify available Conservation Easements and Agreements relative to the alignments. Alignments were adjusted throughout the development of alternatives to avoid the permanent easements and to minimize impacts to other easement and agreement areas through perimeter contact only. The number of individual sites impacted is included in **Table 4-22** from information obtained from the LMVJV.

Based upon discussion with USFWS personnel regarding the potential ROW acquisition within conservation easements, there seem to be few precedents. However, the purchase of easements will likely involve payment to the landowner based on a percentage of the Fair Market Value (FMV). The future FMV will likely be reduced due to the placement of restrictions from the

easement (e.g., no farming, grazing, haying, etc.) and the mitigation for the lost value, function, and restoration. Conservation Agreements are short-term, "at the table" deals that involve annual payments to the property owner and may be dissolved under a ROW acquisition. Agreements will involve payment to the landowner based on the FMV, which will not be affected due to the temporary conditions.

Table 4-22
Conservation Area Impacts

Alternate/Easement	Wetland Reserve Program Easement	Farm Service Agency Easement	Ducks Unlimited Easement	Conservation Agreements
Southern Section				
Western	1	2	0	8
Preferred Alternative – Central	0	0	0	6
Eastern	1	0	0	10
SR 8				
Alternative B (Widening)	0	0	0	5
Alternative C (Bypass)	0	0	0	5
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)				5
Middle Section				
Preferred (Only) Alternative	0	0	0	0
Northern Section				
Western	0	0	0	4
Preferred Alternative – Central	0	0	0	6
Eastern	0	0	0	11
Total for Project (Preferred Alternative)	0	0	0	17

Conservation Agreements – Include private water management units associated with DU or USFWS agreements.

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2004.

Additional coordination and research were conducted to further confirm potential impacts of the Preferred Alternative on conservation areas. As detailed in **Appendix B**, coordination efforts in 2007 and 2008 included the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMVJV), USFWS, and USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). No additional WRPs or DU easements were identified. While no known FSA easements were identified, easements under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) do occur within Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties. The FSA was unable to provide data or personnel to confirm specific locations. However, the FSA did confirm that involuntary loss of the property through project acquisition or eminent domain would enable termination of the CRP contract with no penalties to the participants.

The research also determined that a total of 18 conservation agreements were located within the proposed I-69 and SR 8 Widening ROW, updating the previous estimate of 17 shown in **Table 4-22**. Of those locations, 14 were private Water Management Units (WMUs) through Ducks Unlimited and four were WMUs approved in 1991 and 2000 by USFWS. The USFWS program for WMUs is no longer in existence, and the 10- to 15-year contracts all have expired or would expire before construction of SIU 11 would be complete.

4.17 Cultural Resources

The initial phase of this study involved the collection of the available data on archaeological sites and historic structures in the study corridor from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. These data were added to the project GIS and used by project planners to avoid as many of these resources as possible. Once alternative alignments for the highway had been selected, Phase I cultural resources surveys were conducted within each of these alignments. Due to the length of the alternatives it was not possible to survey each in its entirety. Instead a sampling strategy was proposed and submitted to the Mississippi State Historic Preservation Officer for approval. This strategy involved conducting sample surveys of high probability areas for cultural resources that accounted for approximately 33 percent of each alternative. Once approved, this strategy was implemented, and the data presented here are derived from those surveys. The cultural resource surveys (Coastal Environment, Incorporated, 2004-2007) are appended by reference and remain on file at MDOT and the Department of Archives and History.

4.17.1 Archaeological Sites

4.17.1.1 Methodology

The archaeological survey examined high probability areas that were defined on the basis of landforms and known site distributions in the project corridor. Landforms were identified using the existing geomorphic mapping for the area, USGS topographic maps, and aerial photography. The survey methodology followed the recommendations of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the Mississippi Department of Transportation. On new alignments the survey examined a 450-foot-wide ROW. Where the alignment followed an existing road, a new ROW, 200 feet wide, was surveyed. The ROW required for proposed interchanges was also

examined. Crew members walked transects spaced 30 meters apart down the length of the ROW carefully searching all areas of exposed ground. Shovel or auger tests were excavated in areas where the ground surface was obscured by vegetation or where there was a potential for deeply buried sites.

When a site was located, its limits were defined on the basis of surface examination and the excavation of a series of closely spaced shovel tests. Generally these shovel tests were spaced 10 to 20 meters apart along two perpendicular lines that bisected the site; however, this varied somewhat depending on site size and shape. All sites were recorded using Mississippi Department of Archives and History site cards, sketch maps and photographs.

4.17.1.2 Impacts

The 2004 sample surveys located 217 archaeological sites. After analysis of the survey data, sites that were considered potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places were identified. Whenever possible, project planners then made an effort to shift the proposed alignments in order to avoid as many of those sites as possible. In total 68 sites were avoided in this manner. It must be kept in mind that these data are derived from sample surveys, and therefore, the total number of National Register eligible sites in each alternative will almost certainly be higher. However, it should not be assumed that because the surveys examined 33 percent of the alternatives, only 33 percent of the sites have been located. The surveys concentrated on high probability areas, and therefore have probably recorded the majority of the sites.

After selection of the Preferred Alternative, the remaining portions of that alternative were surveyed, resulting in the location of 66 additional archaeological sites. After analysis of the survey data, 21 of those sites were considered potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. By shifting alignments where practical, all of the 21 sites have been avoided except for Site 22CO852. Including this site and the sites identified previously during the sample surveys, the Preferred Alternative would affect a total of 9 sites. Based on the sample surveys, the Eastern Alternative would affect 9 sites, and the Western Alternative would affect 13.

Table 4-23 provides information on those sites that are listed on or potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and could not be avoided by one of the alternative segments. Some sites are listed more than once as they occur in more than one alternative.

Table 4-23 Listed or Eligible Archaeological Sites Within Right-of-Way				
Alternative	**Site No.**	**Size (ha)**	**Nature of Deposits**	**Age of Occupations**
Southern				
West	22BO507	19.6	Mound, surface scatter, possible midden	Middle-late Woodland, late 19th-early 20th c.
	22CO795	0.8	Surface scatter	Late Woodland
	22CO839	3.2	Surface scatter	Woodland, Mississippi
	22BO915	16.0	Mound, surface scatter	Late Woodland, Mississippi, late 19th-early 20th c.
Preferred Alternative – Central	22BO584	1.9	Surface scatter, possible midden	Unknown prehistoric
	22BO808	0.3	Surface scatter	Late 19th-early 20th c.
	22BO814	0.1	Surface scatter, possible midden	Early Archaic, 19th, 20th c.
	22BO825	0.9	Surface scatter, possible midden	Woodland, late 19th-early 20th c.
	22CO795	0.8	Surface scatter	Late Woodland
	22CO821	22.3	Surface scatter	Late Archaic, Woodland, Mississippi
East	22CO691	2.0	Surface scatter	Archaic
	22CO826	1.0	Surface scatter	Woodland, Mississippi
SR8 Alternative B (Widening)	22BO669	2.1	Surface scatter, possible midden	Late Woodland, Mississippi, late 19th-early 20th c.
Alternative C (Bypass)	22BO669	2.1	Surface scatter, possible midden	Late Woodland, Mississippi, late 19th-early 20th c.
Alternative D (Preferred Alternative)	22BO669	2.1	Surface scatter, possible midden	Late Woodland, Mississippi, late 19th-early 20th c.
Middle Preferred (Only) Alternative	22CO852	2.4	Surface scatter and artifacts below plow zone	Late Woodland.
	22CO731	4.0	Surface scatter, midden	Woodland, Mississippi, late 19th-early 20th c.
Northern				
West	22CO510	Unknown	Mound, surface scatter, cemetery	Woodland, Mississippi, 19th-20th c.
	22CO560	2.9	Surface scatter, midden	Woodland, Mississippi, late 19th-early 20th c.
	22CO683/727	5.4	Surface scatter, possible midden	Woodland, late 19th-early 20th c.
	22CO800	6.0	Surface scatter, possible midden	Woodland, 20th c.
	22TU548	2.0	Surface scatter	Unknown prehistoric
	22TU625	1.3	Surface scatter	Archaic
Preferred Alternative – Central	--	--	--	--
East	22TU561	12.2	Surface scatter	Early-middle Woodland
	22TU653	1.0	Surface scatter, midden	Late Woodland, Mississippi, late 19th-early 20th c.
	22CO832	0.6	Surface scatter	Woodland, mid-late 19th-early 20th c.
	22CO827	1.3	Surface scatter, possible midden	Woodland, Mississippi

Source: Coastal Environments, Incorporated, 2005.

Most of the sites in the Eastern Alternative, like those in the other two alternatives, exhibit evidence of multiple occupations. By far the most common are Woodland tradition occupations, which occur at 8 of the 9 sites. Mississippi period occupations are present at 5 of these sites, and an Archaic period occupation is found at one. Most of these sites are less than 2.5 hectares in area, suggesting that they were occupied by relatively small groups of people. Only one, 22TU561, covers more than 10 hectares. None of the sites within the Eastern Alternative is considered significant enough to warrant preservation in place.

Woodland tradition occupations are also the most numerous in the Preferred Alternative, occurring at 6 of the 9 sites. Three of these sites also exhibit evidence of Mississippi period occupations, and Archaic period occupations are present at two. Four of the prehistoric sites are small, less than 1 hectare in area. Whether these represent small habitation sites, such as hamlets or farmsteads, or some type of limited activity site is not clear from the available data. One historic period house site dating to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century is also represented. None of the sites within the Preferred Alternative is considered significant enough to warrant preservation in place.

Eleven of the 13 sites in the Western Alternative have Woodland tradition occupations, 6 have Mississippi period occupations, and one has an Archaic period occupation. These sites are generally larger than those of the other alternatives. Only two are less than 1 hectare in area, and two cover more than 15 hectares. Three of these sites have mounds and probably represent small villages. Two of the sites, 22BO507 and 22CO510, also have historic period cemeteries on them. The three mound sites should be considered for preservation in place, and the cemeteries on two of them afford them protection under state law. Those three sites may qualify as Section 4(f) properties.

4.17.1.3 Mitigation

Mitigation of the adverse effects of the proposed highway on those archaeological sites that are listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places can in most cases be carried out through data recovery excavations. One of the tools that will be available during the future data recovery is a research project underway by the University of Alabama, titled *Time's River: Archaeological Syntheses in the Yazoo Basin and Lower Mississippi River Valley*. The published report will include inventory and guidelines for addressing gaps in the environmental and

archeological knowledge in the region. Consultation has been carried out with the SHPO and the various THPOs concerning the specific mitigation measures appropriate for each site.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been prepared to cover the mitigation requirements for adverse effects on the archaeological sites by the Preferred Alternative. The MOA was signed by MDOT, SHPO, and FHWA in 2007 (see copy in **Appendix B**). The process involved consultation with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, the Chickasaw Nation, the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma, and the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana. Stipulations include data recovery, reporting, milestones, and continued consultation regarding Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852. In addition, a Data Recovery Plan (DRP) identifies the protocol for the survey and discovery of artifacts. Completion of the data recovery, documentation, and review process will fulfill the mitigation requirements in accordance with Section 106.

Should cultural resources be discovered during construction, all construction activity will cease, and MDOT's Environmental Division will be notified so that the site can be evaluated for the proper action.

4.17.2 Historic Structures

4.17.2.1 Methodology

The standing structure survey focused on areas that on the basis of historic and modern maps appeared to have a high potential for historic structures. In this case the area of potential effects was defined as a corridor that extended one half mile either side of the alignment or one half mile beyond the maximum extent of an interchange. All structures located within that corridor were examined and those that appeared to be greater than 50 years old were documented using Mississippi Department of Archives and History Historic Resources Inventory forms and photographs.

4.17.2.2 Impacts

Table 4-24 provides information on historic structures that are listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and located in the area of potential effects (APE) of one of the alternative segments. The Eastern Alternative APE contains no structures considered eligible

for the National Register of Historic Places, the Western Alternative APE contains a single structure listed on the National Register, and the Preferred Alternative APE contains five structures recommended eligible for the National Register.

Table 4-24
Historic Structures

Alternative	County	Town	Structure No.	Name/Location	Potential Effects
Southern					
West	Bolivar	Benoit	2001	Burrus House (Hollywood Plantation)	Adverse visual effect
Preferred Alternative – Central	Bolivar	rural	4001	Hushpuckena River Bridge	No adverse effect
	Bolivar	Merigold	0001	J.C. Jones House	No adverse effect
		Merigold	0004	Residence	No adverse effect
		Merigold	0005	Methodist Church	No adverse effect
		rural	CEI-57	R.A. Butler Residence on Alligator Lake	No adverse effect
East				None	
SR 8				None	
Middle				None	
Northern				None	

Source: Coastal Environments, Incorporated, 2004.

Three of the five structures located in the Preferred Alternative APE are situated in the town of Merigold in Bolivar County. Two are residences and one is a church, all dating ca. 1920. These structures are located a sufficient distance from the proposed alignment of the Preferred Alternative that they would not be adversely affected physically, audibly or visually by the highway. The fourth structure located along the Preferred Alternative, the R.A. Butler Residence, is a residence dating to ca. 1920 that is situated on Alligator Lake in Coahoma County approximately 1,900 feet from the centerline of existing US 61 (proposed I-69). This structure would not be physically impacted by the proposed highway construction; however, the highway would have a visual effect on it. The proposed interchange is approximately 4,000 feet away from the structure and would not be visible from the front of the house. Therefore, the effect was determined to be not adverse. This residence was not included in the original noise analysis because of its distance from the proposed improvements; however, considering its surrounding development and location, it would be expected that an existing sound level at this location would be approximately 50 dBA. The potential noise contribution from the proposed improvements was

then added (using acoustic addition) to the estimated existing sound level. It was determined that an increase of approximately 1.5 dBA may be expected due to the proposed improvements. This increase would not be detectable to the human ear and is not expected to adversely impact this site.

The fifth structure was identified during a standing structure survey that was conducted within the portion of the APE along the alignment shifts for the Preferred Alternative. That survey examined 31 standing structures, including two previously recorded structures. Only one of the 31 structures, the Hushpuckena River Bridge (011-DUN-4101) was found to be potentially eligible for the NRHP. It is located at the very limit of the APE of the Preferred Alternative and would not be adversely affected.

The Western Alternative APE contains only one historic structure, the Burrus House or Hollywood Plantation, an antebellum residence that is located in Bolivar County and currently listed on the National Register. The proposed alignment of the Western Alternative would have an adverse visual effect on this structure.

4.17.2.3 Mitigation

Some of the listed or eligible structures may be affected visually. These effects may be mitigated through some type of screening, such as plantings. Consultation will be carried out as needed with SHPO and other interested parties concerning the specific mitigation measures appropriate for each structure.

4.18 Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966

In accordance with Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 USC 303) and 23 CFR 774, the FHWA "may not approve the use of land from a significant publicly owned park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless a determination is made that: (i) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the property; and (ii) the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use."

A Section 4(f) use may occur when there is a permanent incorporation of land into a transportation facility, an adverse temporary occupancy, or a "constructive use."

Constructive use is defined in 23 CFR Section 774.15, as follows:

> *"Constructive use occurs when the transportation project does not incorporate land from a Section 4(f) resource but the project's impacts due to proximity are so severe that the activities, features, or attributes that qualify a resource for protection under Section 4(f) are substantially impaired. Substantial impairment would only occur when the utility of the resource in terms of its prior significance is substantially diminished or destroyed, amounting to an indirect taking of such activities, features or attributes."*

No land from public parks, recreation areas, or wildlife and waterfowl refuges of national, state, or local significance would be used by the proposed project alternatives. In addition, no constructive use would occur.

As identified in **Table 4-24**, there are two historic structures of national, state, or local significance within the study area that could result in a visual effect. Both resources are located in the Southern Section; one is located within the APE for the Preferred Alternative and the other is within the APE for the Western Alternative. As discussed in Section 4.17.2.3 above, it may be possible to mitigate visual effects.

As identified in Section 4.17, due to the length of the alternatives, it was not possible to perform an intensive archeological survey for each alternative in its entirety. Therefore, a sample survey of high probability areas was conducted.

After selection of the Preferred Alternative the remaining portions of that alternative were surveyed, resulting in the location of 66 additional archaeological sites. Twenty-one of those sites were considered potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and wherever possible project planners shifted the alignment in an effort to avoid those sites. All but one of those 21 sites have now been avoided. The one site that could not be avoided is 22CO852 (**Table 4-23**). When combined with the eight sites located on the Preferred Alternative in the sample survey, a total of nine sites will be impacted by that alternative. Impacts to these sites will be mitigated through data recovery excavations.

4.19 Hazardous Materials

A preliminary investigation was conducted to determine the impact of the proposed project on potential contamination sites within a 1,000-foot search radius to the proposed alternatives. The purpose of this preliminary investigation was to identify sites that may have a potential adverse effect on the local environment posed by hazardous materials or petroleum contamination that could be transmitted by earth-moving activities during construction of the project. Because of the potentially high cost and complicated procedures required to mitigated impacts when constructing a highway over or through potential contamination sites, avoidance of these areas is the most prudent and feasible alternative.

Figure 4-5 shows the approximate location of mapped sites that were found during EDR's search of reasonably ascertainable records. The findings listed below are based on visual observations, available research data, and regulatory file reviews.

- Available information on the alternative corridor alignment history did reveal indications of past operations or occurrences that will facilitate the presence of recognized environmental conditions within some of the proposed alternative corridors. Due to the high use of fertilizers and pesticides for farming use in the area the alternatives, there is a high probability of residual elements that will be left in the soil or that might have migrated into the groundwater in the lower elevation areas. Soil testing may be warranted to assess any possibility of exceeding state action levels.
- The database report indicated that there are seven locations within the specified radii for registered Underground Storage Tanks (UST). These are noted just for planning information.
- The database report indicated three incidences for Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) within the specified radii. All three of the incidences have been closed out. Since the sites have been closed, it is our opinion that there are no environmental concerns associated with the listed LUST sites.
- The database report indicated incidences with FINDS, FTTS, and ERNS. After review of the information, it is our opinion that there are no concerns with the FINDS, FTTS, ERNS, State Landfill, or the MS NPDES sites indicated in the database report.

In total 15 sites were identified by the EDR Report for the study area. **Table 4-25** identifies the database in which the site was located. The sites initially shown as orphan sites are also included in this table.

This preliminary hazardous materials investigation did not include sampling and analysis of materials, soils, or groundwater at the site; therefore, *absolute* statements concerning the presence or absence of contamination cannot be made. Further, professional judgments regarding risks to the site are subject to information available at the time of the assessment. Professional judgments and findings are based on known conditions as they existed at the time of the assessment.

Table 4-25
Hazmat Database Results for the Study Area

Federal Database	Search Radius	Identified Sites
NPL	1,000 feet	0
CERCLIS	1,000 feet	0
NFRAP	1,000 feet	1
RCRA/RCRIS – TSD facilities	1,000 feet	0
RCRA/RCRIS – Generators	1,000 feet	0
ERNS	Target Property	1
CORRACTS	1,000 feet	0
Total		2
State Database	**Search Radius**	**Identified Sites**
STATE HWS	1,000 feet	0
UST	1,000 feet	8
LUST	1,000 feet	3
INDIAN UST	1,000 feet	0
STATE LANDFILL	1,000 feet	3
Total		14
Federal and State Supplemental	**Search Radius**	**Identified Sites**
FINDS	1,000 feet	1
FTTS	1,000 feet	1
MS NPDES	1,000 feet	1
Total		3

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2004.

The EDR report also provided a list of orphan sites. All of those sites were studied in further detail and any sites that could potentially be impacted were located and shown in **Figure 4-5**. **Table 4-26** provides a summary of the 14 site addresses that are located within or adjacent to the corridor for each alternative. This table includes the orphan sites that have been identified as potentially impacted. As shown, the I-69 alternatives could impact one hazardous site at the US 61 interchange location between Shaw and Cleveland in Bolivar County. For the SR 8 widening, the Alternative B, Alternative C, and Preferred Alternative D have the same impacts on potential hazardous sites.

Table 4-26 Hazardous Material Sites			
Alternative	**Sites Located (Figure ID)**	**Regulatory Database**	**Impacted**
Southern Section			
Western	Tradeway (8)*- 5438 HWY 61 North	LUST	No
Preferred Alternative – Central	Texas Gas (9)- 3305 Highway 61 South – east side of US 61 about four miles south of Clarksdale	NPDES, NFRAP ERNS	No
	659 Hwy 61 (14)	ERNS	No
	Coahoma County Landfill (10) – located on the east side of Highway 8 west of Cleveland	SWF/Landfill	No
Eastern	Texas Gas (9)- 3305 Highway 61 South – east side of US 61 about four miles south of Clarksdale	NPDES, NFRAP ERNS	No
SR 8			
Alternatives B, C, and D	Leo's Market (1)- 1310 South Main Street/ HWY 1 South	UST	Yes
	Tire Cutter Services (7)- 45 Morrison Chapel Road, Cleveland	SWF/Landfill	No
	Presb. Day School (3)- 1100 HWY 8 West – north side of SR 8 one half mile east of the Bishop Road / Ronaldman Road intersection	FTTS	No
	NightRider Market (5)- 1325 HWY 8	UST	No
	Rosedale Landfill (2) – located on the north side of SR 8, approximately 4 miles east of Rosedale	SWF/Landfill	Possible**
	Jim's Store (6) – located on the north side of Highway 8, west of Cleveland.	UST	Possible**
	Sunflower Food Store (4)- 1321 HWY 8 West	FINDS	No
Middle Section			
Preferred (Only) Alternative	Hayes Brothers (13)- HWY 61 North	UST	No
	Bruno's (12)- Highway 61, Alligator	LUST	No
	Dunavent (11)- East Tallahatchie St.	LUST	No
Northern Section			
Western	None		No
Preferred Alternative – Central	None		No
Eastern	None		No

*Refers to number reference on Figure 4-5
**Impact may be avoided based on final roadway design.
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004. Neel-Schaffer, Inc., 2008.

Based on the information included in the EDR report, none of the above sites appears to warrant remediation or additional investigation at this time. The, Hayes Brothers, and Dunavent have either been removed, or have at least have had tanks removed. Tradeway, Bruno's, Dunavent, and Texas Gas have been noted as no further action required.

The Preferred Alternative may potentially impact three sites depending on final roadway design. The first site, Leo's Market, is located at 1310 Main Street/Hwy 1 South in Rosedale, Bolivar County. The site is on the west side of SR 1 at the intersection with SR 8. The road providing access to the Great River Road State Park is located on the south side of Leo's Market. At SR 1,

the Preferred Alternative would relocate SR 8 to the south and create a crossroad intersection with the road providing access to the State Park. The Preferred Alternative will likely impact this site due to the additional ROW required.

The second site, Rosedale Landfill, is an abandoned landfill located on the north side of SR 8, approximately four miles east of Rosedale, Bolivar County. The Preferred Alternative proposes a four-lane divided section on SR 8 at the road intersection with two new lanes added to the south of the existing two lanes. A small amount of additional right of way may be needed to widen the shoulders, flatten the foreslope, and ditch backslope to upgrade the existing lanes of SR 8 to the required standards for a four-lane divided section unless a guardrail is used. To avoid impacting this landfill, a guardrail could be used along SR 8 adjacent to the landfill with the intersection relocated west of its current location.

The third site, Jim's Grocery, is no longer in business and appeared to exist at one of two locations on SR 8 west of Cleveland. Both possible locations are at county road intersections with SR 8. One of the locations is presently a farm headquarters. The other location is a grocery/restaurant/night club called the Airport Grocery. Neither location has active gas pumps for dispensing fuel. The farm headquarters is in the northeast quadrant of the Shaw-Skene Road and would be avoided if the intersection is realigned as currently proposed under this study. The Airport Grocery is in the northwest quadrant of the Airport Grocery Road side road intersection with SR 8. Whether or not the Airport Grocery is impacted depends upon the design treatment that is used for reconstructing the intersection under the SR 8 widening project. If the intersection is reconstructed by relocating it slightly to the east, the Airport Grocery would not be impacted. If the intersection is reconstructed under its current alignment, the Airport Grocery would be impacted because the MDOT would need additional right-of-way from the business.

4.20 Indirect and Cumulative Impacts

4.20.1 Indirect Impacts

Indirect, or secondary, effects are defined by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) as "caused by an action and are later in time or farther removed in distance but are still reasonable foreseeable" (40 CFR 1508.8). In the context of this project, they are the indirect consequences

of the proposed I-69 SIU 11 corridor. They can either be positive or negative, and can affect changes in environmental quality, economic vitality, employment opportunities, land values, population density, and general quality of life issues. Secondary impacts are distinguished from primary impacts in that they are not the immediate result of the I-69 project, but rather may occur due to alterations in the social, economic, environmental, or man-made conditions resulting from the proposed road construction. Analysis of indirect impacts is required by several regulations, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, CEQ regulations, and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulations and guidance.

Of the four counties in the study area, only Tunica County has developed comprehensive and land use plans. The Tunica County Land Use Plan discusses the proposed I-69 corridor through Mississippi, focusing on how it relates to the airport east of Tunica.

The Delta Regional Authority was created in 1988 by the governors of Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana as a part of a plan to rejuvenate the economy of the Delta region. The Authority's focus is on economic development, health care, housing, education, transportation, and tax incentives in the eight participating states. One concept that is being explored by the Authority is "clustering," where public and private facilities are grouped together to concentrate development and resources. It is anticipated that once development is in place, additional development would be induced in close proximity to the initial development.

For this project, indirect impacts would be the result of induced development—development that would be encouraged by the construction of I-69 in Mississippi. Induced development includes development that would not take place if not for the proposed action, or development that would take place at a different location, a smaller scale, or at a later time. For a limited access highway road project such as I-69, induced development is typically concentrated in the vicinity of interchanges.

4.20.1.1 Existing and Induced Development

The potential for induced development depends on existing conditions in an area. The following sections analyze the existing conditions along the proposed alternatives.

Southern Section

The Preferred Alternative and Western Alternative in the Southern Section are contained within Bolivar County, and the Eastern Alternative is located in Bolivar and Sunflower Counties. Bolivar County is the only county in the project study area with a public port, located in Rosedale. The county's primary general aviation airport is west of Cleveland. Major commercial concentrations in the county are located in the downtown Cleveland, along US 61, and along SR 8 west of town. Cleveland, the second largest city in the four-county region (13,841 persons in 2000), also boasts the only four-year college in the analysis area, Delta State University, and a number of health centers. There are four industrial parks in Bolivar County: two in Rosedale, one just off US 61 northeast of Cleveland, and the smallest (currently unoccupied) in Shelby. A short-line railroad connects the port and the three largest industrial parks to the C&G railroad in Greenville. Major employers are located in the Cleveland and Rosedale areas.

Middle Section

The Middle Section for all three alternatives is identical, and follows US 61 in north and central Coahoma County. Clarksdale, at the south end of the Middle Section, is the largest city in the project study area, with a 2000 census population of 20,645. It is a small regional center for commerce, medicine, and education, with limited retail development. The county's general aviation airport is located just northeast of Clarksdale, and a tourist welcome center was recently opened on US 49 slightly west of US 61 in north Coahoma County. There are two major industrial parks in the county: one west of Clarksdale and the other near the intersection of US 61 bypass and US 49 southeast of Clarksdale. The industrial park west of the city is almost built out. The second industrial park contains the heaviest concentration of manufacturing and distribution observed in the four-county analysis area, with five major employers currently located in this corridor. This area will be the focal point of future industrial development. Several other major industrial employers are situated along US 61 and the US 61 Bypass. All three alternatives essentially follow US 61 and US 61 Bypass through Coahoma County, with adjustments as necessary to reduce impacts to the community.

This route would provide convenient access to the county's airport, primary industrial concentration, and growing retail node. Since it uses an existing bypass around Clarksdale (the Southern Section is currently under construction), the new I-69 route is not expected to negatively impact existing local business.

Northern Section

In Tunica County, the majority of commercial and industrial activity is located along US 61. Public water is available throughout the county, and sewer is provided in Tunica and west of US 61 near the casinos. The airport is also located between US 61 and Tunica/North Tunica. The existing industrial park in Tunica County is along US 61 south of the city, and plans call for a second industrial park to be constructed just east of the airport. A rail spur is to be installed to this area from the main line of the Illinois Central Railroad on the far eastern side of the county. A third industrial concentration may be developed in the vicinity of the intersection of SR 3 and the new SR 304 in northern Tunica County. The Preferred Alternative and Western Alternative in the Northern Section would facilitate new and existing development in areas that are currently more built-up, including linking the new airport, the industrial areas, the planned mega-site in the southwest quadrant of US 61 at SR 304 (see Section 4.3.1), and the rail spur. Due to the location of existing sewer, utilities, and businesses, it is more likely that the proposed project would encourage induced development in Tunica County with Preferred Alternative.

The project study area also includes the northwestern edge of Sunflower County. There are no cities or towns located within the Sunflower County portion of the study area. The majority of the development in the county is centered in the city of Indianola, outside the study area, which encompasses nearly one-third of the total county population. Sewer service is limited to incorporated areas, while public water is generally available throughout the county. The county's airport, two industrial parks, the main hospital, and major retail center are also located near Indianola. Ruleville, which is located approximately three miles east of the study area and eight miles from the Eastern Alternative, is the second largest municipality in Sunflower County with 2,000 persons. A hospital is located in Ruleville. An industrial park is proposed between Ruleville and Drew, and the Parchman State Prison (the county's largest employer) is located north of Drew.

The three alternatives begin at the proposed site of the Great River Bridge (SIU 12) south of Benoit and run south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. The Preferred Alternative completely bypasses Cleveland to the west before joining, and generally following, US 61 through Bolivar County bypassing the towns of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, and Shelby until south Coahoma County. The Western Alternative breaks away from the Preferred Alternative around Cleveland to run parallel to US 61. The Eastern Alternative bypasses Cleveland to the east and enters Coahoma County from Sunflower County. The Western and

Eastern Alternatives are located along agricultural lands, with few existing sewer and utilities. The Preferred Alternative would encourage the most induced development in the Southern Section due to its location along existing development. This alternative would be near the airport around which new industry would likely develop, and would best serve Cleveland and Bolivar County. However, the Eastern Alternative would benefit both Bolivar and Sunflower Counties. Although this route would be further from the Port of Rosedale and would be located in rural areas, possibly resulting in less induced development, Bolivar County and Sunflower County would share any economic benefits such as from induced development or increased traffic volumes through the region.

4.20.1.2 Summary of Indirect Impacts

Indirect impacts may be categorized as social/cultural, physical, natural, or economic. In this project, induced development is most likely along the Preferred Alternative, the Southern Section, the common alternative in the Middle Section, and the Preferred Alternative in the Northern Section. Currently, development is located primarily along US 61, adjacent to the cities of Clarksdale and Cleveland, and nearby the new Tunica airport. Due to the limited nature of sewer and utilities in the rural areas of the four-county region, as well as the low population, it is anticipated that future development will primarily build on existing development rather than expand into the rural areas along the new interstate. Some new development along the corridor is likely for all alternatives, including rest areas, gas stations, and restaurants. According to traffic projections prepared for this project, an additional 5,000 trips due to induced development are anticipated in both the Clarksdale and Cleveland areas (10,000 total trips). This demand reflects employees for new (induced) businesses, which would lead to a demand for housing, shopping, and recreational activities. Impacts resulting from induced development are described below.

Social/Cultural

Social/cultural indirect impacts relate primarily to positive impacts provided to residents as a result of increased development, such as cultural or recreational opportunities, shopping opportunities with increased variety and/or lower prices, availability of community facilities, and changes in land use and community characteristics caused by the highway construction. Social/cultural indirect impacts, particularly community cohesion, could be negative if the proposed action would separate neighborhoods or defer development. Induced development from the proposed alternatives is anticipated to have a slight positive impact on social and cultural aspects of life in the four-county region. The majority of the cultural resources, shopping areas,

and community facilities are located in the larger cities and towns, such as Clarksdale and Cleveland. Enhanced transportation infrastructure for commercial uses is likely to lead to an increase in business, especially industrial and manufacturing companies. Employment for these businesses would lead to population growth in the study area and also would result in an increased demand for shopping, recreational, and social activities in those areas, thus providing additional economic benefits.

Physical

Indirect physical impacts relate to impacts along the roadway corridor, such as visual enhancement due to induced development, integration of transportation modes due to highway improvements, and other impacts related to use of the roadway. Since induced development is most likely in areas with existing development, the visual impacts to currently rural areas would generally be limited to the highway itself (a direct impact), billboards advertising businesses in nearby towns (an indirect impact), and support facilities such as gas stations, restaurants, and other travel-related businesses (indirect impacts).

Natural

Indirect impacts on natural resources are similar to the impacts caused by the proposed action, but result from induced development. These impacts are generally negative, such as impacts to wetland and other natural habitats, including fragmentation impacts, but can sometimes be positive, as when a highway induces development to occur in less environmentally sensitive areas than it would have occurred without the highway. In the four-county region included in the study area, the land is primarily agricultural, with forest dominating only the western edge along the Mississippi River, on the west side of levee. Almost all induced development would occur in either existing urban areas or would convert farmland to developed uses. Although the highway construction alternatives would impact wetlands and other natural resources, the great majority of the induced development is expected to occur around existing development, away from wetlands. This development also would need to comply with state and federal regulations protecting wetlands. Therefore, no substantial indirect impacts to natural resource are anticipated.

Economic

Indirect economic impacts include the impact on the local and regional economy due to induced development. These impacts are generally positive, such as increased tax revenue from developed land, increased income and employment opportunities from new industrial and

commercial development, reduced costs due to reduced accident rates on an improved roadway, and increased income from construction of new development. Negative economic impacts may result from bypasses diverting traffic from existing highway-oriented businesses. It is anticipated that the four rural counties in Mississippi impacted by this project, being in proximity to metropolitan areas and with some degree of urbanization, would benefit economically, at least in the short-term, from a new Interstate highway. Highway construction expenditures would benefit rural employment in the manufacturing and retail sectors with effects strongest in the short-term (during construction). Long-term employment opportunities would be increased as the industrial parks along US 61 grow following improvements in road and rail transportation. Population growth would follow employment growth, and would create additional demand for more housing and services. As a part of the national I-69 corridor, SIU 11 would allow local and interstate traffic better access to the cities and towns in rural Mississippi, especially along the Preferred Alternative.

4.20.1.3 Mitigation

Interchange locations were selected with consideration of minimizing natural resource impacts not only the interchange footprints but also to minimize future indirect impacts resulting from development in the vicinity of the interchanges. The extent and magnitude of indirect impacts are largely unknown, and therefore no detailed impact mitigation measures can be established at this time. Any development activity that occurs as a secondary impact will have to meet state and local regulations, which may include mitigating certain impacts. MDOT will provide plans and coordinate with local governments, so that local officials can use the information to guide future land use decisions. Due to the rural nature of the I-69 corridor in this section of Mississippi, no local zoning exists.

4.20.2 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impact is defined by CEQ regulations as “the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a long period of time” (40 CFR 1508.7). The cumulative effects of an action may be undetectable when viewed in the individual context of direct and even

indirect impacts, but nonetheless can add to other disturbances and eventually lead to a measurable environmental change.

One potential for cumulative impact will be the indirect impact from induced development that could occur with the proposed I-69 SIU 11 corridor. Induced development includes any facilities developed in response to the highway corridor, increased traffic and access, or increased activity as a result of the roadway's economic stimulus. To some extent, the Tunica County Land Use Plan has taken into account the impacts of I-69 through the discussions in their approved plan. Also, the Delta Regional Authority has considered the effects of clustered and induced development, and has put those concepts forward as potentially effective methods of improving the economy of the Delta region.

The I-69 SIU 11 project through Mississippi is one part of the national I-69 corridor. The cumulative impacts of this project in conjunction with the overall interstate are generally positive. The national corridor will facilitate travel within each region as well as between regions, benefiting a variety of sectors including industry, tourism, and local business. The Mississippi Delta region has undergone significant changes in the past decades, as large expanses of wooded areas have been cleared for use as farmland, primarily cotton fields. The I-69 corridor is a part of this man-made evolution, as the land use and infrastructure in the Delta have changed to better facilitate the growing agricultural and manufacturing industries.

4.21 Energy Impacts

Building this segment of I-69 would require expending additional energy resources during construction; however, this energy would be more than recovered over the life of the project by the more energy efficient transportation system compared with the No-Build alternative. The increased energy efficiency would be realized through the controlled access highway and the overall decrease in delays, more efficient vehicle operating speeds, and diversion of traffic from less efficient roadways. Therefore, a savings in energy would be realized each year the highway is open and would more than compensate for the additional energy needed to construct the project, and would result in an overall net savings of energy. Based on projected traffic volumes, the Preferred Alternative would have slightly more positive energy impact in that it would attract more traffic from other facilities.

4.22 Visual Impacts

The majority of the study area is flat and used for agriculture, with few distinguishing visual characteristics in the landscape. However, this flat cultivated topography means that any visual landmark is often visible for several miles. The most prominent natural features are the remaining wooded areas, which occur around streams, oxbow lakes, and other water features. The lakes and streams, and particularly the cypress swamps, are the outstanding natural visual features in the study area. Other visual features are largely manmade, including several high-rise hotels in the Tunica area, electric transmission line structures, telecommunication towers, water towers, and grain storage structures. The electric power generation plant north of Cleveland is another manmade feature visible for several miles.

Because avoiding wetlands and natural areas was a priority in developing the alternatives, very few scenic natural areas would be impacted. The wetlands impacts of the alternatives provide a good measure of the degree of impact on natural visual resources. Likewise, by avoiding towns and developed areas and minimizing utility crossings, the build alternatives would minimize impact on manmade visual features.

The highway would be visible for a long distance where it crosses cultivated fields and other areas with little vegetation. The highway surface would be approximate six feet above the surrounding grade, and up to 20 feet above highways at interchanges and grade separations, and up to 24 feet above railroads. These crossings would have the greatest visual impact in terms of distance. The length of the highway, where it is on new location, would change the view of rural areas to include a modern highway with fencing and in some areas with frontage roads. Areas where I-69 follows the existing US 61 alignment would substantially change the view of the highway by restricting access and eliminating driveways and having existing businesses and residences near the highway served by frontage roads. In general, the alternatives on a new location (Western and Eastern) would have the greatest visual impact.

4.23 Construction Impacts

The construction activities associated with building a new roadway along any of the three alternative corridors would create environmental impacts. These impacts, generally short-term in

nature, will be controlled, minimized, or mitigated through conformance with established construction methods. Temporary impacts resulting from construction include traffic disruption; increases in noise and air pollution, erosion, and sedimentation; and wildlife habitat encroachment. Physical alteration to local aquatic and terrestrial habitats would occur.

Construction will be performed to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws governing safety, health, and sanitation. Procedures will apply all safeguards, safety devices, protective equipment, and any other needed action reasonably necessary to protect the life and health of employees on the job, the safety of the public, and property in connection with the performance of the work.

Traffic

Alternatives utilizing existing roadways (the common alternative in the Middle Section, and the Preferred Alternative in the Southern Section) will be developed to maximize the use of existing ROW, and will have greater potential for traffic disruption. Alternatives on new location will minimize disruption of traffic. During construction, all local and through traffic will be adequately and safely accommodated. All construction operations will be scheduled to keep traffic delay minimized, and the contractor will conform to standard construction practices.

Noise

The major construction elements of this project are expected to be earth moving, hauling, grading, and paving. General construction noise impacts, such as temporary speech interference for passersby and those individuals living or working near the project, will be expected, particularly from paving operations and from earth moving equipment. Overall, construction noise impacts are expected to be minimal since the construction noise is relatively short in duration and is generally restricted to daytime hours. Also, noise impacts from construction on alternative segments that are in rural areas would affect a smaller population than on alternatives along existing roadways.

Air Quality

During construction of the proposed project, all materials resulting from clearing and grubbing, demolition, or other operations will be removed from the project site and burned or otherwise disposed of by the contractor. Any burning will be accomplished in accordance with applicable laws, local ordinance, and state regulations for air quality in compliance. Care will be taken to

ensure that burning will occur under constant supervision, at the greatest practical distance from dwellings, and not when atmospheric conditions will create hazards for the public.

Water Quality and Drainage

Erosion of soils is typically the most critical water quality impact resulting from construction activities. The amount of erosion can vary greatly, depending on the size, location, and grade of exposed or disturbed areas, and the effectiveness of erosion control measures and devices. Erosion and sediment control is an important element of construction plans and specifications for the project. An erosion and sedimentation control plan will be prepared as part of the construction documents. The objectives addressed in the plan will include identification of critical areas subject to severe erosion, limiting of exposed areas, limiting the exposure duration, controlling sedimentation, and managing storm water runoff. The plan will be prepared in accordance with the MDOT standards. Measures typically used to minimize erosion and sedimentation includes uses of temporary vegetation, mulching, sodding, sediment catch basins, silt fences, and diversion berms. Construction activities also will be scheduled to minimize the extent and duration of erosion hazards. Erosion control measures will be retained as permanent design features of the facility.

Handling and use of various construction materials also can affect water quality. Improper disposal and storage of materials, wastes, and accidental spills of fuels or other chemicals can adversely affect water quality. Contractors will be required to exercise every reasonable precaution to prevent the introduction of construction materials and chemicals into surface waters. The specifications require that potential pollutants such as fuels, lubricants, bitumens, raw sewage, and other hazardous wastes are not to be discharged into or alongside streams, rivers, and impoundments.

Excavated materials will not be stockpiled or disposed of adjacent to or in areas where storm water runoff may cause erosion of the material into surface waters. If material storage adjacent to surface water is unavoidable, the contractor must take measures to prevent runoff from the storage site into the water body. Contractors are also required to provide sanitary facilities for employees during project construction.

MDOT Standard Specifications also require that special precautions be taken during construction to ensure that groundwater is not contaminated by fuel, lubricants, or chemical spills. If

necessary, localized portions of the groundwater table will be temporarily lowered during pier construction to avoid contamination, and then returned to normal level when construction is complete.

Biotic Communities

Construction, staging, and stockpiling operations will result in the disruption of the resident wildlife population. The clearing of habitats, human activity, and noise from construction operations would result in the displacement of mobile wildlife species. Non-mobile species would be lost as habitat is converted to construction areas.

Maximum disruption of wildlife communities would occur when project construction begins as displaced animals are forced to compete for space with other nearby resident wildlife populations. These impacts would be minimized as much as possible by restricting land clearing and construction operations to within the project ROW. Off-site staging and stockpiling areas will be located to impact the least amount of natural habitat as possible. Stockpiling and staging areas will be re-vegetated after construction, which will provide replacement habitat for some species.

Construction Waste

All construction waste material generated during clearing, grubbing, and other construction phases will be removed from the project site and burned or disposed of by the contractor in accordance with state and local regulations. Litter and other general trash will be collected and disposed of at local landfill locations. Construction waste deposition in and borrow from jurisdictional wetlands will not be allowed unless permitted by USACE.

Utility Service

Construction of any build alternative will require some adjustment, relocation, or modification to existing public utilities. The impacts to these utilities are described in Section 4.6.3. Any disruptions to utility service during construction will be minimized by phased adjustments to the utility lines. All modifications, adjustments, or relocations will be coordinated with the affected utility companies.

Borrow Pits and Spoil Sites

Borrow is material, such as sand and gravel, which is extracted from an excavation or pit area that can be used to fill another site. Spoil is defined as material composed of a variety of rocks and

minerals having differing chemicals and physical characteristics and in varying proportions and sizes. Approved borrow material is taken from sites in conformance with federal, state, and local regulations. MDOT has recently worked closely with US Fish & Wildlife Service, SHPO, and various THPOs to develop better procedures for evaluating and selecting borrow pits and spoil sites. All required permits (i.e., utility protection, erosion control, etc.) are obtained before gathering the borrow material and the pit sites are satisfactory from an archaeological standpoint. Any material excavated will be disposed of in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations. Proper planning and scheduling of pit operations is essential to prevent pollution. Excavated materials will not be disposed of in wetlands and after completion of pit operations, water is not allowed to pond. Furthermore, work on sites containing hazardous or toxic waste must be discontinued until wetlands or ground-water sources are protected. Noise and sound levels must conform to all state and local rules, regulations, and ordinances.

4.24 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

As with any new roadway project, construction of any of the proposed build alternatives will require certain irreversible and irretrievable commitment of natural resources, manpower, materials, and fiscal resources. Lands within the ROW will be converted from their present use to transportation use. Use of these lands is considered an irreversible commitment during the time period that the land is used for a highway facility. However, if a greater need arises for use of the land, or if the highway facility is no longer needed, the land will be converted to another use. At present, there is no reason to believe such a conversion will ever be necessary or desirable.

The fiscal commitment will extend well beyond the initial costs for construction and ROW acquisition, which will total $1,247.9 million (year 2010 dollars) for the Preferred Alternative (see costs in **Table 4-28**). An important long-term cost to consider for a highway investment is maintenance cost. Maintenance cost includes major items such as resurfacing as well as routine maintenance, which includes restriping, mowing, cleaning drainage structures, patching potholes, repairing signs and guardrail, and bridge maintenance. Over time, maintenance cost can be a major expense. The approach in estimating maintenance cost for the I-69 alternatives used historical data to develop unit cost estimates for major and routine maintenance and calculated

annual costs over the 20-year period between 2010 and 2030, assuming resurfacing is needed every 10 years.

To establish a baseline, the routine maintenance budgets for the Second and Third Districts of the MDOT were reviewed for the Fiscal Years 1998 through 2003. The Fiscal Year 2003 routine maintenance budget for the two districts averaged $2170.59 per lane-mile, with the annual increase for the two districts averaging 2.7% per year. Based on those data and discussions with MDOT maintenance engineers, a 3% per year estimated increase in routine maintenance was used for the 20-year time frame from 2010 to 2030.

Fiscal Year 2003 resurfacing costs in the Delta portion of the two districts are approximately $160,000 per mile of two-lane road ($80,000 per lane-mile). A 3% annual increase between 2003 and 2010 yields a figure of $2,670 per lane-mile for routine maintenance for 2010. The $80,000.00 per lane-mile resurfacing cost in 2003 increases to $98,400 in 2010.

The total annual maintenance cost per lane-mile between 2010 and 2030 is based on the annual routine maintenance cost of $2,670 increased by 3% annually plus the annual cost of an overlay after ten and twenty years. The two overlays in the 20-year study period have a 2010 cost of $196,800 per lane-mile. The total maintenance cost over the 20 years between 2010 and 2030 would become $13,400 per lane-mile per year.

The following assumptions and procedures were used in estimating maintenance:

- The cost of maintaining the mainline (freeway section) for each alternative combination was $13,400 times mainline length in miles times the number of lanes.
- The cost of maintaining the frontage roads was $13,400 times the length of the frontage road in miles times the number of lanes on the frontage road.
- The cost of maintaining the interchanges for each alternative combination was the number of access ramps or loops at the interchanges multiplied by $1,320 times their length and width. The maintenance cost of each interchange ramp was estimated to be $10,050, based on one-half mile length and 1.5 lanes per ramp. Interchange loops were estimated to be one-quarter mile long, with an equivalent lane width of one and three-quarters lanes. Based on those assumptions, the estimated cost of maintaining each interchange loop was $5,850.
- New roads at interchange locations (spurs) would also require routine maintenance and resurfacing maintenance at a cost of $13,400 per lane-mile.

- For alternatives containing interchanges on new location, existing access roads would be upgraded to accommodate the posting of an 80,000 pound weight limit. While the upgraded roads are currently maintained by either the MDOT or the local jurisdiction, the cost of routine maintenance as well as the frequency of resurfacing projects will probably increase if a road is used as an access to I-69. For upgraded county roads or highway providing access to the new location alternatives, the annual increase in maintenance costs per lane-mile was calculated at 50% of $13,400 per lane-mile or $6,700 per lane-mile.

The maintenance costs for alternatives that utilize existing sections of US 61 and US49-US 61 for I-69 are included in the mainline and frontage road calculations under the first two items. However, if portions US 61 are not used for I-69, the four-lane sections must still be maintained by the MDOT. Therefore, the maintenance costs for those sections of US 61 not used for I-69 was added to the maintenance costs of the new location alternatives. The sections of US 61 and US 49-US 61 included in the annual maintenance cost for the new location alternatives include:

- US 61 in Bolivar County from near Merigold extending north to near Shelby and from Hushpuckena extending north to the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line;
- US 49-US 61 in Coahoma County from near Coahoma extending north to the split in these two highways;
- US 61 in Coahoma County from its split with US 49 extending north to the Tunica County Line; and
- US 61 from the Coahoma/Tunica County Line extending north to near Dundee.

For these four sections the maintenance costs added to the new location alternatives was the mileage multiplied by 4 lanes multiplied by $13,400.

The estimated maintenance costs are shown by alternative in **Table 4-27**.

Table 4-27
Annual Maintenance Cost

Alternative		Cost (in Millions)
Southern Section	Western	$6.6
Preferred Alternative – Central		$5.9
	Eastern	$6.3
Middle Section Preferred (Only) Alternative		$1.7
Northern Section	Western	$3.5
Preferred Alternative – Central		$3.7
	Eastern	$3.8

Source: Neel Schaffer, May 2004.

Considerable amounts of fossil fuels, labor, and highway construction materials such as cement, aggregate, and bituminous material will be expended to complete the project. Additionally, large amounts of labor and natural resources will be used in the fabrication and preparation of construction materials. These materials are generally not retrievable. However, they are not in short supply and their use will not have an adverse effect on the availability of these resources. Any construction will also require a substantial one-time expenditure of state and federal funds which is not retrievable.

The commitment of these resources will benefit local residents and the state by improving transportation options through the four-county region. Construction of the proposed I-69 SIU 11 project will add a critical link to the national I-69 corridor, and will benefit travelers and businesses by enhancing the transportation infrastructure between Mississippi and its neighboring states. The benefits of improved accessibility, savings in time, and greater availability of quality services are anticipated to outweigh the necessary commitment of resources.

4.25 Relationship Between Short-Term Impacts and Long-Term Benefits

The most disruptive local short-term impacts associated with the proposed project will occur during project construction. Existing homes, farms, and businesses within the alternative ROW will be displaced. However, adequate replacement housing, land, and space are available for homeowners, tenants, and business owners within the study area. Improved mobility and access to and from the detailed study corridors will stimulate economic and business growth and viability as well as long-term residential interest.
Construction activities will create short-term air quality, noise, and visual impacts for nearby residents and businesses. Normal traffic patterns also will be disrupted. Implementation of MDOT standard construction procedures will help minimize these impacts.

Localized water quality could be temporarily affected, specifically by increased turbidity levels in creeks and streams adjacent to construction activities. Use of Best Management Practices will minimize potential water quality impacts. In addition, MDOT will consult with the appropriate federal and state resource and regulatory agencies to identify measures to minimize these impacts.

The local short-term impacts and use of resources by the proposed action will be consistent with the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity. Completion of the proposed project will, over the long-term, be consistent with local, county, regional, and state transportation plans. The purpose of the I-69 SIU 11 project include improving international and interstate trade in accordance with national and state goals; facilitating economic development in accordance with state, regional, and local policies and plans; and improving surface transportation consistent with national, state, regional and local needs and with the congressional designation of the corridor. Building this project will help to achieve these long-term goals.

4.26 Summary of Impacts

Direct and indirect impacts have been assessed for SIU 11 of the proposed I-69 Corridor in Mississippi. The impacts are summarized in ranges by section in **Table 4-28**. The project has been divided into Southern, Middle, and Northern Sections with three alternatives in the Southern and Northern Sections and a common alternative in the Middle Section. Analyses have been conducted to compare alternatives and their potential impacts within each section. **Table 4-29** provides a summary comparison by alternative, based on the possible combinations of alternatives within each section. Public and agency comment and additional analyses provided input into the decision on the Preferred Alternative, which includes minor shifts to further minimize impacts.

Table 4-28
Summary of Impacts

Impact Category	Southern Section			SR 8			Middle Section	Northern Section			Total for Preferred Alternative[6]	Change in Preferred Alternative Impacts Since Public Hearing[7]
	Western	Central	Eastern	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Common	Western	Central	Eastern		
Human Environment												
Farmland (acres)	4,178	4,133	4,117	478	492	463	1,023	2,603	2,574	2,440	8,193	-29
Residential Relocations	16	25	16	18	13	18	3	7	8	20	54	+1
Business Relocations	1	1	2	3	2	3	1	0	0	0	5	+2
Noise Receptors	2	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	+1
Historic Sites (Adverse Effect)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-1
Archaeological Sites (Potential Impact)	4	6	2	1	1	1	2	6	0	4	9	-3
Hazardous Material Sites	0	0	0	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	-10
Minority and Low-Income Population Served by I-69 Within 2 mile radius of Interchange	20,293	24,130	16,573	N/A	N/A	N/A	20,970	370	370	370	45,470	-611
Natural Environment												
Perennial Streams – Number Crossed (Total Feet of Impact)	12 (7,300)	10 (5,165)	14 (9,880)	5 (570)	5 (570)	5 (570)	4 (3,240)	13 (3,775)	13 (3,970)	8 (3,585)	32 (12,945)	None
303 (d) Streams (number) [8]	7	10	11	0	0	0	1	11	11	12	22	None
Wetlands (acres)[1]	122	18	63	2	1	2	20	61	28	32	(106)[4]	+104
Floodplains (acres)	1,103	1,002	847	25	22	25	88	162	567	334	1,682	+414
Vegetation/Wildlife Habitat[2] (acres)	210	104	118	59	53	49	5	31	17	16	175	-5

Table 4-28
Summary of Impacts

Impact Category	Southern Section			SR 8			Middle Section	Northern Section			Total for Preferred Alternative[6]	Change in Preferred Alternative Impacts Since Public Hearing[7]
	Western	Central	Eastern	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D	Common	Western	Central	Eastern		
Engineering/Utilities												
Transmission Line Impact Number of Crossings (length in feet)	2 (955)	2 (1,470)	6 (3,140)	1 (300)	1 (300)	1 (300)	2 (310)	4 (1,115)	4 (1,130)	4 (1,450)	9 (3,210)	None
Gas Pipeline Impact Number of Crossings (length in feet)	8 (19,030)	8 (13,050)	10 (16,595)	3 (3,330)	3 (3,330)	3 (3,330)	3 (16,860)	12 (38,825)	11 (61,985)	8 (44,090)	25 (95,225)	None
2001 Estimated Construction (millions) [3]	$537.9	$473.6	$528.8	$55.3	$54.1	$54.1	$91.9	$315.9	$336.8	$306.7	$956.4	2001 Estimated Computed Costs
2010 Estimated Construction (millions) [3]	$701.9	$618.0	$690.0	$72.2	$70.6	$70.6	$119.9	$412.2	$439.5	$400.2	$1,247.9	2001 Costs Updated to 2010 Costs
Conservation Easements[5]	11	6	11	5	5	5	0	4	6	11	17	None

[1] Wetland impacts in Southern Section are based on revised alignment for Central Alternative near Benoit

[2] Vegetation/Wildlife Habitat consists of: Bottomland Hardwood Forest, Upland Scrub/Shrub, and Freshwater Scrub/Shrub communities.

[3] See Appendix G for Preferred Alternative cost estimate computations and the cost factors used for updating the cost estimates for the other DEIS alternatives to year 2010(construction costs in table include ROW).

[4] In the fall of 2005, an additional field assessment of the wetland impacts within the right of way limits was made. Based on that assessment the 68 acres of impacts (18 + 2 + 20 + 28) was increased to 106 acres for the FEIS to reflect updated information. Similar increases would be anticipated for the other alternatives. See Page 4-47 if additional information is needed on the field assessment conducted on the Preferred Alternative.

[5] Conservation Easements include Wetland Reserve Program Easements, Farm Service Agency Easements, Ducks Unlimited Easements, and Conservation Agreements

[6] Impacts Category Totals are based on adding the impacts for the Southern Section Central, SR 8 - Alt D, the Middle Section, and the Northern Section Central.

[7] Difference in the Preferred Alternative impacts from the impacts presented in Table S-1 of the Draft EIS for the South Section Central Alternative (SSCA) + Middle Section + North Section Central Alternative (NSCA)

[8.] Number of streams shown in table were identified in 2004. Additional TMDL Reports have been compiled since 2004. See Tables 4-14 and 4-15.

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.; Neel-Schaffer, Inc.; 2005-2010

Table 4-29
Summary Comparison of Alternative Combinations

Impact Category	SSWA[1] + Middle Section +			SSCA[1] + Middle Section +			SSEA[1] + Middle Section +		
	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA
Farmland (acres)	8,296	8,267	8,133	8,251	8,208	8,088	8,235	8,206	8,072
Residential Relocations	44	45	57	53	54	66	41	42	54
Business Relocations	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6
Noise Receptors	2	2	2	5	5	5	2	2	2
Historic Sites (Adverse Effect)	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Archaeological Sites (Potential Impact)	13	7	11	15	9	13	11	5	9
Hazardous Material Sites	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Minority and Low-Income Population Served by I-69	41,633	41,633	41,633	46,081	45,470	46,081	37,913	37,913	37,913
Perennial Streams (Crossed)	34	34	29	32	32	27	36	36	31
Perennial Streams (Total Feet of Impact)	14,885	15,080	14,695	12,750	12,945	12,560	17,465	17,660	17,275
303 (d) Streams (number) [5]	19	19	20	22	22	23	23	23	24
Wetlands (acres)	205	172	178	101	68 (106)[2]	72	146	113	117
Floodplains (acres)	1,378	1,783	1,550	1,277	1,682	1,449	1,122	1,527	1,294
Vegetation/Wildlife Habitat (acres)	295	281	280	189	175	203	207	189	188

Table 4-29
Summary Comparison of Alternative Combinations

Impact Category	SSWA[1] + Middle Section +			SSCA[1] + Middle Section +			SSEA[1] + Middle Section +		
	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA	NSWA	NSCA	NSEA
Transmission Line Impact Number of Crossings (length in feet)	9 (2,680)	9 (2,695)	9 (3,015)	9 (3,195)	9 (3,210)	9 (3,530)	13 (4,865)	13 (4,880)	13 (5,200)
Gas Pipeline Impact Number of Crossings (length in feet)	26 (78,045)	25 (101,205)	22 (83,310)	26 (72,065)	25 (95,225)	22 (77,330)	28 (75,610)	27 (98,770)	24 (80,875)
2001 Estimated Construction (millions) [3]	$999.8	$1,020.7	$990.6	$935.5	$956.4	$926.3	$990.7	$1,011.6	$981.5
2010 Estimated Construction (millions) [3]	$1,304.5	$1,331.8	$1,292.5	$1,220.6	$1,247.9	$1,208.6	$1,292.7	$1,319.9	$1,280.7
Conservation Easements[4]	20	22	27	15	17	22	20	22	27

Key: SSWA = Southern Section, Western Alt.; SSCA = Southern Section, Central Alt.; SSEA = Southern Section, Eastern Alt.
NSWA = Northern Section, Western Alt.; NSCA = Northern Section Central Alt.; NSEA = Northern Section, Eastern Alt.

[1] All impacts and totals in the Southern Section are based on SR 8 Alternative D; SSCA + Middle Section + NSCA is the Preferred Alternative

[2] In the fall of 2005. an additional field assessment of the wetland impacts within the right of way was made. Based on that assessment, the 68 acres of impacts shown in the Draft EIS became 106 acres for the FEIS. If additional field assessments were made on the other alternatives, increases in impacts would also be expected. See page 4-47 for more information.

[3] See Appendix G for additional information on the Preferred Alternative Cost Estimate. Relative to the Draft EIS, the 2001 Cost Estimate for the Preferred Alternative increased by a factor of 1.3048. The 1.3048 factor was used for determining the 2010 cost of the other alternatives. Estimated construction costs in table include ROW.

[4] Conservation Easements include Wetland Reserve Program Easements, Farm Service Agency Easements, Ducks Unlimited Easements, and Conservation Agreements.

[5.] Number of streams shown in table were identified in 2004. Additional TMDL Reports have been compiled since 2004. See Tables 4-14 and 4-15.

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc. and Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. 2005-2010

In the Southern Section, the Preferred Alternative would minimize impacts to streams, wetlands, and vegetation. In addition, the Preferred Alternative would serve the greatest percentage of the minority and low-income population, addressing a key component of the project's purpose and need. In an effort to reduce potential impacts, the Preferred Alternative was developed to use as much of existing US 61 as possible. Most of the cities within the project study area are located along US 61, and therefore, the Preferred Alternative would have the greatest number of residential relocations and noise impacts.

The Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section would minimize residential and noise impacts. However, the Eastern and Western Alternatives would have greater impacts to streams. There are also the fewest historic resources located in the Eastern Alternative. The Western Alternative would have the greatest total impact for streams, wetlands, and impact on vegetation. Although the Western Alternative would minimize residential relocation, it would also serve a much lower percentage of the minority and low-income population.

In addition to comparisons among the alternatives and sections, two other comparisons are helpful in evaluating the alternatives and comparing their impacts so as to differentiate the impacts of alternatives in specific areas. One such comparison involves the southernmost portion of the project, in the vicinity of Benoit. This comparison was documented in Chapter 2 (2.4.3.2) and showed that the alternative crossing Lake Bolivar (shown in green on **Figure 2-3**) impacts fewer wetlands than the alternative crossing to the north (shown in red on **Figure 2-3**) and therefore was incorporated into the Central Alternative in the DEIS and subsequently, became part of the Preferred Alternative.

The proposed construction will provide a vital link in the national I-69 corridor. This project will provide for a safer and more efficient highway system. Long-term benefits offered by this project—including economic development, reduced potential for accidents, reduced vehicular operating costs, savings in travel time, and the fulfillment of a national goal—should more than offset the short-term inconveniences and adverse effects on the human environment.

Legend

- Noise Monitoring Sites
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

Robinsonville, North Tunica, Tunica, Dundee, Lula, Rich, Friars Point, Coahoma, Jonestown, Stovall, Sherard, Clarksdale, Rena Lara, Alligator, Duncan, Shelby, Gunnison, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Rosedale, Beulah, Pace, Merigold, Renova, Cleveland, Boyle, Skene, Benoit, Shaw, Mattson, Dublin, Rome, Drew, Ruleville, Doddsville, Sunflower, Parchman, Askew WR, State Penal Farm, Dahomey NWR

Tunica, Coahoma, Bolivar, Sunflower

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Noise Monitoring Sites

Figure 4-1

Legend

- Impacted Streams
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Watershed Areas
- Intermittent Streams
- Perennial Streams
- TMDLs in HUC (Linear)
- TMDLs in HUC (Area)
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

080302041000
Phillips Bayou-Yazoo Pass
080302040900
Moon Lake
Friars Point
Coahoma
080302041000
Jonestown
Mill Creek
Dry Bayou
61
49
Stovall
Lake Bayou-Big Sunflower River
080302070100
1
080302020500
Cassidy Bayou
6
Sherard
322
Clarksdale
Rena Lara
DeSoto Lake
Coahoma
Bolivar
61
Harris Bayou
Mattson
080302070300
Harris Bayou-Big Sunflower River
Alligator
Hushpuckena River
080302070200
Duncan
Dublin
444
1
Mississippi River
Hushpuckena River
Coahoma
Sunflower
Rome
Shelby
61
161
Gunnison
32
Snake Creek
State Penal Farm
Bolivar
Big Sunflower River
Black Bayou
Quiver River
Winstonville
Parchman
Mound Bayou
Snake Creek-Bogue Phalia
080302071100
161
1
Rosedale
61
Merigold
Bogue Phalia River
Wild Bill Bayou
Mound Bayou-Big Sunflower River
080302070400
Drew
Beulah
Pace
61
Renova
Big Sunflower River
Lake Beulah
Cleveland
Burrell Bayou
8
8
Dahomey NWR
Skene
Bogue Phalia
446
Boyle
Ruleville
080302071300
Bogue Hasty-Bogue Phalia
End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11
1
61
Doddsville
Benoit
Shell Lake-Clear Creek
080302071200
442
Porter Bayou-Big Sunflower River
080302070500
Bolivar
Sunflower
442
080302071800
Rolling Fork Creek-Upper Deer Creek
Shaw
448

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Impacted Streams and Watersheds

Figure 4-2A

Legend

- Impacted Streams
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Watershed Areas
- Intermittent Streams
- Perennial Streams
- TMDLs in HUC (Linear)
- TMDLs in HUC (Area)
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

* - Lake Cormorant Bayou - Coldwater River Watershed

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

Upper Lake Cormorant Bayou*
080302040703

Lower Lake Cormorant Bayou*
080302040705

Buck Island Bayou*
080302040704

080302040800
White Oak Bayou-Coldwater River

Phillips Bayou-Yazoo Pass

080302040900

Muddy Bayou-Coldwater River
080302041000

080302070100
Lake Bayou-Big Sunflower River

080302020500
Cassidy Bayou

080302070300
Harris Bayou-Big Sunflower River

080302070200
Hushpuckena River

Robinsville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stoval
Sherard
Clarksdale
Rena Lara
Alligator
Mattson

Tunica Lake
Flower Lake
Beaver Dam Lake
Moon Lake
Mississippi River
Dry Bayou
M'\\/ Creek
Swan Lake
Coldwater River
Askew WR
DeSoto Lake
Harris Bayou

304
61
3
4
49
1
322
6

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Impacted Streams and Watersheds

Figure 4-2B

Legend

- Wetlands Identified in Corridor
- Potential Wetlands
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

N W E S

Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stovall
Clarksdale
Sherard
Rena Lara
Alligator
Mattson
Dublin
Duncan
Coahoma
Bolivar
Sunflower
Rome
Gunnison
Shelby
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Parchman
Mound Bayou
Rosedale
Merigold
Drew
Beulah
Pace
Renova
Ruleville
Cleveland
Boyle
Skene
Dahomey NWR
Doddsville
Benoit
Bolivar
Sunflower
Shaw

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Wetland Impacts

Figure 4-3A

Legend

- Wetlands Identified in Corridor
- Potential Wetlands
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

Robinsville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown
Stoval
Clarksdale
Sherard
Rena Lara
Alligator
Mattson
Askew WR
Tunica Coahoma
Coahoma Bolivar
Tate Co.

61 304 3 4 49 1 322 6

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Wetland Impacts

Figure 4-3B

Legend

- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Prior Central Alternative
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

Robinsville
North Tunica
Tunica
Dundee
Lula
Rich
Friars Point
Coahoma
Stoval
Jonestown
Sherard
Clarksdale
Rena Lara
Alligator
Mattson
Askew WR
Tunica
Coahoma
Tate Co.
Tunica
Coahoma
Coahoma
Bolivar

304 61 3 4 61 49 61 49 1 6 322 322

Approximate Location of Pondberry Population

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Pondberry Location

Figure 4-4

Legend

- Hazardous Materials
- Central Alternative (Preferred)
- Western Alternative
- Eastern Alternative
- SR 8 Alternative
- Section Boundaries
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Counties

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11

Robinsonville, North Tunica, Tunica, Dundee, Lula, Rich, Friars Point, Coahoma, Jonestown, Stovall, Sherard, Clarksdale, Rena Lara, Alligator, Duncan, Shelby, Gunnison, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Merigold, Rosedale, Beulah, Pace, Renova, Cleveland, Boyle, Skene, Benoit, Shaw, Sunflower, Mattson, Dublin, Rome, Drew, Ruleville, Doddsville, Parchman, State Penal Farm, Askew WR, Dahomey NWR

Tunica Coahoma, Tunica Quitman, Coahoma Bolivar, Coahoma Sunflower, Bolivar Sunflower, Bolivar, Sunflower

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Hazardous Material Sites

Figure 4-5

Chapter 5
List of Preparers

This Final Environmental Impact Statement was prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Mississippi Department of Transportation, Division of Highways.

Federal Highway Administration

Andrew H. Hughes, P.E. Division Administrator	Federal Highway Administration Jackson, Mississippi B.S. in Civil Engineering and over 30 combined years of experience in transportation engineering and planning.
Cecil W. Vick, Jr. Realty Officer/Environmental Coordinator Retired 2009	Federal Highway Administration Jackson, Mississippi B.A. in Liberal Arts, M.A. in English, and over 30 combined years of experience in NEPA issues, real estate, and planning.
E. Claiborne Barnwell, P.E. Project Development Team Leader	Federal Highway Administration Jackson, Mississippi B.S. in Civil Engineering, and over 20 combined years of experience with the Mississippi Department of Transportation, transportation engineering, and NEPA issues.

Mississippi Department of Transportation

E. Claiborne Barnwell, P.E. Division Engineer Retired 2009	Mississippi Department of Transportation Environmental/Location Division See Above
Kim D. Thurman Environmental Division Administrator	Mississippi Department of Transportation Environmental/Location Division M.C.S. in Mathematics and Computer Science, and over 15 years of experience in transportation planning.
R. Chad Wallace, P.E. Location Engineer	Mississippi Department of Transportation Environmental/Location Division B.S. in Civil Engineering, and over 15 combined years of experience in transportation engineering and NEPA.

Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

Robert Walker, P. E.	B.S. in civil engineering and over 15 combined years of experience in transportation engineering and planning.
Jimmy Shirley, P. E.	B.S. in civil engineering and over 30 years of experience in transportation engineering.
Wayne Parrish	M.S. in mathematics and over 10 years of experience in transportation planning. Currently retired.
Mark Bailey, P. E.	B.S. in civil engineering with over 30 years of experience in transportation engineering.
David Ruhl, P. E.	B.S. in civil engineering and B.S. in geology and over 15 combined years of experience in transportation engineering and geology.
Aubrey Kopf, SCET	Senior Certified Engineering Technician with over 40 combined years of experience in roadway and conceptual design.
Muhammad Ali, E. I.	B.S. in civil engineering and over 3 years of experience in transportation engineering.
Sara Owen	Engineering Technician with over 20 years of roadway experience.
Mike Schulze	B.S. in environmental studies with over 6 combined years of experience in NEPA and natural resource studies.
Tonya Bolton	B.S. in wildlife management with over 6 combined years of experience in NEPA and natural resource studies.

Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

Laurence J. Meisner, P.E. AICP	Master of Science, Regional Planning, UNC-Chapel Hill; Bachelor of Science, Industrial Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology; more than 30 years of experience.
Elizabeth A. Reed, PWS	Master of Science, Coastal Zone Management/ Oceanography, Florida Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Science, Marine Biology, Auburn University; 20 years of experience.
Todd A. Barker, AICP	Bachelor of Arts in English, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Graduate Management Studies, North Carolina State University; over 15 years of experience.

Freya Thamman	Master of Arts, Geography, University of Arkansas; Bachelor of Arts, Gustavus Adolphus College, Environmental Science; 4 years of experience.
Meridith C. Krebs	Bachelor of Science, Plant and Soil Sciences, University of Tennessee, Knoxville; 3 years of experience.
Michael M. Rutkowski, P.E., AICP	Master of Science, Civil Engineering, North Carolina State University; Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering, University of North Carolina at Charlotte; over 15 years of experience.
D. Norton Webster	Master of Science in Forestry, North Carolina State University; Bachelor of Science in Business, Wake Forest University; 9 years of experience.
Teresa Gresham, PE	Master of Science, Civil Engineering, University of Texas, Austin; Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering, Michigan Technology University; 7 years of experience.
Pete T. Romano, REPA	Bachelor of Arts, Geographical Planning, University of South Florida; over 15 years of experience.
Andy R. Kiley	Master of Science, Environmental Resource Management, Florida Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Science, Biology, Notre Dame; 9 years of experience.
Colleen A. Kiley	Master of Science, Coastal Zone Management, Florida Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Science, Geology, Washington & Lee University; 6 years of experience.
Jennifer C. Haynie	Master of Environmental Management, Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University; Bachelor of Science in Physics, Davidson College; 3 years of experience.
Tommy B. Cousins	Bachelor of Environmental Science, North Carolina State University; 3 years of experience.
Jason A. Yakimowich, P.E.	Master of Science, University of Tennessee; Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering, University of Tennessee; 4 years of experience.
Jennifer J. Napier	Bachelor of Science, General Agriculture, University of Missouri, 6 years of experience.

Coastal Environments, Inc.

David B. Kelley, Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy, Anthropology, Tulane University; Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology, University of Kansas; over 30 years of experience.
Richard A. Weinstein, RPA	Master of Arts, Anthropology, Louisiana State University; Bachelor of Arts, Sociology, Wilkes College; over 30 years of experience.
Joanne Ryan	Master of Arts, Archaeological Studies, Yale University; Bachelor of Arts, Classical Archaeology, University of North Carolina; over 15 years of experience.
Douglas C. Wells, Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Arts, Anthropology, Tulane University; Bachelor of Arts, Chemistry and Anthropology, Vanderbilt University; 14 years of experience.
Josetta A. LeBoeuf	Master of Arts, Anthropology, Louisiana State University; Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology, University of Southwestern Louisiana; 8 years of experience.
Stephanie L. Perrault	Master of Arts, Anthropology, Louisiana State University; Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology, Louisiana State University; 12 years of experience.
Sara A. Hahn	Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology, University of Southwestern Louisiana; 8 years of experience.
Brian P. Tyler	Master of Arts, Anthropology, Louisiana State University; Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology, Washington University in St. Louis; 3 years of experience.
Robert E. Fleming	Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology, University of New Orleans; 3 years of experience.

Ken Weeden & Associates

Kenneth E Weeden	Master of Science, Regional Planning, UNC-Chapel Hill; Bachelor of Arts, Journalism, University of Mississippi; 30 years of experience.
A. Lavelle Fitch	Master of Education, Memphis State University; Bachelor of Education, Memphis State University; 20 years of experience.

Chapter 6

Draft EIS Distribution List

Federal Agencies
Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Environmental Affairs
Department of the Interior
Department of Agriculture
Department of Energy
Department of Transportation
Department of Commerce
Delta Regional Authority
Environmental Protection Agency
Federal Railroad Administration
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Office of Management and Budget
Federal Aviation Administration

Regional Offices
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Federal Emergency Management Agency
General Services Administration
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Federal Transit Authority

State Agencies
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mississippi Department of Archives and History
Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission
Mississippi Department of Human Services
Mississippi Tourism Development
Mississippi Division of Economic Assistance
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
Mississippi Public Service Commission
Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department

Local Governments
Mayor of Alligator
Mayor of Benoit
Mayor of Beulah
Mayor of Boyle
Mayor of Clarksdale
Mayor of Cleveland
Mayor of Coahoma
Mayor of Drew
Mayor of Duncan
Mayor of Friars Point
Mayor of Greenville
Mayor of Greenwood
Mayor of Gunnison
Mayor of Indianola
Mayor of Jonestown
Mayor of Lula
Mayor of Lyon
Mayor of Merigold
Mayor of Mound Bayou
Mayor of Pace
Mayor of Rosedale
Mayor of Ruleville
Mayor of Shaw
Mayor of Shelby
Mayor of Tunica
Mayor of Winstonville

Sunflower County Administrator
Tunica County Administrator
Bolivar County Administrator
Coahoma County Administrator
Memphis Chamber of Commerce
Clarksdale-Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce and Industrial Foundation
Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce
State Senator, District 13
State Representative, District 9
State Representative, District 28

Local Agencies
City of Cleveland-Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission
Benoit Interstate 69 Committee
Great River Bridge Authority
Greenville Port Commission
Economic Development District of Bolivar County
The Nature Conservancy of Mississippi
National Forests in Mississippi
Bolivar County Council on Aging
Cleveland Bolivar County Industrial Development Foundation
Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
Chickasaw Nation
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Jena Band of Choctaw
Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana

Tunica County School System
Coahoma County School System
Bolivar County School System
West Bolivar County School System
Sunflower County School System
Bolivar County Board of Supervisors

Chapter 7
Comments on DEIS and Responses

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement was coordinated with federal, state, and local agencies and organizations, as well as with the public through an extensive public involvement plan.

7.1 DEIS Distribution

The following agencies received a copy of the DEIS. Specific agencies and organizations who responded to the DEIS are indicated with a (*). This chapter also includes the DEIS comments and responses asked by Federal Agencies, Regional Offices, and State Agencies. Response letters are included in **Appendix B** (Agency Coordination).

Federal Agencies

Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Environmental Affairs
* Department of the Interior
* Department of Agriculture
Department of Energy
Department of Transportation
Department of Commerce
Delta Regional Authority
* Environmental Protection Agency
Federal Railroad Administration
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Office of Management and Budget
Federal Aviation Administration

Regional Offices

Department of Housing and Urban Development
Federal Emergency Management Agency

General Services Administration

* U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Federal Transit Authority

State Agencies

* Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

* Mississippi Department of Transportation

* Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission

Mississippi Department of Human Services

Mississippi Tourism Development

Mississippi Division of Economic Assistance

Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

Mississippi Public Service Commission

Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department

Local Governments

Mayor of Alligator

Mayor of Benoit

* Mayor of Beulah

* Mayor of Boyle

Mayor of Clarksdale

* Mayor of Cleveland

Mayor of Coahoma

* Mayor of Drew

* Mayor of Duncan

Mayor of Friars Point

* Mayor of Greenville

Mayor of Greenwood

Mayor of Gunnison

* Mayor of Indianola

Mayor of Jonestown

Mayor of Lula

Mayor of Lyon

* Mayor of Merigold

* Mayor of Mound Bayou

* Mayor of Pace

* Mayor of Rosedale

Mayor of Ruleville

* Mayor of Shaw

* Mayor of Shelby

* Mayor of Tunica

Mayor of Winstonville

* Sunflower County Administrator

Tunica County Administrator

* Bolivar County Administrator

Coahoma County Administrator

Memphis Chamber of Commerce

* Clarksdale-Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce and Industrial Foundation

* Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce

State Senator, District 13

State Representative, District 9

State Representative, District 28

Local Agencies

City of Cleveland-Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission

Benoit Interstate 69 Committee

Great River Bridge Authority

Greenville Port Commission

Economic Development District of Bolivar County

The Nature Conservancy of Mississippi

National Forests in Mississippi

* Bolivar County Council on Aging

Cleveland Bolivar County Industrial Development Foundation

* Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
Chickasaw Nation
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
* Jena Band of Choctaw
Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana

Tunica County School System
Coahoma County School System
Bolivar County School System
West Bolivar County School System
Sunflower County School System
* Bolivar County Board of Supervisors

7.2 Comment and Response Summary

7.2.1 Federal Agencies

United States Department of the Interior

Letter dated August 15, 2005

Comment: Field surveys for the presence of the federally listed endangered plant pondberry (*Lindera melissifolia*) and the federally threatened bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) must be conducted once the Preferred Alternative is selected.

Response: Once the Preferred Alternative was selected, field surveys were conducted for the presence of pondberry *(Lindera melissifolia)* and the bald eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus)* within the project corridor. One population of pondberry was identified during the field survey, which was conducted during September and October, 2005. The alignment was shifted to avoid this population, as described in 4.15.5. No bald eagles were observed and a biological conclusion of no effect was determined, due to the limited amount of suitable nesting habitat.

Comment: The regulations for Section 4(f) define "constructive use" of a 4(f) property as proximity impacts so great as to impair the values or the purposes of the property. The FHWA and MDOT have determined there will be adverse effects under Section 106 to these properties through the impacts of visual and noise intrusions into the historic setting of these properties. We find no evidence in the DEIS that the Mississippi State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has concurred or not concurred with these effect determinations.

Response: According to the letter dated March 16, 2006, the Mississippi SHPO has concurred with the effect determination (see **Appendix B**). There would be no constructive use of Section 4(f) properties associated with the proposed project.

United States Department of Agriculture- Natural Resources Conservation Service

Letter dated: December 15, 2004

Comment: A couple of terminology errors were noticed. The Natural Resources Conservation Service concurs on you Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Response: Terminology was updated to state "Natural Resources Conservation Services" and "Form NRCS-CPA-106".

United States Environmental Protection Agency

Letter dated: February 4, 2005

Comment: Environmental Commitments/Requirements Table: The status of the commitments should state when they will be fulfilled, i.e. phase of the project and the responsible official for ensuring the commitments are met. In addition, the environmental impact commitments should be as specific as possible.

Response: The Environmental Commitments/Requirements table has been updated, including phase of the project, the specific branches or divisions within MDOT that will be responsible, and when commitments will be fulfilled. Environmental commitments have been made more specific, including detail regarding items such as bridge lengths and height and location of berms where sufficient design has been performed.

Comment: Summary Table of Comparison Alternative Combinations and Summary of Impacts: The FEIS should ensure consistency in the numbers of impacts between the two tables.

Response: The tables have been assessed for accuracy between the two tables. In addition, the table has been updated to reflect the Preferred Alternative.

Comment: Alternative Considered: The FEIS should identify the environmentally preferred alignment. EPA recommends the Central Alternative because, on balance, it results in the fewest overall environmental impacts. However, in order to fully assess the project impacts, the environmental and social impacts for the alternatives carried forward in the FEIS needs to be thoroughly analyzed.

Response: The FEIS has identified the Preferred Alternative as the Central Alignment, with some modifications to minimize impacts (see Section 2.4.3.3). The environmental and social impacts were fully assessed, meeting the project's requirements. All alternatives have been evaluated to the extent necessary to identify the Preferred Alternative.

Comment: 3.7 Air Quality: The FEIS should reference the regulatory citations/actions that determined that the area in question is in attainment for the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS).

Response: The text has been revised the text to include EPA's regulatory citations.

Comment: 4.7 Air Quality: The rationale for the exclusion of this assessment should be modified in the FEIS. It is not sufficient to state that because the area is in conformance with the State Implementation Plan that the project would not cause violations of the air quality standards. The

selection should be re-written to address whether or not localized violations of the carbon monoxide standard, based on the different project alternatives, is anticipated.

Response: The text was re-written to state that violations, including localized violations of the carbon monoxide standard, are not anticipated for any of the project alternatives.

Comment: 4.8.1 Design year (2030) Build Alternative: Noise Methodology: The DEIS noise analysis should include the number of facilities that could be impacted by the proposed project. This includes those facilities that were excluded from the noise analysis because they were relocated. Following this, the DEIS could have stated that the facilities would be relocated due to the projected adverse impacts.

Response: All noise impacts were included in the **Table 4-11** in Section 4.8.1. Only structures located within the proposed right-of-way were not included as noise impacts. No structures would be relocated based on noise impacts.

Comment: 4.17.1 Archaeological: The remainder of the alternative should be assessed for archaeological impacts to develop more of a basis for selecting a Preferred Alternative. More information is needed to refine alignment and to fully assess impacts. Consultation and coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices regarding further avoidance, minimization and mitigation should continue as noted in the document.

Response: All alternatives have been sampled on an equal basis to provide a valid basis for comparison of archaeological impacts, and to identify potential impacts on archaeological sites. This effort was extraordinary compared to similar MDOT projects. Archaeology was not the deciding factor in selecting the Preferred Alternative, although the Western Alternative, which was not selected, had the most impact on archaeological sites. Additional work has been performed to avoid sites either previously known or discovered based on the survey. After additional testing was conducted on the Preferred Alternative, the alignment was modified to further avoid and minimize impacts to any significant archaeological sites. Consultation with SHPO and THPOs has been ongoing (see **Appendix B**).

Comment: Wetlands and Stream Impacts: In order to fully assess proposed project impacts and alternatives, the FEIS needs to provide more details on jurisdictional wetlands and streams. In addition to the quantities of each impact, this information should include the quality and function of each wetland and stream and identify whether the resources are jurisdictional or isolated. A wetlands functional assessment method such as Hydrogeomorphic Assessment Method or Index of Biological Integrity should be used. These evaluations and results should be quantified in the FEIS.

Response: All alternatives have been evaluated on an equal basis to determine their relative impact on streams and wetlands, in conformance with guidance provided by the Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District. Additional work has been performed to evaluate the quality, functions, and values of streams and wetlands for the Preferred Alternative. This additional information has been documented in the FEIS. No additional work is needed for other alternatives.

Comment: Aquatic Resource Mitigation: The FEIS should include a draft mitigation plan to compensate for predicted wetland and stream losses that remain following efforts to avoid and minimize such impacts. The document should discuss mitigation on a watershed basis using COE RGL 02-2 and 1995 EPA Mitigation Banking Federal Guidance and functional assessment based on EPA Region 4's Compensatory Mitigation Policy.

Response: Existing mitigation banks such as Tallahatchie National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), O'Keefe Wildlife Management Area (WMA), and Dahomey NWR will be utilized for mitigation. In addition, on-site opportunities will be considered where available. Mitigation has been discussed and evaluated on a watershed basis. MDOT will contact property owners of potential mitigation sites adjacent to Dahomey NWR to identify willing sellers of such sites. Stream and wetland quality, functions, and values as determined above will be used in determining appropriate mitigation measures.

Comment: Water Quality Impacts: EPA notes the DEIS commits that MDOT will work with MDEQ to determine what pollution control measures should be adopted to advance the state's non-point source management plans in the project area…The status of development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for any waterways in the study area should be identified in the FEIS and how the proposed project could affect implementation of restoration efforts in these

watersheds. Due to the presence of several impaired waterbodies in the area, we also request the opportunity to review and/or provide assistance in the development of an appropriate storm water management plan to ensure the effective control of polluted storm water runoff both during and after construction.

Response: MDOT's storm water management plan for the region, including TMDLs, has been accepted by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality.

Comment: Cumulative and Secondary or Indirect Impacts: One of the key purposes of the I-69 corridor is to promote economic development in the lower Mississippi Delta. However, induced growth created by the new proposed I-69 project will also result in additional environmental impacts. Although the document has effectively outlined potential locations of induced growth, there does not seem to be a comprehensive plan of how the resulting secondary impacts will be addressed…A watershed-based approach to protecting aquatic resources from secondary and cumulative impacts is needed. The FEIS should include the type of comprehensive information discussed in the aquatic resource comments regarding project impacts and mitigation so that an effective aquatic resource protection decision- making can be made. Conservation easements held by local governments should be considered once valuable aquatic resources are identified.

Response: The results of the additional economic studies performed by MDOT have been incorporated into the FEIS and will be used to further quantify indirect impacts. Indirect impacts have been minimized by selection of alignments and interchange locations for the alternatives, including the Preferred Alternative. Indirect impacts have been discussed in terms of watersheds.

Department of the Army- Vicksburg District, Corps of Engineers

Letter dated: January 7, 2005

Comment: We have reviewed all the information you have provided and have no specific comments to offer at this time. We will need a copy of the draft intensive cultural resource survey report that is to be conducted once the Preferred Alternative is chosen, and also an indication of how the tribal coordination is progressing.

Response: On December, 2005, a copy of the draft intensive cultural resource survey report was submitted to the Department of the Army. In addition, the Department was informed of the most recent tribal coordination.

7.2.2 State Agencies

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

Letter dated: December 15, 2004

Comment: Our examination revealed that there was little discussion in the document of animal road crossings (especially bear crossings) in known corridors where there are streams and waterways or between adjacent wooded areas or other major pathways locally known as areas of high probable use by wildlife…The Black Bear for the Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*) is a species listed as Endangered by the State of Mississippi…The I-69 project seems to be an ideal project in which to incorporate such design features not only in the interest of wildlife conservation but automobile passenger safety and property loss as well.

Response: Animal road crossings have been evaluated and have not been incorporated into the project. Based on the location of the preferred alternative and the lack of large wooded tracts and corridors near the alignment, it has been determined that such crossings would not be effective. Potential wildlife crossings would be provided at locations where bridges will cross drainage areas. (See 4.15.3)

7.2.3 Native American Tribes

Jena Band of Choctaw Indians

Letter dated: December 3, 2004

Comment: After through review of the document submitted, it has been determined that there will be no significant impacts in regards to the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians.

Response: Coordination appreciated, and it is noted that there will be no significant impact to the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians.

Chapter 8
Agency Coordination and Public Involvement

Early coordination with appropriate agencies and interested citizens was accomplished through project scoping, regular meetings of the steering committee, and an extensive public involvement program. This section of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) provides a summary of the agency coordination effort and public involvement process, as well as summaries of comments made at the citizens' public workshops. In addition, this FEIS also includes a summary of the comments from the corridor public hearing and the pre-hearing workshop.

8.1 Agency Coordination

8.1.1 Notice of Intent

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the lead Federal agency, in cooperation with the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT). In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a NEPA Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was published in the Federal Register on May 9, 2001 (see **Appendix A**). No comments were received in response to the Notice of Intent.

8.1.2 Scoping Meeting

The initial coordination meeting, or scoping meeting, was held on July 11, 2001 at Clarksdale High School, a central location within the project study area. Prior to the meeting, the invitees were provided a map of the project's corridor study area and the agenda for the meeting. The invitees were requested to provide pertinent information in their areas of expertise to the project planners. Since the length of the study area is approximately 100 miles, optional field visits were conducted on Thursday, July 12, 2001. These field visits offered a tour and viewing of a portion of the project area. The field visits also offered the invitees an opportunity to locate their specific concerns for the project planners. The invitation to this meeting, the meeting's sign-in sheet, and the minutes from the July 11 meeting and the July 12 field visits are in **Appendix C**.
The initial scoping meeting had the following purposes:

- Obtain input from agencies/entities on what to avoid or take into account
- Provide means for early and frequent communication of inputs from those favoring or opposing acceptable alternatives
- Establish methods to facilitate and negotiate routes and alternatives
- Evaluate the need to change the project's scope of work based on inputs and comment sheets
- Initiate the scoping process by laying the groundwork for future meetings with specific agencies or groups

Eighty-nine representatives from the following agencies attended the July 11 scoping meeting:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Highway Administration – Southern Resource Center
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service – Tunica County
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Mississippi Valley Division
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- State of Mississippi House of Representatives
- Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department
- Mississippi Department of Archives and History
- Mississippi Department of Transportation
- Mississippi Levee Board
- City of Greenwood
- City of Indianola
- Town of Benoit
- Town of Lula
- City of Cleveland
- City of Tunica
- Town of Ruleville
- Town of Beulah
- City of Clarksdale
- Sunflower County
- Tunica County
- Leflore County
- Bolivar County
- Coahoma County
- Yazoo Mississippi Delta Levee Board
- Archaeological Conservancy
- Clarksdale Press Register
- The Bolivar Commercial
- Delta Council
- City of Cleveland-Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission
- Great River Bridge Authority
- Greenville Port Commission
- Mississippi Space Commerce Initiative

Approximately 20 representatives from the following agencies attended the July 12 field visits:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Highway Administration – Southern Resource Center
- Town of Benoit
- Cleveland-Bolivar County
- Bolivar County
- Sunflower County
- Tunica County

8.1.3 Request for Participation and Comments

A letter was sent on September 19, 2001 to the following federal and state agencies to request their participation in the study process as Cooperating Agencies and solicit comments on the proposed project. An asterisk (*) indicates those agencies that responded to the letter accepting Cooperating Agency status; copies of the invitation letter and the response letters are included in **Appendix B**. A second asterisk (**) indicates those agencies that initially accepted cooperating agency status and later declined that status.

Federal Agencies
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development***
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*
U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service***
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

State Agencies
Mississippi Department of Archives and History*
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks*
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

8.1.4 Other Agency Meetings

In addition to the full agency scoping meetings and the steering committee meetings, the project team also coordinated with individual agencies as a part of the EIS process. These meetings fulfilled requirements of the NEPA/404 merger process and were scheduled as needed.

August 22, 2001

A letter was sent to Native American Tribes in the area inviting them to a coordination meeting on August 22, 2001. Since there was no Native American representation at the meeting, the meeting was cancelled. Two tribes, the Chickasaw Nation and the Cherokee Nation, declined to attend but sent letters thanking the FWHA for the invitation, and stating that they are not aware at this time of any culturally sensitive or sacred sites in or near the study area. However, they realize that the project could lead to the discovery of such sites. If such sites are uncovered, they expect the inadvertent discoveries to be brought to their attention immediately and all work at the site to cease according to applicable federal laws. Copies of the letters are included in **Appendix B**. The meeting invitation letter (located in **Appendix B**) was sent to the following tribes:

- Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
- Chickasaw Nation
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- Jena Band of Choctaw
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation
- Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
- United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee
- Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
- Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
- Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana

August 29, 2001

The second coordination meeting was held on August 29, 2001 between Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. During this meeting, the EPA provided the project team with additional mapping data for the I-69 project, including Primary Ecological Areas (PEA), which are areas of ecological significance. Meeting minutes are in **Appendix C**.

April 2, 2002

A third coordination meeting was held at MDOT offices on April 2, 2002. The purpose of this meeting was to update the Cooperating Agencies, as well as other key governmental agencies and interested Native Americans, on the status of the project and to obtain the agencies' input on the alternative alignments being studied. Prior to the meeting, the invitees were provided with a map

of the alternate alignments, an environmental screening analysis of the alignments, and a copy of the Draft Purpose and Need statement. The minutes for the April 2, 2002 meeting are in **Appendix C**. Of the 18 agencies that were invited to meet with the project team, representatives from nine attended the meeting, for a total of 31 attendees. The agencies that were invited are listed below.

Attended

- Federal Highway Administration
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
- Mississippi Department of Archives and History
- Mississippi Department of Transportation
- Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department

Did Not Attend

- U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
- Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- Jena Band of Choctaw
- Chickasaw Nation
- Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
- Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana

May 8, 2002

The fourth coordination meeting was held at the MDOT on May 8, 2002, and was attended by approximately 26 people. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a status report and present a recommendation for the alternative corridors to MDOT and FHWA for approval. Meeting minutes are in **Appendix C**.

September 4, 2002

The fifth and sixth coordination meetings were held on September 4, 2002, with field visits scheduled for September 5, 2002. The purpose of both meetings was to update the invitees on the

status of the project and to obtain their input on a limited number of merited alternative corridors. The minutes for both meetings are in **Appendix C**. The fifth meeting was the Mayors-County Supervisors meeting. The agencies that were represented included:

- Federal Highway Administration
- Mississippi Department of Transportation
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Delta Initiatives
- City of Cleveland
- Coahoma County
- City of Shaw
- City of Greenville
- City of Mound Bayou
- City of Clarksdale
- Tunica County

February 11-13 2004

The sixth coordination meeting was the Agency-Native American scoping meeting, and was attended by representatives from the following agencies:

- Federal Highway Administration
- Mississippi Department of Transportation
- U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Corps of Engineers
- Mississippi Department of Archives and History

On February 11-13 2004, in accordance with the formal consultation process described in 36 CFR 800, MDOT, in conjunction with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), hosted a Native American Conference. The purpose of the conference was to coordinate with Native American tribal representatives who could possibly identify properties of importance to Native Americans, as well as properties to which one or more tribes may attach religious or cultural significance, relative to the alternatives undergoing further study for SIU 9 and SIU 11. To provide a good cross section of representation for the issues involving the natural and human environments, some Federal and State Cooperating Agencies were invited to send representatives. The conference was attended by representatives of the following agencies, tribes, and consultant teams:

- Federal Highway Administration
- Mississippi Department of Transportation
- Tennessee Department of Transportation
- Mississippi State University
- Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- Chickasaw Nation
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Mississippi Department of Archives and History
- PBS&J
- Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
- Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
- Coastal Environments, Inc.

Bad weather conditions prevented the representative of the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma from attending the conference. Excluding the 22 representatives from the MDOT, TDOT, FHWA, and consultant teams, 13 persons attended the conference. Minutes for this meeting are contained in the **Appendix C**.

The main concern expressed by the Native Americans at the Conference, and on the field visit, was the area adjacent to US 61 in the vicinity of the US 49 intersection at Lula. It was agreed at the Conference that the consultant team would review and refine the alternatives, if necessary, near this intersection. It was also agreed that the consultant team would provide the Native Americans with a copy of the alternative mapping for the alternatives undergoing study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

January 21, 2005

To assist in EPA's review of the DEIS, the project team met with the appropriate EPA staff in its Regional Office in Atlanta, Georgia. The project team, including FHWA and MDOT representatives, provided a broad scope overview of the project, addressed the study approach and project status, discussed the identification of the alternatives' natural environmental issues, Environmental Justice and Community Outreach, development and refinement of alternatives, and addressed any questions from EPA.

Other topics discussed were the public hearings, the actions taken since the public hearings, the Environmentally Preferred Alternative, and what the project team believed would be the alternative recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval. The following was addressed as the environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative the project team intended to recommend to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval:

- In the South Section, between Benoit and Clarksdale, the Central Alternative would be the Preferred Alternative and would take the Lake Vista crossing of SR 1;
- In the Middle Section, between Clarksdale and the Lula area, there is only one study alternative; this would be the Preferred Alternative;
- Between the Lula area near the Welcome Center and the interchange at Dubbs Road in the southern part of Tunica County, there are two alternatives. The Western Alternative would be recommended if the archaeological problems could be overcome. The Central Alternative would be recommended if archaeological problems could not be overcome; and
- Between the Dubbs Road Interchange and the SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville, the Central Alternative would be the environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that would be recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval.

FHWA and MDOT emphasized that it was possible that there might be problems with the approval process internally within the MDOT on the Recommended Preferred Alternative. Before the Recommended Preferred Alternative is processed to the FHWA for approval, a recommendation would first need to be approved by the MDOT Technical Staff and then by the MDOT Transportation Commission. It was stated that if the described alternative was not approved by the MDOT Technical Staff and the MDOT Transportation Commission, then EPA would be notified and another meeting with them would be scheduled. Meeting minutes are in **Appendix C**.

February 3, 2005

A meeting was held with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) in the MDOT Environmental Division Conference Room to discuss the project's archaeological study issues particularly relating to the Western Alternative in the Northern Section near the Welcome Center and the Central Alternative in the Middle Section at the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange.

Representatives from Coastal Environments discussed the known archaeological sites along the Western Alternative in the vicinity of the Welcome Center, and that the shared Central and Eastern alternative between Lula and Dubbs Road had been studied and adjusted to produce an

acceptable alignment from an archaeological perspective. It was determined that the known archaeological sites for the Western Alternative along US 61 in the vicinity of the US 49 intersection near the Welcome Center were too important and the probability of burial occurring in these sites too high to continue the possibility of using the Western Alternative in this area. Therefore, a decision was made to use the Central Alternative in the Northern Section as the alternative that would be recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff as the Preferred Alternative segment.

In addition, modifications proposed for the Central Alternative in the Middle Section at the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange were also discussed. The modified concept was developed to better accommodate the interchange's traffic, to lessen the farmland impacts caused by the original concept, which offset the interchange north of the crossroad to avoid all the archaeological sites, and to create an interchange that would align with the crossroad in a manner that would avoid as much of archaeological sites as possible. The MDAH representatives reviewed the modified concept and gave their concurrence to the modified concept. Meeting minutes are in **Appendix C**.

February 16, 2005

This meeting was to present the Recommended Preferred Alternative to the MDOT and FHWA Technical Staff and to receive the staff's support for presenting the Recommended Preferred Alternative to the MDOT Transportation Commission for the Commission's approval. The Commission's approval is needed to advance the project to the next level of completing the remaining studies on the Preferred Alternative, preparing the Final Environmental Impact Statement, and obtaining a Record of Decision (ROD) to complete the study.

Each person attending the meeting's attendance was registered and every attendee received a handout developed to supplement the presentation. Displays were placed on easels as an aid to the power point presentation.

The presentation was developed in a manner that first provided minimal background information and then presented the Recommended Preferred Alternative in key segments controlled by major issues. The following were presented:

- A Study Area Map and the General Approach to the Study – Up to three alternative routes would be studied from near Benoit to near Robinsonville. Special emphasis would be made on Economic Enhancement and Environmental Justice. Some of the additional critical study issues assessed were archaeology, natural resources, and farmland impacts.
- A Map of the Refined Alternative Corridors and Comments on Critical Environmental Issues – The Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge in the southwest corner of the study, the natural resource concerns in the north part of the study area, and the archaeological and Native American concerns were identified as being critical issues.
- A Map of the Study Alternatives in the Benoit and Dahomey National Wildlife areas Identifying the Recommended Preferred Alternative as the Eastern (Green) Alignment – This alternative segment uses the Eastern Alternative from the connecting point to the adjacent study on Section of Independent Utility 12, the southern crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista, and joins the Central Alternative south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Road between SR 448 and Litton Road. Some advantages of this Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment are: it is about $4 million cheaper than other alternatives; it has the least number of impacted landowners; it is closer to Greenville; and, it has fewer environmental impacts. A disadvantage of this Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment is it is further from Benoit, Rosedale, and the Port of Rosedale.
- A Map of the Study Alternatives for Widening SR 8 to Four Lanes Between Cleveland and Rosedale and Comments on the Recommended Preferred Alternative for Accomplishing this Widening – The Recommended Preferred Alternative is to have a five-lane section extended west of Cleveland to a point west of the new I-69 Interchange with the Central Alternative. West of that interchange the roadway would transition to a four-lane divided section and remain this way until the eastern edge of Pace where the roadway would transition to a five-lane section through the built-up area of Pace. The Recommended Preferred Alternative would then transition back to a four-lane divided section to a point slightly east of Rosedale where it would then transition to a five-lane section and remain a five-lane section to the intersection with SR 1.
- A Map of the Study Alternatives in the Cleveland Area and Comments That the Central Alternative Segment is the Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment – The Central Alternative Segment is the Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment for the following reasons: it is about $60 Million cheaper than the other alternatives; it has the least overall environmental impacts; it is a more direct route for the interstate motorist; and, it was preferred by 82% of the public attending the recent public hearings, including all the cities and towns along US 61 in Bolivar County north of Cleveland. Some disadvantages of using the Central Alternative Segment in this area are: it impacts more prime farmland; and converting US 61 to I-69 would be more disruptive to traffic during construction.
- A Map of the Cleveland Area and a Chart Addressing a Comparison of the Modified Eastern Loop Alternative around Cleveland with the Modified Central Alternative to the West of Cleveland – This comparison was needed to respond to requests received from landowners and the Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce after the public hearings. The comparison showed the Modified Eastern Loop Alternative Segment with the Connector to SR 8 West is not a better alternative than the Modified Central Alternative Segment. The modified Eastern Loop with the SR 8 Connector is estimated to impact 46 more property owners, require the relocation of seven more residents and two more businesses, has 19 more current residents that would be living within ¼ mile of the corridor, has 76 more residents that would be living within ½ mile of the corridor, and would cost approximately $80 Million more than the Modified Central Alternative.

Some advantages of the Modified Central Alternative relative to the Eastern Loop Alternative with the SR 8 Connector are: it is a shorter and more direct route; it has less construction cost; it impacts fewer property owners; it has fewer relocation impacts; it would have less residents living within close proximity of the corridor. Some advantages of the Eastern Loop Alternative with the SR 8 West Connector relative to the Modified Central Alternative are: it passes closer to the existing infrastructure, and it has less impact to prime farmland. A disadvantage of the Eastern Loop Alternative with the SR 8 West Connector is it impacts an existing minority area southeast of Cleveland. The comparison of these two alternative segments did not take into account the major impacts the Eastern Loop Alternative would have on a planned residential subdivision and golf course development that would be located on the south side of SR 8 within the proposed right of way limits at this interchange location. Adjusting the interchange to the west to avoid impacting most of this planned subdivision would also require relocating SR 8 to the north on a parallel county road and placing the interchange access all on the north side of the relocated county road. Based on the analysis made of the Modified Central Alternative Segment with the Central Alternative Segment presented at the public hearings, the modified segment appears to be an improvement. The project team is recommending that the Modified Central Alternative segment be advanced to the same level of study as that accomplished on the Central Alternative. If the study verifies the Modified Central Alternative segment is indeed better, the project team recommends it replace that portion of the Central Alternative that was presented to the public at the recent hearings. The Modified Central Alternative is the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment between the Dahomey National Wildlife area and Clarksdale.

The project team concluded the presentation by stating that the recommended Preferred Alternative for SIU 11 is the Modified Central Alternative, which would use the Eastern Alternative crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista. Following the presentation, MDOT and FHWA Technical Staff asked the project team questions about the project. MDOT Technical Staff stated that further time was needed to consider the recommendation. The meeting minutes, including questions asked at the meeting, are included in **Appendix C**.

August 13, 2008 Meeting and Follow-up Actions

The MDOT and the Mississippi Division Office of the FHWA conducted Cooperating and Participating Agency Coordination Meetings on multiple projects at the MDOT in Jackson on August 13-14, 2008. The goals of the meetings were to address the status of each of the studies and to discuss any special issues or concerns of the agencies. The meeting for this study on SIU 11 of I-69 was held during the morning of August 13th.

A copy of the Final EIS for review and an approval form for the Cooperating Agencies to sign were provided to each Cooperating Agency contact prior to the meeting on August 13th. With the exception of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, all Cooperating

Agencies in this study sent representation to the meeting. The Cooperating Agencies present were:

- the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency;
- the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;
- the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service;
- the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks; and,
- the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Other agencies and organizations represented at the meeting included the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality; the Federal Highway Administration; the MDOT Environmental Division; the MDOT Roadway Design Division; the MDOT Second District; the MDOT Third District; and, Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

MDOT Environmental Division Engineer Claiborne Barnwell presented a power point presentation on the study's history. His presentation addressed: purpose and need; status of the adjoining SIU 10 and SIU 12; project goals; development of alternatives and constraints; public, agency, and Native American involvement in the development of the alternatives; revisions made in the alignments of the alternatives to avoid natural and human environmental impacts; a follow-up independent economic study comparing benefits of the alternatives; the selected Preferred Alternative; that the selected Preferred Alternative is also the Environmentally Preferred Alternative; a summary of the alternatives' impacts; mitigation of impacts; and, the environmental commitments.

MDOT Staff Archaeologist John Underwood made a presentation on the study's archaeological findings and the steps taken in the alternative development to reduce the number of impacted sites.

Table S-1 and **Table S-2** were referred to by Mr. Barnwell in summarizing the impacts of the study alternatives and the Preferred Alternatives for I-69 and SR 8. Ms. Ntale Kajumba, the EPA representative, and Ms. Susan Jarvis, the Corps of Engineers representative, suggested improving **Table S-1** and **Table S-2** in the Final EIS to better explain the Preferred Alternative impact changes that had occurred since the Central Alternative was selected as the Preferred Alternative after the public hearings. It was also suggested that more current estimated costs should be shown in these two tables and/or addressed in their footnotes.

In response to the requests by Ms. Kajumba, Ms. Jarvis, and others, Mr. Barnwell advised **Table S-1** and **Table S-2** in the Final EIS would be updated to better address their concerns.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Barnwell requested the Cooperating Agency contacts provide their signed approval sheets along with any comments to the MDOT as soon as possible. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife representative brought that agency's signed approval sheet to the meeting and gave it to the project team at the meeting. A copy of that signed approval sheet is contained in **Appendix B**.

In the weeks after the meeting, signed approval sheets without cover letters and one with a cover letter that did not require a response were received from the following Cooperating Agencies: the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks; and, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. A copy of each of these three approval sheets and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers cover letter is contained in **Appendix B**.

After the meeting, the MDOT contacted the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) regarding signing their Cooperating Agency Approval Sheet. The USDA-NRCS referenced a previous letter mailed to the Mississippi Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration dated July 11, 2008. The letter stated in part: "After reviewing the document, NRCS has determined that no WRP easements will be impacted by the preferred alternative. Since the agency will not be impacted, we have no reservations with the project and request to be removed as a cooperating agency." A copy of the July 11, 2008, letter and the unsigned approval sheet is contained in **Appendix B**.

As stated previously, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) did not send representation to the meeting. After the meeting, Mr. Barnwell contacted HUD and was informed that their representative in the study retired and was not replaced. They stated that HUD had no interest in continuing as a cooperating agency in the study. A copy of their unsigned approval sheet is contained in **Appendix B**.

The one remaining original cooperating agency whose approval of the Final EIS needs addressing, is the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA signed their approval

sheet and provided suggested comments for inclusion in the Final EIS or Record of Decision (ROD). A copy of the EPA's signed approval sheet is contained in **Appendix B**.

Based on the actions taken in response to this Cooperating Agency Meeting, the approval sheet at the front of this document was revised to two sheets. The first sheet lists the following as Cooperating Agencies: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks; and, Mississippi Department of Archives and History. The second sheet contains the scanned approval signatures.

The comments EPA suggested for consideration in the Final EIS after the August 2008 meeting were mainly listed under the categories of Aquatic Resources, Noise, Alternatives, or Summary of Impacts. The meeting minutes, which are contained in **Appendix C**, provide detailed information on the comments EPA provided after the meeting and the MDOT response to the EPA's suggested comments. **Table 8-1** was developed in response to an EPA request for identifying known hydraulic bridge crossings in the Final EIS.

Table 8-1 Proposed Interstate 69 Section of Independent Utility 11 Probable Bridge Locations Over Waterbodies			
County	**Waterbody**	**Segment (See Appendix G)**	**Approximate Location by Station Number (See Appendix G)**
Bolivar	Lake Bolivar	B1-1	265+00
Bolivar	Straight Bayou	B1-2	485+00
Bolivar	Clear Creek	B2-1	630+00
Bolivar	Stillwater Bayou	B2-1	805+00
Bolivar	Bogue Phalia Tributary	B10-1	889+00
Bolivar	Bogue Phalia Dam	B10-1	906+00
Bolivar	Bogue Phalia	B10-1	931+00
Bolivar	Bogue Hasty	B10-1	1000+00
Bolivar	Hushpuckena River	B15-4	2545+00
Bolivar	Alligator Lake	B15-5	2835+00
Bolivar	Bogue Phalia	SR 8 Widening	506+00
Bolivar	Unnamed Tributary	SR 8 Widening	564+00
Coahoma	Harris Bayou	C2-1	135+00
Coahoma	Yazoo Pass	C7-2	1615+00
Coahoma	Muddy Bayou	C9-1	1810+00
Tunica	White Oak Bayou	T4-2	852+00
Tunica	Jack Lake Bayou	T4-2	1060+00
Tunica	Lost Bayou	T5-2	1480+00
Tunica	Beaver Dam Lake	T5-2	1538+00
Tunica	Big Six Ditch	T5-2	1600+00
Tunica	Beaver Dam Lake	SR 304 Spur	150+00
Tunica	Big Six Ditch	SR 304 Spur	204+00

Source: Neel-Schaffer, Inc. 2004, 2008.

The MDOT response also resulted in the following environmental commitments being added to this Final EIS.

- There are several existing bridges that will not be reconstructed in the initial construction phase; however, should any of these bridges be modified, consideration will be given for eliminating use of scuppers. Scuppers will not be included in the bridge designs for the proposed interstate except where determined to be the only practical way to safely handle the drainage.
- During design, a commitment will be included to consider the construction of detention/retention ponds for stormwater run-off where such a system would make a measurable difference in water quality, function without mechanical components, and require reasonable degree of maintenance.

- To accommodate aquatic and aquatic dependent fish and wildlife movement and migration installation of culverts will include inverted designs. Flat grades and low velocities of channel flow in conjunction with the soil types in the Delta will create a natural substrate by siltation in a very short time. Therefore, the gravel substrate would not provide any useful benefit.
- Impacted streams will be mitigated as part of the 404/401 permit process. In accordance with the EPA's suggestions, it is anticipated that mitigation would consist of restoration of streams within the same watershed using a ratio to be determined through negotiation between MDOT and permitting agencies.

In a letter to the EPA dated March 25, 2009, the MDOT advised the EPA of the format chosen for addressing the comments EPA provided in response to the meeting held on August 13, 2008. A copy of the MDOT letter is contained in Appendix B. The attachment to the MDOT letter was the documentation of the minutes and follow-up actions for the meeting held on August 13, 2008. As previously mentioned, **Appendix C** contains a copy of the documentation that was attached to the MDOT letter.

8.1.5 Coordination with FHWA and Other State DOTs

The project team joined in conferences with the FHWA and other state Departments of Transportation to discuss the background and environmental process for all I-69 projects, and coordinated with resource agencies regarding requirements and data. The FHWA led the conferences, which it viewed as a large scale scoping meeting.

The first joint I-69 conference was held August 16 and 17, 2001. Topics discussed included the national I-69 purpose and need, an overview of the NEPA completion and approval process, and coordination with federal and state agencies. It was emphasized that each of the I-69 segments should meet state and local needs as well as the national purpose. Presentations were made by the Indiana DOT and Mississippi DOT, as well as by federal and regional EPA representatives, the Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The goal of this conference was to establish a process for all I-69 segments that will be collaborative, where each project team will work with each other and federal and state agencies to develop consensus in procedural decisions, utilize resources efficiently, and complete the national I-69 project successfully. Meeting minutes are in **Appendix C**.

The second I-69 NEPA coordination meeting was held in Robinsonville, Mississippi on July 23, 2002, and was attended by representatives from Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi,

Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Topics included balancing the national perspective with state and local needs, facilitating economic development along the corridor, environmental justice, and a cost/benefit discussion. Status report presentations were delivered by the states attending or their designee.

8.2 Public Involvement

A public involvement plan was developed at the initiation of the study process, and was updated throughout the process. The public involvement plan included use of several communications media as well as meetings scheduled at various points during the study. These communications media and meetings are described in the following sections.

8.2.1 Mailing List

A computerized mailing list consisting of elected officials, civic and business groups, local governmental agencies, and interested citizens was compiled at the beginning of the study and continually updated throughout the study process. The mailing list, as well as announcements in local newspapers, was used to notify the public of the study's initiation, progress, and proposals. Dates, times, and locations of the citizen's informational meetings also were announced through direct mailing and local newspaper announcements. At the time of the DEIS preparation, the list contained 674 names.

8.2.2 Newsletters and Brochures

A project brochure was distributed to the public at the initial citizens' informational workshops. The brochure presented the project history and assignment in an informative question-and-answer format. Instructions on how to obtain additional project information also were included in the brochure. Following the first public meetings, a folder was created that included the brochure and other updated project information that was added throughout the process. Information added to the folder may include fact sheets, press releases, maps, analysis spreadsheets, and comment sheets. A copy of the brochure is in **Appendix D**.

8.2.3 Citizen Questions and Comments

Citizens had the opportunity to contact the project team with questions or comments throughout the project process. Contact information was located on newsletters and on the website under the "Contact Us" link. Phone number, address, and email address was given for Neel-Schaffer and for Claiborne Barnwell of the MDOT Environmental Division. Comments received from newsletters or brochures are contained in **Appendix D**.

8.2.4 Project Website

The project website, http://www.msdoti69.com, was established in September 2001, and has been advertised in project publications and at public meetings since that time. The website includes a history of the project, frequently asked questions, project news, links to other I-69 corridors, and contact information. See **Appendix D** for samples of pages from the website.

8.2.5 Environmental Justice Task Force - Community Outreach Program

8.2.5.1 Environmental Justice Task Force Meetings

The Task Force was composed of representatives and citizens of Tunica, Coahoma, Bolivar and Sunflower Counties. An example of an invitation letter sent to an interested citizen is in **Appendix D.** Fifteen citizens attended the Bolivar/Sunflower County combined group meeting on March 5, 2002; the Coahoma County group met on March 6, 2002, with 10 attendees; and in Tunica, the group met on March 7, 2002, with a total of 11 in attendance. Project officials updated the citizen groups, and explained the purpose of the meetings. Attendees were then given a questionnaire that asked them to address any community, social, and economic issues in their community or county.

October 21, 2002

The Tunica County Task Force conducted its second meeting during lunch at the Tunica County Chamber of Commerce Office for the following reasons:

- To update this county group on the status of the study;
- To provide the county group a report on the format of a meeting that would be held later that day with area residents concerning the location of study alternatives from Prichard Road to the northern limit of the project; and,

- To provide this group an opportunity for input through asking questions and making comments in a small, informal environment.

As the Tunica County Task force received their update, members of the Tunica County Task Force made a few comments and asked the project team some general questions. After the project team completed the update and the members of the task force did not have any more questions or comments, several task force members expressed their appreciation for the update. There were not any requests made by members of the task force at this meeting for the project team to study additional alternatives. In general, the task force continues to support the alternative that passes just east of the airport, crosses Prichard Road just west of Oak Grove M.B. Church, crosses Verner Road west of Bonds Road, turns east near Robinsonville to parallel SR 304 to the south, continues east across SR 3 and the railroad, and then turns north to cross SR 304 to connect with the spur at the north end of the project.

Several task force members advised they planned to attend the Special Tunica County Meeting scheduled for later that day, and several task force members also stated they hoped the later meeting would satisfactorily address the attendees' questions, problems, and concerns about the alternatives recommended for further study.

January 29, 2003

The Bolivar/Sunflower County Task Force conducted this dinner meeting at Crawdad's Restaurant in Merigold. The purpose of the meeting was to update this joint two county task force on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternatives presented for detail study in the Draft EIS.

Invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting. Including the representatives from the MDOT, the FHWA, and the consultant team, there were 26 people who registered their attendance at this meeting.

The meeting opened with welcoming and opening comments by the consultant team and the MDOT. Everyone in attendance was then asked to provide a brief self introduction and during their introduction to state their association with the project. The attendees were advised an informal format would be used for the meeting, and aerial photography mapping displays of the alternatives recommended for further study were available for the attendees to view, ask

questions and make comments. The attendees were encouraged to submit their comments by using a comment form that was provided for them at the meeting.

The Bolivar/Sunflower County task force did not recommend adding other alternatives to the study. The members of the task force continue their overall support of the project. However, most of this joint county task force's Bolivar County members support an alternative that crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland, while the Sunflower County members support an alternative that crosses SR 8 east of Cleveland.

There was not much discussion concerning the Central Alternative north of Merigold. This was probably due to that alternative being discussed in such detail earlier in the day at the Highway 61 – North Bolivar County Mayors Meeting. There was also not much discussion concerning eliminating the Western Alternative from further study because that alternative blocks the planned westward expansion of the Dahomey NWR to the Mississippi River. There were not any major expressions of interest for or against the modified western alignment that crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland at the same location as the Central Alternative. That modified western alignment, after crossing SR 8, proceeds northwest on new location to connect to the western alternative near SR 444.

There was a request to move the shared crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland, currently used by the Central and modified Western Alternatives, farther west. The interchange proposed at the current crossing is just east of Shaw-Skene Road, and the current conceptual design for the interchange does not impact the new water well and water tank on Shaw-Skene Road south of SR 8. Kimball Lake is a horseshoe type drainage area that begins to the north and south of SR 8 at a point approximately halfway between Shaw-Skene Road and the Bolivar County Correctional Facility. The next possible crossing point to the west for an interchange would be halfway between the Bolivar County Correctional Facility and the easternmost natural gas pipeline substation. An interchange at this location would have the Bolivar County Correctional Facility in the northeast quadrant, a natural gas pipeline substation in the northwest quadrant, and be bordered by Kimball Lake to the north and south of SR 8. There is another pipeline substation farther west at the western limits of Kimball Lake. For these reasons, this request to move the current crossing of SR 8 farther west was not explored.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the attendees were reminded to provide their comments in writing to the project team. Two comment forms were received from this meeting's attendees, and both of the forms were from Sunflower County residents expressing support for the crossing of SR 8 east of Cleveland. For further details on this meeting, see the minutes contained in **Appendix D**.

January 30, 2003

This meeting at Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce in Clarksdale was held to update this county task force on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternatives presented for detail study in the Draft EIS.

Invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting. Including the representatives from the MDOT, the FHWA, and the consultant team, there were 19 people who registered their attendance at the meeting.

The meeting opened with welcoming and opening comments by the consultant team and the MDOT. Everyone in attendance was asked to provide a brief self introduction and during their introduction to state their association with the project. The attendees were advised an informal format would be used for the meeting, and aerial photography mapping displays of the alternatives recommended for further study were available for the attendees to view, ask questions and make comments. The attendees were encouraged to submit their comments by using a comment form that was provided for them at the meeting.

The Coahoma County Task Force appeared pleased with the alternatives, and they did not recommend adding other alternatives to the study. One of the issues discussed was how the interstate would be accessed from the existing network of county roads, state and Federal highways. Another issue discussed was a concern about coordination of the location of I-69 with the planned City of Clarksdale Airport Expansion.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the attendees were reminded to provide their comments in writing to the project team. However, they chose not to submit any written comments. For further details on this meeting, see the minutes contained in **Appendix D**.

8.2.5.2 Public Meetings and Citizen Informational Workshops

September 24-27, 2001

Four initial, identical public meetings were held to discuss the proposed Interstate Highway 69 (I-69) during the week of September 24, 2001. Locations for the four meetings included Benoit, Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica. Information was given on potential corridor alternatives and combinations of segments throughout the project area. Information packets were provided to each participant in the meeting discussing the goals, advantages, and possible corridor segments for the I-69 project. The meeting minutes are contained in **Appendix D**.

July 16-18, 2002

Three additional public meetings were held the week of July 15, 2002 in Clarksdale, Cleveland, and Tunica. Information was provided concerning the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors, and mapping of known natural and human environmental features within 1,000 feet of the proposed segments. Information packets were provided to each participant in the meeting discussing the goals, advantages, and possible corridor segments for the I-69 project. The meeting minutes are contained in **Appendix D**.

April 30- May 1, 2003

The third set of public meetings was held the week of April 30, 2003. Locations of the meetings included both Cleveland and Clarksdale. Information was provided on the refined 450 feet wide alternative corridors recommended for study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Also, steps were taken to explain to the public the process of deciding on a preferred alternative for the I-69 project. The meeting minutes are contained in Appendix D.

October 21, 2002

This Special Tunica County Meeting – concerning the location of study alternatives at the crossings of Prichard Road and Verner Road, and the location of the study alternatives relative to Oak Grove M.B. Church and Bonds Road – was held as scheduled at the Greater New Saint Paul Church for the following reasons:

- To inform the people living in this area or attending Oak Grove M.B. Church that the location of the I-69 alternative corridor receiving the most favorable comments in this portion of the County could impact their residence or pass near their church;
- To address these people's questions, problems, and concerns; and,

- To provide these people an opportunity to furnish their written comments.

The Special Tunica County Meeting was well advertised by letters to key community contacts, placing flyers in nearby community gathering places, and by making an announcement at the Oak Grove M.B. Church. Including the MDOT, FHWA, and consultant team representatives, there were 74 attendees at the meeting.

Aerial photography mapping of the alternative corridors under consideration was provided for the attendees to better understand the location of the alternatives. For the alternative that had received the most favorable comments at previous meetings, the people with concerns related to the church were advised an interchange would be provided for that alternative at Prichard Road without directly impacting the church or the adjacent cemetery. Upon learning this, the people with concerns about the church property appeared satisfied.

Most of the remaining comments about the alternative that had received the most favorable comments at previous meetings concerned the residences that would be relocated at that alternative's crossing of Verner Road and the noise impacts to remaining residences on Verner Road and Bonds Road. After the alternatives were further refined, it was agreed a follow-up meeting would be conducted to better identify the potential relocates on Verner Road and to address the noise concerns of Verner Road and Bonds Road residents.
Six written comments were received in response to the meeting. The comments were all from people who wanted to be relocated from this area prone to flooding, and a couple of the comments were from people who asked relocation assistance questions. For further details on this meeting, see the meeting minutes in **Appendix D.**

January 29, 2003 (Special Benoit Meeting)

This special meeting was conducted in the morning at the Ray Brooks School near Benoit for the following reasons:

- To update the Ray Brooks School, community, and farming contacts in the Benoit area on the project's status; and,
- To receive these contacts input on the alternatives presented for detail study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The attendees at this meeting were able to view maps of the alternatives in the Benoit area and discuss the alternatives with representatives of the MDOT, the FHWA, and the consultant team. Including the project team representatives, there were 17 attendees at the meeting. Most of the discussions concerned the alignments from SR 1 west to the connecting point of the adjacent study that HNTB Corporation is conducting on Section of Independent Utility (SIU) 12. Public comments regarding the HNTB meeting can be found in **Appendix D**. The following concerns from SR 1 west to the connecting point on the adjacent study were expressed: separation of farmland and potential farmland access issues, seep water from Mississippi River, maintaining drainage, school safety and increased noise at school.

The farming interests at this meeting requested that consideration be given to adding a southern alternative that would cross SR 1 between the Ray Brooks School and Scott near an area known as Lake Vista. In response, it was agreed at the meeting that the SIU 11 consultant team would conduct a sufficient study to determine if this requested alternative should be added to the study. For further details on this meeting, see the minutes contained in **Appendix D**.

January 29, 2003 (Bolivar County Mayors Meeting)

This special luncheon meeting was conducted at Crawdad's Restaurant in Merigold for the following reasons:

- To update the mayors of municipalities along US 61 between Merigold and Alligator on the status of the study; and,
- To obtain the mayors' input on the alternatives presented for detailed study in the Draft EIS.

Invitation letters to the mayors of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, Duncan, and Alligator were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting. The 19 attendees at the meeting included most of the invited mayors, several municipal employees, the President of the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors, a couple of concerned citizens, and project team representatives from the MDOT, FHWA, and consultant team.

The meeting opened with welcoming and opening comments by the consultant team and the MDOT. Everyone in attendance was then asked to provide a brief self introduction and during their introduction to state their desires for the outcome of the project. All the mayors and local officials want an alignment closest to their municipality because they believed such an alignment

would provide the greatest economic impact. All of these officials expressed their support for the alignment that converts existing US 61 to I-69.

The attendees were provided an opportunity to view aerial photography mapping of the alternatives recommended for further study in the Draft EIS and to ask questions and make comments. Most of the discussions concerned the Central Alternative, which would convert as much of existing US 61 as possible into I-69. The consultant team explained a concept that would be used to construct the Central Alternative. During the discussion of the concept, questions were asked concerning potential interchange locations and how these six municipalities would be accessed from the interchanges.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the attendees were asked to provide their comments in writing to the project team. Two comment forms were received from this meeting's attendees, and both of the forms were from local officials who supported the Central Alternative. For further details on this meeting, see the minutes contained in **Appendix D**.

January 30, 2003

This meeting was conducted at the Tunica County Economic Development Building as a follow-up to the meeting held at Greater New Saint Paul Church in Tunica County on October 21, 2002. The purpose of this follow-up meeting was to update the Oak Grove Church members and residents in the areas surrounding Bonds Road, Verner Road, and Prichard Road on the status of the project, and to obtain their input of the alternative corridors recommended for detailed study in the Draft EIS. Using the registration sheet for the previous meeting, invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to this meeting.

Including the MDOT, FHWA, and consultant team representatives, there were 52 people who registered their attendance at the meeting. Welcoming, status report, and general project comments were made by the MDOT, FHWA, and consultant team representatives. A consultant team representative discussed the two alternative locations that are recommended for crossing Prichard Road and the constraints that restricted the amount of adjustment that would be made for the alternative location that crosses Prichard Road and Verner Road.

The consultant team representative identified the locations of the potential residential displacement for the alternative that crosses Verner Road, and the possible ways that a grade

separation bridge would be constructed at the Verner Road crossing to maintain access from one side of the interstate to the other. A MDOT representative advised the MDOT had specialist at this meeting to address relocation and acquisition questions. A FHWA representative elaborated on these issues from a Federal perspective.

There were a few follow-up questions from the audience on the possible construction phasing for providing a grade separation bridge at the crossing of Verner Road. The meeting then moved to an informal format where the attendees would view the aerial photography mapping displays for the alternatives and discuss their relocation type questions with the right of way specialists. The map of the Verner Road crossing identified locations of manufactured and brick homes within and adjacent to the 450 foot wide corridor width.

Some of the concerns discussed during the informal format were: access to the interstate; access to property adjacent or near the interstate; relocation assistance; and potential noise and aesthetic impacts.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the attendees were reminded to provide their comments in writing to the project team. However, only one person chose to submit a comment form. That person's comment was supportive and did not contain any suggestions. For further details on this meeting, see the minutes contained in **Appendix D**.

April 30, 2003 (Special Follow-up Benoit Meeting)

This special follow-up meeting was held at Ray Brooks School in Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Hawley's office. The primary discussions at the previous meeting concerned the crossings of SR 1 southwest of Benoit, and a request to study a crossing of SR 1 farther southwest of Benoit at Lake Vista. After the requests made at the previous meeting were analyzed, it was decided the crossing of SR 1 at Lake Vista merited study.

There were two meeting locations chosen for the Third Series of Public Meetings scheduled for April 30-May 1, 2003, in Cleveland and Clarksdale respectively. Since the Lake Vista crossing was one of the three alternative crossings that would be presented to the public for comments at the meeting in Cleveland that evening, it was appropriate to schedule the follow-up meeting at Benoit. Everyone that attended the previous meeting on January 29th was invited to this follow-up meeting. Because making changes west of the crossing of SR 1 will impact the adjacent study

on SIU 12, the SIU 12 contacts with HNTB and the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department were invited to this follow-up meeting.

The Cleveland – Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce has been actively involved in the Great River Bridge project since its conception. Because it is likely that I-69 will use the Great River Bridge crossing of the Mississippi River on SIU 12, this group also needed to be advised of the history behind the alternative crossings of SR 1 that would be presented at the meeting in Cleveland that evening. By inviting this group to the follow-up meeting, they would have an opportunity to ask questions, express any concerns, and make comments prior to the meeting in Cleveland that evening. The appropriate members and officials of the Chamber, as well as other community leaders they deemed appropriate, were invited to the meeting by the Chamber.

There were 26 people who were registered as attendees at this meeting. Of the 26 people, nine were representatives of either the SIU 11 or SIU 12 project teams. The remaining 17 people were farmers, Chamber officials, City of Cleveland officials, Bolivar County officials or Ray Brooks School officials.

After the welcome was provided and everyone present introduced themselves, the attendees were advised the environmental document for the adjacent study to the west on SIU 12 study would state that the eventual crossing of SR 1 would be determined by the study to the east on SIU 11. Then attendees were informed the SIU 11 study began by using the SIU 12 crossing alternatives of SR 1, but as the engineering and environmental studies for SIU 11 progressed adjustments were needed in the SR 1 crossing alternatives. The following describes the presentation.

- The HNTB crossing location of SR 1 north of Benoit was eliminated from further detailed study because it was too far out of direction to proceed southeast and cross Litton Road prior to the current western limits of the Dahomey NWR.
- The HNTB crossing location of SR 1 just south of Downtown Benoit was eliminated because it had too many negative natural and human environmental impacts to connect with the remaining alternative alignment corridors to the east that are undergoing study.
- The HNTB crossing location of SR 1, southwest of Benoit and just south of Ray Brooks School, was adjusted south to the first curve in SR 1 south of the school. The adjustment in this crossing point was needed to avoid impacting the expansion of the school's athletic fields, and to connect with the SIU 11 study alternatives proceeding east from Benoit.
- The SIU 11 recommended SR 1 crossing location alternatives are just north of Ray Brooks School, at the first curve south of Ray Brooks School, and further south of the school at Lake Vista.

The attendees were advised how the crossing alternatives of SR 1 would connect to the west to the SIU 12 study and how the alternatives would cross SR 448 southeast of Benoit. An aerial photography mapping display was available for the attendees to view these alternatives recommending for further study, and the attendees were informed these were the SR 1 crossing alternatives that would be presented to the public at the meeting in Cleveland later that day.

While seated and in a formal setting, some of the attendees asked questions, made comments, and expressed concerns. Some of the major farmers in the area expressed their appreciation that the Lake Vista alternative was recommended to be added to the SIU 11 study.

The Cleveland – Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce representatives expressed concern that adding the Lake Vista alternative would delay obtaining a Record of Decision (ROD) for the HNTB study on SIU 12. The Chamber representatives advised they hope to obtain I-69 funding to supplement or in lieu of Great River Bridge funding for the Mississippi River crossing. They wanted assurance that adding the Lake Vista alternative would not delay obtaining the ROD on the SIU 12 study so the Great River Bridge construction could begin as soon as possible. The state highway officials from Arkansas and Mississippi advised they believed this could be worked out; however, they emphasized they could not say that for certain to the group today.

The following summarizes the two comment forms submitted by this meeting's attendees.

- One comment form received was from a citizen of Cleveland, who is a member of a Chamber industrial development committee. He did not believe the Lake Vista crossing merited further consideration because he thought it had been ruled out by earlier studies. He believes the only route that would be economically feasible for the ultimate economic success of the MS Delta is either the orange or red route.
- The other comment form received was from a farmer who supported the crossing alternative at Lake Vista. He believes there should be no hurry in the SIU 11 study but a commitment by everyone involved to get best possible route from east of Benoit to the Bridge Location.

For further details on this meeting, see the minutes contained in **Appendix D**.

April 30, 2003 (Special Rosedale Meeting)

This special meeting was conducted in the West Bolivar County Courthouse at Rosedale. SIU 11 of I-69 will interchange with SR 8 either near the eastern or the western limits of the City of Cleveland. The Rosedale – Bolivar County Port is a Mississippi River Port located to the west of SR 1 near the southern limits of Rosedale. SR 8 intersects with SR 1 in the south part of Rosedale, and SR 8 will serve as an intermodal connector between the Port and I-69 at Cleveland. There is also an industrial park near Rosedale and the Port.

SR 8 is a two-lane, two-lane highway over the approximately 18 miles from SR 1 at Rosedale to the western limits of Cleveland. The portion of SR 8 through Cleveland is a five-lane section, and the MDOT has location and environmental approval to widen SR 8 to four lanes from the eastern limits of Cleveland east to Ruleville in Sunflower County.

Regardless of the side of Cleveland on which I-69 has its interchange with SR 8, the MDOT decided SR 8 needed widening to four lanes between SR 1 at Rosedale and Cleveland. The reason the MDOT made this decision was to satisfy the expected intermodal connectivity needs that SR 8 would have associated with freight traffic between Rosedale and Cleveland. At the request of the MDOT, the I-69 SIU 11 study team agreed to conduct the necessary environmental and engineering studies to obtain the environmental clearance for widening this section of SR 8 to four lanes as part of the SIU 11 Study.

The alternatives recommended for further study to accomplish the widening of SR 8 were to be presented to the public at the meeting in Cleveland during the evening of April 30, 2003. The purpose of this meeting at Rosedale was to provide the community leaders, Cleveland Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce officials, local elected officials, and concerned citizens advance notice of the alternatives that would be presented for further study at the meeting that evening in Cleveland. Invitations to the Rosedale meeting were provided by the Chamber.

There were 22 people who were registered as attendees at this meeting. Of the 22 people, 10 were representatives of the SIU 11 project team, MDOT, or FHWA. The remaining 12 people were City of Rosedale officials, Chamber officials, City of Cleveland officials, Bolivar County officials, and concerned citizens.

After a welcome was provided by the MDOT, everyone introduced themselves and stated their interest in the project. The consultant team advised the attendees that aerial photography mapping displays of alternatives for widening SR 8 to four lanes were available for the group to view, ask questions, and make comments. The attendees were informed the same mapping displays would be presented to the public at the meetings scheduled for later that day in Cleveland and the following day in Clarksdale. Before asking the attendees at the Rosedale meeting to view the alternatives, which were placed flat on tables, the consultant team described the alternatives recommended for further study.

Two alternatives were presented for the intersection of SR 8 with SR 1 at Rosedale. One alternative would reconstruct the current intersection and the other alternative would relocate the intersection slightly south to align with the access to the State Park. From the eastern limits of the SR 1 intersection through the industrial park access to slightly west of Riverside Fertilizer Association, the only alternative under consideration is widening SR 8 to five lanes. At Riverside Fertilizer Association, the five-lane section would transition to a four-lane divided section with the new lanes being added on the north side of the existing lanes. The new lanes would continue on the north side of the existing lanes to curve near the electric substation. Using the curve near the electric substation to make the transition, the new lanes would be added on the south side of the existing lanes after exiting the curve. The new lanes would continue to be added on the south side of the existing lanes to the crossing of the Bogue Phalia located west of Pace.

From the crossing of the Bogue Phalia to natural gas pipeline substation just west of the Bolivar County Correctional Facility three alternatives were presented. One alternative is for the four-lane divided type section to transition to a five-lane section along the existing alignment of SR 8. The second alternative for accomplishing is a four-lane divided facility along the existing SR 8 corridor. The second alternative would use the same widening concept as the five-lane. The third alternative for accomplishing the widening at Pace is a four-lane divided alternative on new location to the north of SR 8. This alternative would rejoin SR 8 east of Pace where the new lanes would be added to the south of SR 8.

Between the natural gas pipeline substation just west of the correctional facility and the correctional facility, two alternatives were presented. The first alternative is to transition the four-lane divided section to a five-lane section. The second alternative is to maintain the five-lane section with all the widening being added to the south of the existing lanes.

From just west of the correctional facility to the western limits of Cleveland, the only recommended alternative is a five-lane concept with all the widening being added to the south of the existing lanes. Near the western limits of Cleveland a transition would occur to connect to the existing five-lane section.

The attendees were invited to view the mapping of the alternatives that were placed on the tables, and to discuss any questions, comments, or concerns they had about the project with members of the project team. The attendees were also encouraged to submit any comments they have about the project in writing using the comment form that was provided at the meeting.

The following summarizes the three comment forms submitted by this meeting's attendees.

- One comment advised the widening of SR 8 to four lanes is a great idea and much needed. However, the cost of this project should not be a part of the I-69 feasibility study since it is not essential to the route determination of I-69.
- Another comment was from the Port Director. He advised the need to widen this section of SR 8 to four lanes increases every year. He stated there are substantial cargo movements to and from the Port. Based on statistics from the MDOT and the Corps of Engineers, he advised in 1991 there were 467,000 short tons transported through the Port, while in 1999 there were 582,000 short tons transported. He stated the 712,000 short tons transported in 1995 was the largest amount moved between 1991 and 1999. He believes this project should be carried forward for the need that will be present in future years.
- The final comment received from this meeting's attendees expressed complete support for widening SR 8 to four lanes from Cleveland to Rosedale. This comment also expressed support for the northern bypass at Pace.

The following summarizes the comment forms submitted by people who were not registered as attendees at the meeting in Rosedale on April 30, 2003.

- Fifteen comments were mailed to the project team in the same Cives Steel Company envelope. This company is located in Rosedale. The comments were slightly different; but generally their comments supported the project to address the increased traffic that makes passing slower vehicles and farm equipment difficult, the narrow shoulders on SR 8, what some considered a contributing cause to a high number of traffic accidents, and the increased traffic that I-69 should generate on this section of SR 8.

- Twenty-four (24) comments were mailed in the same envelope from employees of the State Penal Farm located in Sunflower County at Parchman. Eighteen (18) of the 24 comments concerned the I-69 alternatives. These 18 comments expressed support for the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section, which passes just west of the State Penal Farm. Three (3) of the remaining six comments expressed support for four-laning this section of SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland. The remaining three comments expressed support for widening SR 8 to four lanes from Cleveland to Ruleville and/or widening US 49W to four lanes from Ruleville to Parchman.

For further details on this meeting, see the minutes contained in **Appendix D**.

May 2, 2003

This luncheon meeting was requested by the Tunica County Chamber of Commerce on behalf of several landowners and several casinos located in the Robinsonville area. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed interchange locations in the Robinsonville area for the alternatives recommended for further study in the Draft EIS, and the manner in which the connecting roads at the proposed interchange locations would provide access to the casinos at Robinsonville.

There were approximately eight attendees at this meeting. The casino representatives wanted to make sure their traffic, especially from the Memphis area, is provided good access from I-69. The casino representatives expressed their support for the proposed Arkabutla Dam Road Interchange on the Western Alternative, and they advised they favor the Western Alternative over the Central and Eastern Alternative.

The casinos representatives are concerned about the manner in which the Western Alternative joins the spur, which connects existing SR 304 with the new section of SR 304 that is under construction. They advised the proposed Western Alternative will either require their customers from the north to travel west on existing SR 304 through an at-grade railroad crossing or their customers will be required to continue on I-69 south to the Kirby Road interchange to exit. After exiting to the north at the Kirby Road interchange, this traffic from Memphis would then have to turn left at existing SR 304 to proceed west. The casino representatives believe the existing at-grade railroad crossing on SR 304 would require them to direct their traffic to the Kirby Road Interchange. However, they believe the left turn required for their casino traffic at SR 304 after proceeding north from the Kirby Road Interchange is a substantial change in the existing traffic pattern.

The project team representatives were asked why the alternative originally proposed by the county, which crossed existing SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3, was eliminated. The casino representatives and landowners wanted to know if this alternative would be reconsidered or what other options were available to address their concerns.

During the course of the project team's addressing of the questions and concerns expressed at the meeting, the following noteworthy items were either discussed or decided.

- The county's original alternative crossed SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3 on a very severe angle. The angle of the crossing was unacceptable for providing an interchange at SR 304. Changing the angle of the crossing was also unacceptable because of the curves in the I-69 alignment that would be required to connect with the spur to the north and the Western Alternative to the south.
- The proposed Eastern and Central Alternatives would relocate existing SR 304 west of the SR 304 interchange location shared by these two alternatives. The new section of SR 304 west of the interchange would be located to the north of SR 304, bridge over the railroad, and possibly interchange with SR 3 before rejoining the existing five-lane section of SR 304.
- The proposed interchange locations for the Western Alternative would remain at Arkabutla Dam Road, Kirby Road, and existing SR 304.
- SR 304 would be improved west of the interchange for the Western Alternative in the same manner as that proposed for the Eastern and Central Alternatives. The casino representatives were satisfied that implementing this change in the Western Alternative will adequately address their concerns.

For further details on this meeting, see the minutes contained in **Appendix D**.

May 19, 2003

After the public meeting at Cleveland held on April 30, 2003, which was attended by Mr. Joe Aguzzi, the Aguzzi Family requested a Special Meeting with the MDOT. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Aguzzi Family's concerns about how the Western and Central Alternatives divide their farmland. The Aguzzi Family's main concern is their land located south of the Western and Central alternatives' shared crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland.

The only MDOT representatives attending the meeting were the MDOT Third District Engineer and the MDOT Central District Transportation Commissioner. At the request of the Aguzzi Family, there were not any members of the consultant team or the FHWA in attendance at the

meeting. Prior to the meeting, the consultant team provided the MDOT Third District Engineer a copy of the alternative mapping presented at the recent public meetings in Cleveland and Clarksdale.

After the Third Series of Public Meetings and after this Special Meeting, some members of the Aguzzi Family submitted written comments. Those comments, opposing the Western and Central Alternatives crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland and supporting the Eastern Alternative crossing of SR 8 east of Cleveland, are addressed in detail in the minutes for the Third Series of Public Meetings under comments received from attendees at the Cleveland Meeting and under comments received by non-attendees of the Third Series of Public Meetings.

June 20, 2003

The City of Cleveland and Bolivar County officials requested this meeting to help them better understand how to address the complaints they were receiving from landowners about the impacts these two alternatives have on their property. The meeting was held at the MDOT Third District Office in Yazoo City.

Approximately 15 people attended the meeting. The people representing the City of Cleveland and/or Bolivar County in attendance at the meeting included Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce officials and members, the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Director, the Bolivar County Engineer, and the City Administrator for the City of Cleveland. The MDOT had representatives at the meeting from the Third District and the Environmental Division, and the consultant team had two representatives at the meeting.

After a welcome was provided by the MDOT Third District Engineer, the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce officials advised their group is routinely being asked why the Western and Central Alternatives divides so much farmland between Litton Road and the SR 8 interchange location west of Cleveland, which these two alternatives share. He stated they do not know how to answer this question and that he hoped they could obtain some information at the meeting today to assist them in better answering the question.

The MDOT and the consultant team decided it was best for the consultant team representatives to address the question. There were tables in front of the chairs where the attendees were sitting. This sitting arrangement allowed the mapping displays of the Western and Central Alternatives

between Benoit and Clarksdale to be placed flat on the tables in front of the attendees. By placing two sets of mapping on the tables, all the attendees were able to view the mapping as the consultant team discussed the environmental and engineering factors that led to the recommended locations for the Western and Central Alternatives between Litton Road and the proposed SR 8 interchange location west of Cleveland.

After providing the explanation for the location of the Western and Central Alternatives between Litton Road and SR 8, the consultant team addressed some general questions concerning the impacts on the natural and human environment that would be caused by making changes in the alternatives between Litton Road and SR 8. Several attendees, representing Bolivar County interests, advised they understood these constraints. However, they stated they were not sure how well they could relay this information and address future questions on this issue.

The possibility of having a meeting in the future with people impacted by the current alternatives was discussed. The Bolivar County representatives expressed their appreciation for having the meeting, and advised they better understood the constraints that existed for the Western and Central Alternatives between Litton Road and SR 8 west of Cleveland.
For further details on this meeting, see the minutes contained in **Appendix D**.

8.2.6 Public Hearing

The public hearings were held on successive evenings between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. at the following locations:

- Ray Brooks School near Benoit on December 13;
- Bolivar County Expo Center Annex in Cleveland on December 14;
- Clarksdale High School in Clarksdale on December 15; and,
- G.W. Henderson Center near Tunica on December 16.

Information on the refined 450-foot-wide alternatives studied in the DEIS was presented at these hearings using the same format as that used for previous public meetings. In addition, information on the alternatives studied for widening SR 8 in Bolivar County to four lanes between SR 1 at Rosedale and Cleveland was presented at these hearings. Aerial photography mapping displays on the alternative corridors recommended for detail study were placed on tables. In addition, other displays included a maps\ of the study area; known natural and human

environmental features in the study area; alternatives corridors studied and eliminated from further study; alternatives studied in detail in the DEIS; a chart summarizing impacts of the alternatives in the Southern, Middle, and Northern Sections; a chart summarizing impacts of combining the alternatives in the Southern, Middle, and Northern Sections, including the SR 8 widening; and typical roadway sections. Display maps were placed on easels for the public to view, ask questions, and make comments. At each hearing, brief presentations were made by the MDOT Environmental Division and the consultant team.

Discussion at each of the hearings included the following topics:

- The history that led to the three alternative locations for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit.
- The elimination of the alternative crossing of SR 1 just north of Benoit. The elimination was necessary because the crossing is out of direction for connecting to the study alternatives east of SR 1 that pass south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge.

- The elimination of the far-west alternative between Benoit and the crossing of SR 444 in Bolivar County. The elimination was necessary because it bisected the planned westward expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge to the Mississippi River.
- The three locations studied for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit are just north of the Ray Brooks School for the Western Alternative, either in the curve south of Ray Brooks School or at Lake Vista for the Central Alternative, and at Lake Vista for the Eastern Alternative.
- The information provided at the aerial photography mapping display areas for the I-69 alternatives and the alternatives to accomplish the widening of SR 8 to four lanes.
- The location of an alternative relative to a person's residence or property.
- Landowners' concerns about their farmland being divided and their access to divided farmland.
- Environmental constraints, engineering constraints, drainage ditches, and locations of changes in property ownership contributed to alternatives bisecting some farmland. When bisecting of farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave extremely large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative. The property retained by the owner after acquisition of the I-69 right-of-way was acquired could then be large enough to farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would be an uneconomical remnant.
- To lessen the impacts on farmland access, grade separation bridges or interchanges are proposed on a maximum spacing of approximately two miles. In addition, frontage roads are proposed where economically feasible and practical.
- Residents' concern about being relocated or having the interstate near their residences.
- The archaeological findings are major constraints for using the Western Alternative for I-69 in the Lula area near the Welcome Center

- The archaeological findings for the shared Central and Eastern alternative near the crossing of Flea Harbor Road in Tunica County have required this crossing point to be adjusted to two other options. One of the options is west of the current location near the natural gas pipeline crossing, and the other option is farther east of the current crossing point.
- Reconsideration of a previously dropped alternative that would use the Eastern Alternative from Benoit to SR 8 east of Cleveland, and then connect the Eastern Alternative to the Central Alternative at Merigold by following a routing east of the Steam Plant.

Attendees were provided a packet containing the project brochure; a color coded map showing the alternatives studied in the DEIS; a chart summarizing alternative impacts in each of the three sections, including the SR-8 widening; a chart summarizing impacts by combining alternatives between sections, including the SR 8 widening; and a comment form. Please see **Appendix D** for additional information on the DEIS public hearing, including comments and responses.

8.2.6.1 Summary Alternative Preferences by Section

A total of 679 persons registered their attendance at the four public hearing locations. Of the 679 persons, 85 registered in Benoit; 467 registered in Cleveland; 56 registered in Clarksdale; and 71 registered in Tunica. **Table 8-2** shows a summary of alternative preferences based on comment forms, letters, and resolutions received in response to the public hearings. Comment forms, letters, and resolutions were received at or following the public hearings.

Table 8-2
Summary of DEIS Alternative Preferences

Alternative		Support
Southern Section	Western	1
	Central	370
	Eastern	54
SR 8	Widening	3
	Bypass	3
Middle Section		4
Northern Section	Western	12
	Central	3
	Eastern	5

Note: In addition to the numbers stated above, there were 48 comment forms or letters that did not include statements that supported a particular alternative. Of the 48 comments, 12 showed support of the project in general.

Source: Neel-Schaffer, 2005.

The following text indicates cases where a comment may have shown a segment preference or a preference for more than one alternative. For example, in the Southern Section eight persons who stated a preference for Lake Vista of SR 1 crossing for the Southern Section Central Alternative;

four persons preferred a Lake Vista crossing near Benoit. Also, in the Southern Section, there was support for an Eastern to Central Loop Alternative around Cleveland (20 comments); and six persons indicated a preference for either the Eastern Alternative or Eastern to Central Loop Alternative. In the Northern Section, one comment indicated a preference for either the Western or Central Alternative.

8.2.6.2 Resolutions or Letters of Support Received from Local Officials

Resolutions or letters of support for the Central Alternative in the Southern Section were received from the following:

- The Town of Merigold
- The City of Rosedale
- The Town of Duncan
- The Town of Beulah
- The Cleveland Airport Commission
- The City of Greenville
- Delta State University
- The Town of Boyle
- Bolivar County Economic Development District
- Port of Rosedale
- Bolivar County Council on Aging, Inc./Mississippi Public Transit
- The City of Mound Bayou
- The City of Cleveland
- The Town of Renova
- The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce
- The Town of Pace
- The City of Shaw
- The Bolivar County Board of Supervisors
- The City of Shelby

These resolutions or letters of support for the Central Alternative in the Southern Section are shown in **Appendix D** and were included in the totals shown in **Table 8-2**.

Resolutions or Letters of Support for the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section were received from the following.

- The City of Indianola
- The Ruleville Chamber of Commerce
- The Drew Chamber of Commerce
- The City of Drew
- The North Sunflower Community Council of Sunflower County Drew-Ruleville, MS
- The Sunflower County Board of Supervisors
- The Economic Development District of Sunflower County

These resolutions and letters of support for the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section are shown in **Appendix D** and were included in the totals shown in **Table 8-2**.

8.2.6.3 Summary of Comment Forms and Letter Content

Comment forms and letters were submitted in response to the public hearings. The following text provides a summary, by section, of the public's statements in support or against a particular alternative. **Appendix D** includes a summary of the public comments/questions with responses, and copies of submitted comments.

Southern Section

Western Alternative

Reasons provided for supporting the Western Alternative in the Southern Section included:

- Is the straightest and stays on section lines better than the other alternatives.

Reasons provided for not supporting the Western Alternative in the Southern Section included:

- Is a detriment to the long-range business interests of the City of Cleveland. Cleveland has an industrial park not being fully utilized, along with excellent medical care access on the east side of Cleveland. The Western Alternative is too far from emergency medical services offered by the hospital at Cleveland. Most of the services provided in Cleveland for travelers are located along Highway 61. Why make potential customers come through Cleveland for services? Enhance business on the east side and leave the west side for residential growth.
- Extremely disruptive to farmland and wetlands.
- Doesn't make sense to spend federal dollars to support wetland development in this area only to then use federal dollars to build an interstate through them. Crosses through environmentally sensitive lands and would adversely affect wildlife.
- It is imperative that I-69 be as far south of the Ray Brooks School campus as possible. Believes air pollution and noise will severely impact the campus and outdoor activities at the school if this alternative is used.

Central Alternative

Reasons provided for supporting the Central Alternative in the Southern Section included:

- Probability of capturing economic development potential is much greater than the other alternatives. The Central Alternative is closer to more communities in Bolivar County and will benefit the existing population centers along US 61 between Clarksdale and Cleveland and provides best potential for reviving and developing local economies.
- By the Central Alternative being located closer to the municipalities along US 61, the cost to municipalities of providing utility services to businesses at interchange locations would be less. By following US 61, the Central Alternative offers the shortest and least expensive route for manufacturers located between Cleveland and Clarksdale.
- Serves more economically disadvantaged and minority residents. The Central Alternative is the only alternative within the Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone. By passing closest to the minority communities along US 61, this alternative best meets Environmental Justice guidelines.
- Is the least environmentally disruptive and damaging from an ecological standpoint. It avoids more Wetland Reserve Program land than the other alternatives and is the least disruptive to wild game and the natural habitat. By following US 61, there would be less right-of-way needed and fewer environmental issues. The Central Alternative involves fewer wetlands, farmland, stream, and floodplain impacts.
- By being millions of dollars cheaper, is most cost effective route and that is important to taxpayers. In addition, it has the least associated maintenance costs.
- Is the most feasible alternative as well as the shortest and straightest route. It does not create unnecessary additional highways that chop the Delta into smaller pieces creating unnecessary damage to the human and natural environments.
- The Central Alternative would enhance transportation to and from both ports in Greenville and Rosedale together with the industries in Cleveland. It provides more potential for multi-modal transportation by being closer to the ports as well as airports.
- More central to the geographic layout of the Delta. In addition, it is more centrally located to Delta State University and would provide safer and quicker access for non-local traffic generated by Delta State University.
- Does more to develop tourism and heritage efforts of the Blues Corridor by following US 61. It also borders the country's oldest black municipality of Mound Bayou, which was established in 1887 and has a lot of historical value.
- Creates additional four-lane miles of highway in the Delta with use of the connector routes and improvements to existing highways. US 61 is an established four-lane and provides better opportunities for interchange access.
- Common sense says to build the route along the already developed portion of Highway 61. This area does not need two four-lane parallel highway facilities within a few miles of each other.
- Provides good access to Great River Road State Park at Rosedale.
- Shows good financial planning to select estimated cheapest route and the ecosystem would not be affected as much as the other alternatives because those other alternatives do not use US 61.

- Would be closer to more industrial parks. The industrial site on the east of Cleveland has limited expansion area and the Bolivar County believes this alternative has the best long-term economic growth potential for Cleveland and Bolivar County as a whole.
- Shares with the Eastern Alternative the use of the southern crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista; thus placing an alternative as far south of Ray Brooks School as possible. In addition, it as far away as possible from the Benoit Outing Club and the Bolivar community.
- Creates more positive impression than a route by Parchman.
- Could be completed quicker.
- Has most support from the public.

Reasons provided for <u>not</u> supporting Central Alternative in Southern Section included:

- Questions that it is cheaper than other alternatives. Crosses more county roads and drainage ditches at severe angles, which makes bridge construction most costly.
- Is located too far away from Cleveland.
- It is growing more residentially of the west side of Cleveland than the east.
- Do not need to replace an easy access Highway 61 with a facility only allowing access at interchange locations. Our communities are well served with Highway 61. We need more, not less, 4-lane highways.
- Some of the impacted farmland has been in families for generations, has been precision leveled, and has a tremendous agriculture base. Slices, or divides, too much prime farmland with high productivity. Some of the impacted farmland fields are square, irrigable.
- Several years ago when the West bypass of Highway 61 was built, the MDOT acquired 40 acres of farmland from a family. This family advises the land on either side of the 40 acres that they retained became virtually worthless from a productive agriculture state. They advised the productivity dropped about 30% on the remainder of the property because of the manner in which the highway crossed their property. The Central Alternative will take over 150 acres of additional farmland from this family and leave cut up and odd shapes in the remainder of their impacted fields.
- Is a complete detriment to the long-range business interests of the City of Cleveland. Cleveland has an industrial park not being fully utilized, along with excellent medical care access on the east side of Cleveland. Most of the services provided in Cleveland for travelers are located along Highway 61. Why make potential customers come through Cleveland for services? Enhance business on the east side and leave the west side for residential growth.
- Would stop housing growth to the west of Cleveland.
- Too far from emergency medical services offered by hospital at Cleveland.
- It is amazing how so much public opinion has been generated in favor of the Central Route by our elected officials and others who rely on farmers to sustain their own businesses. Private landowners were never reached out to by the community and thus stand to lose a great deal. The I-69 comment process has allowed public opinion to dictate the route at the expense of the private landowners without giving those impacted landowners much consideration.

Eastern Alternative

Reasons provided for supporting the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section included:

- Passes closer to Cleveland. By looping around Cleveland to the south and east, this alternative has a greater length closer to Cleveland than the other two alternatives that pass west of Cleveland.
- Shared crossing of SR 1 at Lake Vista with Central Alternative is the greatest distance away from Benoit. It addition, it is as far away as possible from the Benoit Outing Club and the Bolivar community.
- Is in the Central portion of the Delta. It will bring education facilities closer to all Deltans and will be a more direct route from Clarksdale to Jackson.
- Will furnish the best route to serve more of the Delta to be an economic benefit to more Delta people. The Eastern Alternative will positively impact a greater portion of the whole Mississippi Delta and all of its residents than the other two alternatives.
- Will give the whole Delta a second four-lane highway running parallel with Highway 61, which is already in the middle of Bolivar County, and would greatly increase the economic development for the entire Mississippi Delta.
- Will benefit Drew, Ruleville, Sunflower, Indianola, Itta Bena, Greenwood, and Grenada with an interstate highway.
- The State of Mississippi owns an extremely large tract of land nearly adjacent to this alternative, and that tract of land is presently utilized for the State Penitentiary on a limited basis. The majority of such lands would be available for use for a major economic development project on the same scale as the previously State supported Nissan project near Canton, Mississippi. It is further believed that using this alternative adjacent to such State owned land would give a great advantage to the State of Mississippi in seeking economic development projects of such magnitude.
- Construction costs should be less. There are no hazards to hinder the construction.
- Could be constructed quicker.
- Has lower land values.
- Impacts less existing roads and drainage.
- Impacts less prime farmland and destroys fewer homes.
- Crosses intersecting county roads at better angles for bridge overpass construction.
- Impacts fewer rural water associations.
- Closer to Cleveland Industrial Park (which has empty buildings), hospital, and historic Downtown.
- Closer to motels located along US 61 near Cleveland.
- Does not interfere with residential expansion of Cleveland to the west.
- More north-south and can go along property lines better.
- Closer to Blues Heritage sites like Dockery Plantation and the burial site of Fannie Lou Hammer at Ruleville.
- East Cleveland, Ruleville, and Drew need more development than West Cleveland.

Reasons provided for not supporting the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section included:

- Too far east of existing population centers.
- Would limit the economic growth east of Cleveland.
- Would require industrial traffic to the Port of Rosedale to travel through Cleveland to access the interstate.
- Adds unnecessary length to the interstate.
- Runs through rural Sunflower County.
- It doesn't make sense to spend federal dollars to support wetland development in this area only to then use federal dollars to build an interstate through them.
- Has no municipal growth opportunities in Sunflower County portion.
- Creates safety threat and detriment to tourism by passing so close to the State Penal Farm at Parchman.
- Extremely disruptive to farmlands and wetlands, and would adversely affect wildlife.
- Crosses through environmentally sensitive lands and disrupts duck hunting areas.
- Uses too much farmland, and we will not see positive effect.

SR 8 Improvements in the Southern Section

Comments on the SR 8 Widening in Bolivar County from Rosedale to Cleveland

- Do not need a bypass at Pace.
- Do widening through Pace along existing alignment.
- Bypass at Pace would cause too much negative impacts on farming operations; therefore, do widening along existing alignment.

Middle Section

Reasons provided for supporting the one alternative in the Middle Section included:

- Seems to be ideal route because of its use of the existing roadway.
- Makes good economic sense.

Reasons provided for not supporting the one alternative in the Middle Section included:

- Impact to a family farm at the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange.

Northern Section

Western Alternative

Reasons provided for supporting the Western Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- For visitors and tourists traveling on I-69 that would use the Welcome Center located on US 49 North near the US 61 intersection, it is the closest alternative to the Welcome Center. In addition, they would only have to exit at the US 49 North-SR 315 Interchange, proceed north on US 49 until slightly outside the limits of the interchange, and then turn left into the Welcome Center.
- Less costly and safer because it requires only one interchange at the junction of US 49 North and SR 315.
- Believes there would be less chance of encountering Native American archaeological sites along US 61 than on new alignment.
- Less costly because of its use of US 61.

Reasons provided for not supporting the Western Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- Farmland impacts at the US 61 interchange near Dundee.

Central Alternative

Reasons provided for supporting the Central Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- A resident living on Verner Road in Tunica County advised they were willing to be relocated.
- Seems to be the best route.

Reasons provided for not supporting the Central Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- The concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives pass too far east of the Welcome Center. Lack of use may close the Welcome Center.
- For visitors and tourists traveling on the concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives that would use the Welcome Center, they would have to exit at the US 49 North-SR 315 Interchange, proceed north on a US 49 connector across the US 61 Interchange until slightly outside the limits of the interchange, and then turn left into the Welcome Center.
- The concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives require an interchange at the junction of SR 315 and the US 49 North Connector, a short US 49 North connector, and another partial interchange at US 61.
- More costly and not as safe because the concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives require two interchanges at the junction of SR 315 and the US 49 North.

- Believes there would be more chance of encountering Native American archaeological sites on new alignment than along US 61.
- Farmland impacts at the Crenshaw Road interchange.

Eastern Alternative

Reasons provided for supporting the Eastern Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- The shared Western and Central alternative in north Tunica County would divide a farm.
- North of Tunica in the vicinity of the Hollywood community, there is not a need to have so many highways (Old US 61, US 61, and I-69) so close together because not enough space is available for economic development opportunities without adversely impacting residents and residential development opportunities. The Eastern Alternative is farther away from existing population centers better suited for opening new economic development opportunities in the eastern portion of Tunica County along the SR 3 corridor.

Reasons provided for <u>not</u> supporting the Eastern Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- The concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives pass too far east of the Welcome Center, which may mean the Welcome Center would get less use. For visitors and tourists traveling on the concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives that would use the Welcome Center, they would have to exit at the US 49 North-SR 315 Interchange, proceed north on a US 49 connector across the US 61 Interchange until slightly outside the limits of the interchange, and then turn left into the Welcome Center.
- The concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives require an interchange at the junction of SR 315 and the US 49 North Connector, a short US 49 North connector, and another partial interchange at US 61.
- More costly and not as safe because the concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives require two interchanges at the junction of SR 315 and the US 49 North.
- Believes there would more chance of encountering Native American archaeological sites on new alignment than along US 61. Indian mounds yielding valuable pottery, artifacts, and arrowheads are found along the Buck Island corridor.
- Will reduce prime farmland that produces high value cotton and soybeans (Class I). The alternative Crosses and splits a three generation family farm.
- Farmland impacts at the Crenshaw Road Interchange.
- Perennial streams and wetlands will be destroyed along Buck Island Bayou and the Coldwater River.
- Wildlife habitat will be destroyed that provides food and cover for deer, turkey, rabbits, quail, and small animals.
- Floodplain impacts.
- Conservation tillage is being practiced on farmland along these stream corridors
- Has more residential relocations than other alternatives.

8.2.7 Follow-Up Actions

Several agencies, elected government officials, and citizens have been involved in continued coordination with the I-69 project team. Details of correspondences and meetings are included in **Appendix C** and **D**.

Chapter 9

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Chapter
Index

A

Access 4-24

Affected Environment 3-1

Agency Coordination 7-1

Alternatives Carried Forward ..... 2-16 through 2-37

Air Quality 3-24

Archaeology.....4-69 through 4-72

B

Build Alternative.....2-3 through 2-37

Business Impacts.....4-25 through 4-28, 4-84

C

Churches 3-18, 4-22

Coastal Zones and Coastal Barriers 3-30, 4-59

Community Cohesion .....4-18, 4-22 through 4-25

Conservation .....3-52, 4-67 through 4-69

Construction Impacts 4-88

Coordination 8-1, 8-7

Cultural Resources..... 3-49, 4-69

Cumulative Impacts 4-86

D

Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge 3-19, 3-55

Description of Proposed Action.....1-1

E

Economic Characteristics.....3-12

Economic Development.....1-11 through 1-16

Economic Impacts.....4-4 through 4-10

Endangered Species ..... 3-44 through 3-48, 4-66, 4-67

Environmental Consequences.....4-1

Environmental Justice.....3-15, 4-10 through 4-21

Evaluation of Alternatives .....4-96 through 4-101

Existing Noise Levels 3-28

F

Farmland ..... 3-5, 3-6, 4-2 through 4-4

Fat Pocketbook Mussel 3-49

Floodplain 3-38

Habitat Fragmentation 4-62

G

Geology.....3-30

H

Habitat. .....3-40 through 3-49, 4-62

Hazardous Materials .....3-55, 4-77 through 4-80

Historic Resources 3-54, 4-73

I

Indirect Impacts .....4-80 through 4-86

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments 4-92

L

Land Use ..... 1-2, 3-3 through 3-4, 4-1

Least Tern 3-46

Legislation 1-10

Level of Service 1-9

List of Preparers 5-1

M

Meetings.....4-11 through 4-16, 8-1 through 8-32

Mitigation..... 4-52 through 4-57, 4-63, 4-72, 4-75, 4-86

Modal Interrelationships 1-16

Modes.. .....2-1 through 2-3

N

Need for Improvement.....1-3 through 1-19

No-Build Alternative 2-1

Noise ... .3-26 through 3-29, 4-32 through 4-36, 4-89

P

Pallid Sturgeon.....3-47

Parks and Recreation.....3-19

Permits 4-57

Pondberry.....3-48

Population .....3-7 through 3-12, 3-17

Preparers 5-1

Prime Farmland.....3-5, 3-6, 4-2, 4-3

Project Purpose 1-3

Proposed Action.....1-1

Public Involvement 8-1, 8-8

R

Railroads 3-22, 4-29

Relocations..... 4-18, 4-19, 4-25 through 4-28

Relationship Between Short Term 4-95

Roadway Deficiencies 1-19

S

Safety 1-18

Schools 3-18, 4-22

Secondary Impacts.....4-80 through 4-86

Section 4(f) 3-55, 4-75

Short-Term Impacts 4-95

Social Impacts.....4-4 through 4-28, 4-85

Soils 3-31

Surface Water..... 3-34, 4-39

Study Area 1-1, 3-1

T

Threatened and Endangered Species..... 3-44, 4-66

Traffic . .....1-5 through 1-10

Transportation.....1-9, 3-21, 4-29

Transportation System Management 2-1

U

Utilities 3-23, 4-30, 4-31

V

Vegetation..... 3-40, 4-59

W

Water Quality.....4-39 through 4-41, 4-90

Water Resources 3-34, 4-38

Wetlands .....3-36, 4-48 through 4-52

Wild and Scenic Rivers..... 3-39, 4-59

Wildlife .....3-41 through 3-43, 4-63 through 4-64

Appendix A
Notice of Intent

Federal Register Notice of Intent

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

RTCA Special Committee 195; Flight Information Services Communications (FISC)

Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92–463, 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2), notice is hereby given for Special Committee (SC)–195 meeting to be held May 31–June 1, 2001, starting at 8:30 a.m. each day. The meeting will be held at RTCA, Inc., 1140 Connecticut Ave., NW., Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20036.

The agenda will include: May 31: Plenary convenes: (1) Welcome and Introductory Remarks; (2) Review Meeting Agenda; (3) Working Group (WG)–1, Aircraft Cockpit Weather Display; Plenary reconvenes: (4) Review of Previous Meeting Minutes; (5) Report from WG–1 on Activities; (6) Review of Product Registry Guidance Draft Document; June 1: (7) Review of NOTAMS and D–ATIS Draft Specification; (8) Work on Change 1, RTCA Minimum Aviation System Performance Standards (MASPS) for FIS/B; (9) Other Business; (10) Date and place of Next Meeting; (11) Closing.

Attendance is open to the interested public but limited to space availability. With the approval of the chairman, members of the public may present oral statements at the meeting. Persons wishing to present statements or obtain information should contact the RTCA Secretariat, 1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 833–9339 (phone); (202) 833–9434 (fax); or http://www.rtca.org (web site). Members of the public may present a written statement to the committee at any time.

Issued in Washington, DC, on May 2, 2001.

Janice L. Peters,

Designated Official.

[FR Doc. 01–11719 Filed 5–8–01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

RTCA Special Committee 172; Future Air-Ground Communications in the VHF Aeronautical Data Band (118–137 MHz)

Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92–463, 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2), notice is hereby given for Special Committee 172 meeting to be held May 22–24, 2001, starting at 9 a.m. The meeting will be held at RTCA, 1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20036.

The agenda will include: May 22: Plenary Session Convenes; (1) Introductory Remarks; (2) Review Meeting Agenda; (3) Review Previous Meeting Minutes; (4) Disposition the Final Review and Comment (FRAC) Form comments for DO–224A, Change 1 (VHF Data Link MASPS); (5) Disposition the FRAC Form comments for VHF Data Link MOPS Mode 3. May 23 and 24: (6) Disposition of the FRAC Form comments continues; (7) Review ICAO Aeronautical Mobile Communications Panel (AMCP) and EUROCAE WG–47 Activities; (a) Aeronautical Operational Control Over Aircraft Communications Addressing and Reporting Systems (AOA) in MOPS; (b) Ground Reference Station requirements; (c) ARINC 631 Specification vs. SARPs vs. MOPS/MASPS maintenance issues; (8) Report on Next Generation Communications (NEXCOM) Advisory Rulemaking Committee (NARC) and other FAA digital activities; (9) Report on Airline Electronic Engineering Committee Systems Architecture Interfaces Sub-committee (AEEC SAI) work on NEXCOM; (10) Other Business; (11) Date and Location of Next Meeting; (13) Closing.

Attendance is open to the interested public but limited to space availability. With the approval of the chairman, members of the public may present oral statements at the meeting. Persons wishing to present statements or obtain information should contact the RTCA Secretariat, 1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 833–9339 (phone); (202) 833–9434 (fax); or http://www.rtca.org (web site). Members of the public may present a written statement to the committee at any time.

Issued in Washington, DC, on May 2, 2001.

Janice L. Peters,

Designated Official.

[FR Doc. 01–11720 Filed 5–8–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: Bolivar, Sunflower, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties, Mississippi

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Federal Highway Administration is issuing this notice to advise the public that an environmental impact statement will be prepared for the I–69 Corridor Study in the above referenced counties in Mississippi.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Cecil Vick, Realty Officer/Environmental Coordinator, Federal Highway Administration, 666 North Street, Suite 105, Jackson, MS 39202–3199, Telephone: (601) 965–4217. Contacts at the State and local level, respectively are: Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental/Location Division Engineer, Mississippi Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 1850, Jackson, MS 39215–1850, telephone: (601) 359–7920; Mr. James Dickerson III, District 2 Engineer, Mississippi Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 660, Batesville, MS 38606, telephone (662) 563–4541; and Mr. Walter Lyons, District 3 Engineer, Mississippi Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 630, Yazoo City, MS, 39194, telephone (662) 746–2513.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FHWA, in cooperation with the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a segment of the proposed Interstate 69 corridor in Mississippi.

This segment of the proposed interstate would be located in one of at least three identified corridor areas. It has logical termini at the Great River Bridge crossing of the Mississippi River near Benoit, Mississippi, and at Mississippi Highway 304 east of Robinsonville in Tunica County, Mississippi.

This approximately 100-mile section of I–69 in Mississippi is a part of the much larger transcontinental highway 69 project extending from Canada to Mexico. The purpose of the I–69 project in Mississippi is very similar to the national purpose of improving international and interstate trade and facilitating economic development. I–69 is also a transportation recommendation of the Delta Initiative. The Delta Initiative is aimed at the revitalization and economic development of the Lower Mississippi Delta. The I–69 corridor, after crossing the Mississippi River, will enter Mississippi at its western termini in Bolivar County and extend in a generally northerly direction through several Mississippi Delta counties exiting Desoto County to Memphis, Tennessee. The highway is a proposed full control of access facility, and interchanges will be studied at various locations.

Alternatives under consideration include (1) taking no action and (2) build alternatives.

The FHWA and MDOT are seeking input as a part of the scoping process to assist in determining and clarifying issues relative to this project. Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed or are known to have interest in this proposal. A formal scoping meeting with federal, state, and local agencies, and other interested parties will be held in the near future.

Coordination will be continued with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, tribes, and private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed or are known to have an interest in this proposal. Of paramount importance to this effort is the public participation process. Several public involvement meetings will be held, a newsletter will be developed, and a website will be created to keep the public informed. The draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the official public hearing.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

Andrew H. Hughes,

Division Administrator, Jackson, Mississippi.

[FR Doc. 01–11586 Filed 5–8–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–22–M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

[Docket Number MARAD–2001–9615]

Requested Administrative Waiver of the Coastwise Trade Laws

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Invitation for public comments on a requested administrative waiver of the Coastwise Trade Laws for the vessel ISABELLA.

SUMMARY: As authorized by Pub. L. 105–383, the Secretary of Transportation, as represented by the Maritime Administration (MARAD), is authorized to grant waivers of the U.S.-build requirement of the coastwise laws under certain circumstances. A request for such a waiver has been received by MARAD. The vessel, and a description of the proposed service, is listed below. Interested parties may comment on the effect this action may have on U.S. vessel builders or businesses in the U.S. that use U.S.-flag vessels. If MARAD determines that in accordance with Pub. L. 105–383 and MARAD's regulations at 46 CFR Part 388 (65 FR 6905; February 11, 2000) that the issuance of the waiver will have an unduly adverse effect on a U.S.-vessel builder or a business that uses U.S.-flag vessels, a waiver will not be granted.

DATES: Submit comments on or before June 8, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to docket number MARAD–2001–9615. Written comments may be submitted by hand or by mail to the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL–401, Department of Transportation, 400 7th St., SW, Washington, DC 20590–0001. You may also send comments electronically via the Internet at http://dmses.dot.gov/submit/. All comments will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection and copying at the above address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., E.T., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. An electronic version of this document and all documents entered into this docket is available on the World Wide Web at http://dms.dot.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kathleen Dunn, U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, MAR–832 Room 7201, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. Telephone 202–366–2307.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Title V of Pub. L. 105–383 provides authority to the Secretary of Transportation to administratively waive the U.S.-build requirements of the Jones Act, and other statutes, for small commercial passenger vessels (no more than 12 passengers). This authority has been delegated to the Maritime Administration per 49 CFR § 1.66, Delegations to the Maritime Administrator, as amended. By this notice, MARAD is publishing information on a vessel for which a request for a U.S.-build waiver has been received, and for which MARAD requests comments from interested parties. Comments should refer to the docket number of this notice and the vessel name in order for MARAD to properly consider the comments. Comments should also state the commenter's interest in the waiver application, and address the waiver criteria given in § 388.4 of MARAD'S regulations at 46 CFR Part 388.

Vessel Proposed for Waiver of the U.S.-build Requirement

(1) Name of vessel and owner for which waiver is requested. Name of vessel: *Isabella*. Owner: A B Creel, LLC.

(2) Size, capacity and tonnage of vessel. According to the applicant: "Length 58 feet, Breadth 16.1 feet, Depth 11.7 feet, Gross Tons 54, Net Tons 49, Measurement pursuant to 46 U.S.C. 14502"

(3) Intended use for vessel, including geographic region of intended operation and trade. According to the applicant: "Vessel will be used for six to twelve passenger charters. Vessels' intended market is corporate charters for full day sails and meetings and overnight or weekend charters for one or two couples. Areas will be out of Fajardo, Puerto Rico and local islands, Culebra and Vieques November through June and the mid-Chesapeake Bay and local waters July through October."

(4) Date and Place of construction and (if applicable) rebuilding. Date of construction: 1997. Place of construction: Kaohsiung Hsien Taiwan, Republic of China."

(5) A statement on the impact this waiver will have on other commercial passenger vessel operators. According to the applicant: "Fajardo, Puerto Rico. The industry in Puerto Rico is limited to sports fishing vessels, large multi-hulls, bare boats, and a single mono-hull vessel of which I am aware. There will be no impact on the sports fishing vessels. There will be no impact on the large multi-hulls as these are big catamarans, which * * * take out large groups * * * for hotel guests. There is no impact on the bare boat charter fleet as they are all foreign manufactured vessels and are strictly for rent with the renter being the captain. The single mono-hull in the same area is overbooked most of the time and turns down enough charters that the overflow to my vessel alone would keep me in business with out competing for customers. * * * There are no other vessels like the one I operate in Puerto Rico and there is a high demand, since most vessels of my size and quality charter out of the U.S. or British Virgin islands * * * If my analysis of this market is as accurate * * * I alone will not be able to fill the demand and my presence will not unduly adversely affect existing operations * * *

Chesapeake Bay: I intend my primary base to be in the Solomon Island area of the Chesapeake Bay. There are some very large day sail vessels in the Norfolk area and the Baltimore and Annapolis area of the bay however these are mostly to take out large groups 20 to 100 on

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Early coordination
Invitation to scoping meeting
Correspondence with Native American Tribes
Invitation to Native American consultation meeting
Agency comments on the DEIS
Agency preferred alternative concurrence
Memorandum of Agreement
Cultural Resources Correspondence
RWD-600
Water Management Unit and Conservation Easement Correspondence
Cooperating Agency Signature Sheets
US Environmental Protection Agency Correspondence

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Early coordination

I69-G

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mississippi Field Office
6578 Dogwood View Parkway, Suite A
Jackson, Mississippi 39213

September 24, 2001

RECEIVED
NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC.
OCT 10 2001
MARK B
ROBERT
ORIG → MJRS

Mr. Andrew H. Hughes
Federal Highway Administrator
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Dear Mr. Hughes:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has received your letter dated September 19, 2001, included therein a notification of the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for Section 11 of the proposed Interstate 69 in Mississippi. Our comments are submitted in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661-667e).

Your agency has requested that the Service be a cooperating agency in the National Environmental Policy Act documentation of this project. The Service consents to that request. We also agree to provide fish and wildlife resources information, to review all environmental documents, and to participate in coordination meetings as they relate to the Interstate 69 project.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the planning and development of this project.

Sincerely,

Curtis B. James

Curtis B. James
Acting Field Supervisor

cc: Fish and Wildlife Service, Atlanta, GA
Attn.: Aaron Valenta, John Hefner

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Historic Preservation Division
PO Box 571 • Jackson, MS 39205-0571 • 601 / 359-6940 • Fax 601 / 359-6955 • mdah.state.ms.us

RECEIVED
NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC
OCT 15 2001
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ONO. 02-4345-07

October 1, 2001

Mr. Andrew H. Hughes
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Mississippi Division
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Dear Mr. Hughes:

RE: Cooperating Agency Status
Interstate 69/Section 11

We have received your letter of September 19, 2001, asking that the Department of Archives and History join as a cooperating agency in the development of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Section 11 of the new Interstate 69. We are aware of the importance of this project for both Mississippi and the nation and will be happy to join in the development of the EIS as a cooperating agency on the terms outlined in your letter.

Our staff are available to provide any appropriate information, participate in coordination meetings and joint field reviews, and review and comment on any technical studies from the standpoint of effects on historic and cultural resources. As this effort proceeds, Tom Waggener, our Review and Compliance Officer, at 601-359-6940, will be the initial point of contact and coordination. Please feel free to contact him or other staff as needed.

Sincerely,

Elbert R. Hilliard
State Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell

Board of Trustees: William E. Winter, president / Van R. Burnham, Jr. / Arch Dalrymple III / Lynn Crosby Gammill / E. Jackson Garner
Gilbert R. Mason, Sr. / Duncan M. Morgan / Marris D. Ramage, Jr. / Rosemary Taylor Williams / *Department Director Elbert R. Hilliard*

USDA NRCS
Natural Resources Conservation Service

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Suite 1321, Federal Building
100 West Capitol Street
Jackson, MS 39269
COM: (601) 965-5205
FAX: (601) 965-4940

DLG-C

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NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC

OCT 15 2001

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October 3, 2001

Mr. Andrew H. Hughes, Division Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Mississippi Division
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, MS 39202

Dear Mr. Hughes:

Thank you for your letter of September 19, 2001, inviting the Natural Resources Conservation Service to be a cooperating agency in the environmental study of proposed new Interstate 69/Section 11.

The NRCS welcomes the opportunity to be a part of this great endeavor and would like to offer any assistance available to make it a success.

Please keep us informed of activities associated with this project.

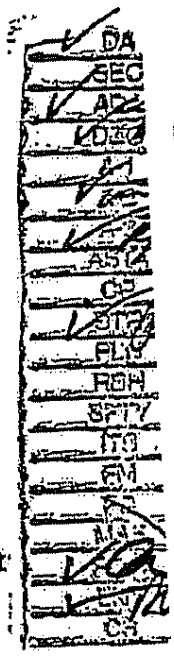
Sincerely,

Homer L Wilkes

Homer L. Wilkes
State Conservationist

cc:
Reginald M. Spears, Assistant State Conservationist (PROG), NRCS, Jackson, MS
Al Garner, Assistant State Conservationist (OP), NRCS, Jackson, MS
James E. Johnson, Assistant State Conservationist (FO), NRCS, Greenwood, MS

FILE copy for farmland file



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

October 23, 2001

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Mississippi Division
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Subject: Participation of EPA, Region IV as a Cooperator in the Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Interstate 69 - Section 11

Dear Andrew Hughes:

This is in reference to your subject request of September 19, 2001, for assistance in the development of the above EIS. We accept the role of a cooperating agency subject to further discussion as to our specific involvement. The level of our participation may also be constrained by staff and travel resources. After this dialogue a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) may be necessary to formalize our responsibilities. In the past we have been able to assist in activities associated with the scoping process, participate in site inspections of the subject area, and help in the development of some aspects of the study plan (e.g., alternatives analysis, environmental justice).

Further, we will be able to provide review and comment on preliminary documents above and beyond our normal responsibilities. Of course, any involvement as a cooperating agency will not negate our responsibilities for review and comment pursuant to Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and Section 102 (2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act. With these general qualifications we are willing to provide assistance.

An example of a Memorandum of Agreement which we have used in the past to define the basics for our cooperative effort is attached.

When we can be of further assistance in this matter, Ntale Kajumba (404-562-9620) will serve as initial point of contact.

Sincerely yours,

Heinz J. Mueller, Chief
Office of Environmental Assessment
Environmental Accountability Division

Attachment

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
Mississippi Division
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

File 2-4345-07

IN REPLY REFER TO
HRW-MS

November 28, 2001

Mr. Heinz J. Mueller, Chief
Office of Environmental Assessment
Environmental Accountability Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth St., NW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Dear Mr. Mueller:

Subject: Cooperating Agency Status
Interstate 69/Section 11

Thank you for your October 23, 2001, letter accepting the role of a cooperating agency for the development of the EIS for this project. We understand that all agencies' participation in such activities is at times restricted by staff and travel resources.

We find the MOA you provided to be a good basis for our roles as lead and cooperating agencies. A signed copy is attached.

Sincerely yours,

Lawrence J Kastner

Andrew H. Hughes
Division Administrator

Attachment

cc: Robert Walker, Neel-Schaffer

RECEIVED
NEEL SCHAFFER, INC.
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MOA with MDOT and FHWA

I. Introduction and Purpose

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), has begun an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Section 11 of the proposed new Interstate 69. The proposed corridor is part of a 1,650-mile long continuous national highway that will start at the Michigan /Canada Border and end at the Texas/Mexico Border. The proposed project extends from SR 304 east of Robinsonville in Tunica County to the Great River Bridge crossing of the Mississippi River near Benoit in Bolivar County.

The document will address various environmental impacts associated with selected alignments. EPA's review of a prospective NEPA document will consist of an examination of the proposed projects environmental impacts on the water quality, air quality, hazardous waste, natural resources and socioeconomic issues.

The purpose of this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is to establish an understanding between MDOT, FHWA, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding certain conditions and procedures to be followed in the proposed cooperation.

In accordance with the FHWA's request under 40 CFR Part 1501.6, EPA agrees to be a Cooperating Agency in the preparation of the EIS on the Basis of its special expertise in environmental areas. Specifics in this regard will be determined during staff contacts.

The parties intend that the development and the preparation of the information provided for the EIS will satisfy the requirement of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

II. General Provisions

1. FHWA and MDOT shall act as the lead agency and shall be responsible for assuring compliance with all applicable requirements of NEPA and other pertinent regulations. FWHA and MDOT, with consultation, advise, and assistance from EPA

2. The FHWA and MDOT will consider any additional alternatives developed by EPA during preparation of the EIS.

3. EPA, as a cooperating agency, will assist in scoping, development of alternatives, participate in site investigations, and other areas to be determined. EPA has the right of concurrence on language in the EIS on all matters relating to its input.

4. The EIS will include a complete review of alternatives considered by the FHWA and MDOT including the criteria used in alternative selection and the relative environmental impacts of alternatives.

5. EPA retains its review or comment authority over the EIS under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

6. An EPA representative may attend public hearings and other meetings and will be available to respond to inquiries, correspondence, etc., pertinent to any information prepared by EPA.

DATE:_____

Environmental Accountability Division
EPA, Region IV

DATE: NOV 2 8 2001

Environmental Team Leader
FHWA Mississippi Division

MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS
SAM POLLES, Ph.D.
Executive Director

I69-0

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12/19/01

PRJ FILE
02-4345
COOPERATING AGENCY FILE

December 11, 2001

Mr. Andrew Hughes
U.S. Dept. of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Mississippi Division
666 North State Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Re: Cooperating Agency Status
Interstate 69/Section 11

Dear Mr. Hughes:

In response to your letter regarding I-69 Section 11, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) agrees to participate as a "cooperating agency."

Should you have any questions, please call me at 601-432-2118.

Sincerely,

Christopher S. Alonzo
Environmental Director, MDWFP

cc: Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
VICKSBURG DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
4155 CLAY STREET
VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI 39183-3435

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/

I-69-2

January 8, 2002

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Operations Division
Regulatory

SUBJECT: Cooperating Agency Status, Interstate 69/Section 11 RSR

Mr. Andrew H. Hughes
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Mississippi Division
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Dear Mr Hughes:

I am responding to your letter of September 19, 2001, requesting that the Corps of Engineers be a cooperating agency for the subject project.

We will be happy to act as a cooperating agency by attending meetings when possible, reviewing related documents, including a wetlands determination, and completing a Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines review. Mr. Philip Hollis of my staff will be the point of contact for this action.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact Mr. Hollis, telephone (601) 631-5491, telefax (601) 631-5459.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth S. Guynes
Chief, Regulatory Branch

Printed on Recycled Paper

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Memphis Area Office
One Memphis Place
200 Jefferson Avenue, Suite 1200

January 17, 2002

Mr. Andrew H. Hughes
Division Administrator
U.S. Department Of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Dear Mr. Hughes:

Subject: Cooperating Agency Status
Interstate 69/Section 11

This is in response to your letter regarding Cooperative Agency Status Interstate 69/Section 11.

We have been active and expect to continue our involvement and partnership with Federal Highway Administration (U.S.DOT)/ Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), as a cooperating agency.

We believe the I-69 project is vital to the economic development and tourism in the Lower Mississippi Delta Region and key to the success of the Delta Initiative. Therefore the Department of Housing and Urban Development looks forward to a continued productive working relationship with U.S. Dept. of Transportation/MDOT regarding Delta Initiatives.

Please direct inquiries, invitations, concerns and information regarding the I-69/Section 11 to Ben. Davis, Special Programs Officer/Delta Initiatives, 200 Jefferson Ave. Suite 1200, Memphis, TN 38103 or call 901-544-3457.

Sincerely Yours,

Benjamin F. Davis, Jr.
Special Programs Officer/Delta Initiatives

MISSISSIPPI Department of
MDAH
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

HISTORIC PRESERVATION
PO Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205-0571
601-576-6940 • Fax 601-576-6955
mdah.state.ms.us

July 15, 2004

Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer
Mississippi Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 1850
Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1850

RE: Cultural Resources Survey of the Proposed Route of Interstate 69 Between Robinsonville and Benoit, Bolivar, Coahoma, tunica and Sunflower Counties, Mississippi; MDOT Project No. NCPD-1069-00(001)/103104/101000
Report # 04-106

Dear Mr. Barnwell:

We have reviewed the February 2004, cultural resources survey report of Coastal Environments, Inc. for the above referenced undertaking pursuant to our responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800. We concur with the recommendations presented in Table 8-1. The 43 sites considered eligible should be avoided or proposed mitigation measures addressed in an MOA.

The National Register Bulletin: *Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Archaeological Properties* asserts, "Overlooking the significance of small sites may skew our understanding of past lifeways as those sites not only receive less research attention, but also are destroyed without being recorded thoroughly because they are 'written off' as ineligible for listing in the National Register.

Do to the large number of archaeological sites that will be affected by the proposed undertaking, there is a high probability that small or overlooked sites are included in the identified sample of 217 sites recorded. Because of the potential loss of unrecognized significant site types, we recommend that a small sample (ca.10%) of the archaeological sites determined ineligible be considered for additional archaeological investigations to ensure that these often ignored sites are adequately considered. The sample should include a range of site types and investigative techniques.

If you need additional information or have questions about this letter, please contact Cliff Jenkins or me at 601-576-6940.

Sincerely,

Thomas H. Waggener

BY: Thomas H. Waggener
Review and Compliance Officer

cc: Clearinghouse for Federal Programs

RECEIVED
JUL 16 2004
ENVIRONMENTAL LOCATION

Board of Trustees: William F. Winter, president / Van R. Burnham, Jr. / Arch Dalrymple III / Lynn Crosby Gammill / E. Jackson Garner
Gilbert R. Mason, Sr. / Duncan M. Morgan / Martis D. Ramage, Jr. / Rosemary Taylor Williams / *Department Director: Elbert R. Hilliard*

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Invitation to scoping meeting

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY

I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
TELEPHONE: 601.948.3071 • FAX: 601.948.3178 • EMAIL: i69@neel-schaffer.com • WEBSITE: www.msdoti69.com

August 14, 2002

Ms. Susan P. Hampton
Chief, Regulatory and Environmental Compliance Branch
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mississippi River Commission/Mississippi Valley Division
P. O. Box 80
Vicksburg, MS 39181-0080

SUBJECT: AGENCY-NATIVE AMERICAN SCOPING MEETING
INTERSTATE 69, SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY NUMBER 11
PROJECT NUMBER NCPD-I-69(1); 103104 / 101000

Dear Ms. Hampton:

The Mississippi Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration invite you and/or your representative(s) to attend this coordination meeting. The meeting will be conducted in Clarksdale at the Headquarters of the Delta Regional Authority, located in the old federal building, from 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM on Wednesday, September 4, 2002. Attached is a map to this downtown meeting location at the corner of Third Street and Sharkey Street.

The purpose of the meeting is to update the cooperating agencies, other key governmental agencies, and the Native Americans on the status of the project and to obtain input on a limited number of merited alternative corridors that the project team believes should be taken forward for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). For your reference, attached are the map and the screening analysis for the alternative corridors the project team presented to the public on July 16-18, 2002.

The agenda for this coordination meeting is attached. During the opening session, attendees will be furnished the project's status and presented the alternative corridors that the project team believes merit further study. Break-out sessions will be offered for the Benoit to Clarksdale and Clarksdale to Robinsonville segments. The goal of the two break-out sessions is to discuss the alternative corridors in sufficient detail to develop organized comments for presentation in the closing session. The closing session will consist of presenting and discussing the break-out session comments, and developing a plan to resolve issues delaying the selection of the alternative corridors for detail study in the DEIS.

A field visit will be offered the following day on September 5. To assist us in preparing for the meeting, please complete the attached post card and return it to us by Monday, August 26, 2002. If you have any questions, please give me a call at 601-948-3071.

Sincerely,

Robert Walker, P.E.
I-69 Project Manager

Attachments

pc: Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell – MDOT Environmental Division Engineer
Mr. Cecil Vick – FHWA, Mississippi Division

Following Federal agencies, or their designee, were mailed the same invitation correspondence to this meeting as that mailed Ms. Susan P. Hampton of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Federal Highway Administration
Jackson, MS

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Vicksburg District
Regulatory Branch
Vicksburg, MS

U.S D.A. Forest Service
Atlanta, GA

U.S.D.A. Forest Service
Jackson, MS

U.S.D.A. – Natural Resources Conservation Service
Jackson, MS

U.S.D.A. – Natural Resources Conservation Service
Clarksdale, MS

U.S.D.A. – Natural Resources Conservation Service
Cleveland, MS

U.S.D.A. – Natural Resources Conservation Service
Ridgeland, MS

U.S.D.A. – Natural Resources Conservation Service
Tunica, MS

U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
Delta Initiative Program Officer
Memphis, TN

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Atlanta, GA

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Atlanta, GA

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Jackson, MS

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Boyle, MS

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Grenada, MS

The following state agencies, or their designee, were mailed the same invitation correspondence to this meeting as that mailed to Ms. Susan P. Hampton with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Arkansas Highway and Transportation Dept.
Environmental Division
Little Rock, AR

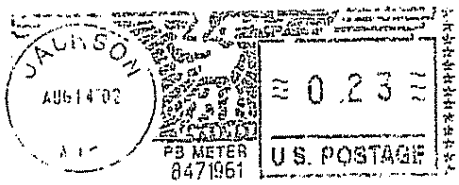
HNTB Corporation
Kansas City, MO

INTERSTATE 69
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY #11
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

NATIVE AMERICAN – AGENCY SCOPING MEETING
DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY HEADQUARTERS
CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI
1:30 PM, SEPTEMBER 4, 2002

MEETING AGENDA

▪ OPENING SESSION	1:30 – 2:30 PM
• Welcome and Introductions	Claiborne Barnwell MDOT
• Project Status Update	Robert Walker Neel-Schaffer
• Agency Coordination	Cecil Vick FHWA
▪ BREAK-OUT SESSIONS (Attend One of Two Options)	2:30 – 3:30 PM
• Option One Benoit to Clarksdale Alignments	
• Option Two Clarksdale to Robinsonville Alignments	
▪ CLOSING SESSION	3:30 – 4:30 PM
• Break-Out Session Report Benoit to Clarksdale Alignments	Project Team Representative(s)
• Break-Out Session Report Clarksdale to Robinsonville Alignments	Project Team Representative(s)
• Issues Needing Addressing Prior to Selecting the Alternatives for Detailed Study in the Draft EIS And an Action Plan for Addressing Those Issues	R. Walker, C. Vick & Claiborne Barnwell (Moderators)
• Closing	Claiborne Barnwell



NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC.
I-69 Corridor Project Manager
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

MISSISSIPPI PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO SENGIT — SECTION 11

SCOPING MEETING SEPTEMBER 4, 2002
FIELD VISIT REQUEST SEPTEMBER 5, 2002

Please provide us the following information for the September 4 (Wed.) Scoping Meeting:

Agency (Name): _____

Agency contact person and telephone number:

_____ _____
Name Phone Number

Number of representatives that will attend: _____

To request a field visit for September 5 (Thurs.), please provide us the following information:

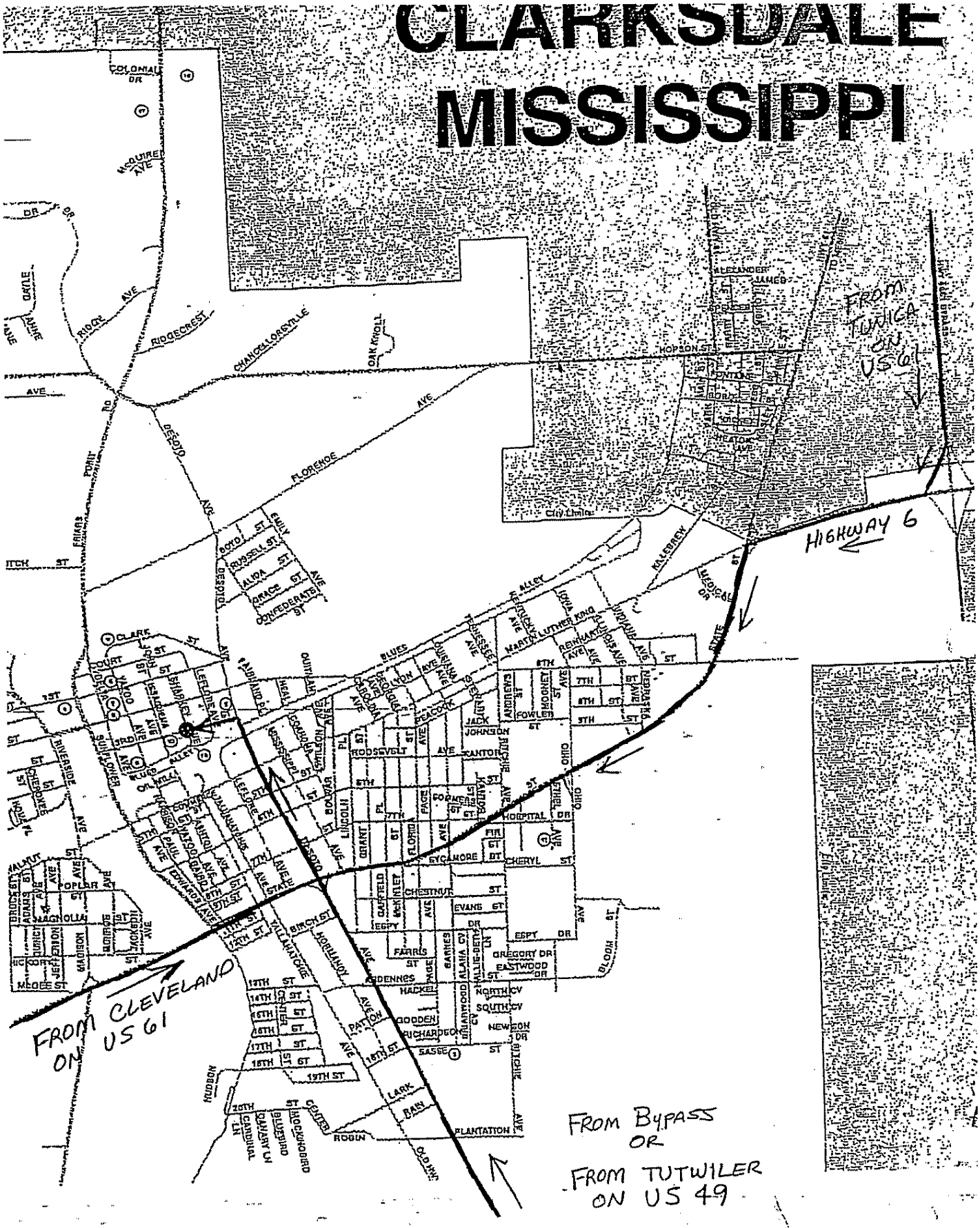
Number of representatives that will attend: _____

Your requested field visit is to the following location (s): _____

_____

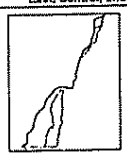
_____

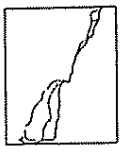
CLARKSDALE MISSISSIPPI



I-69 Corridor: SIU 11
Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties
East, Central, and West Corridors

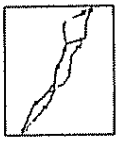
MDOT





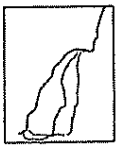
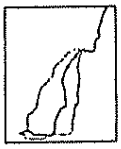
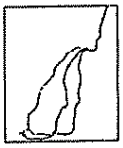
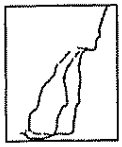
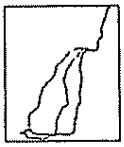
		West	Central	East
Length (miles)	Existing Alignment	18.3	21.3	16.7
	New Alignment	89.4	93.8	98.5
	Total Length	107.7	115.2	115.2
Crossings	Intermittent Streams	110	115	124
	Perennial Streams	17	18	20
	Railroads	4	4	5
	Transmission Lines	5	6	7
	Gas Pipelines	11	14	10
Acreage in Corridors	Farmland	6,578.7	6,922.2	6,877.1
	Open Water	22.0	19.9	35.8
	Catfish Ponds	11.4	58.3	2.8
	100-Year Floodplain	403.0	1,168.8	1,174.4
	Potential Wetlands	240.8	183.7	170.1
	Conservation Areas	108.7	210.2	117.5
Other	Archaeologic Sites	1	1	0
	Environmentally Sensitive Areas	0	0	1
	Historic Structures	0	0	1
	Economic Impacts	High	Highest	Higher

Northern Alternatives

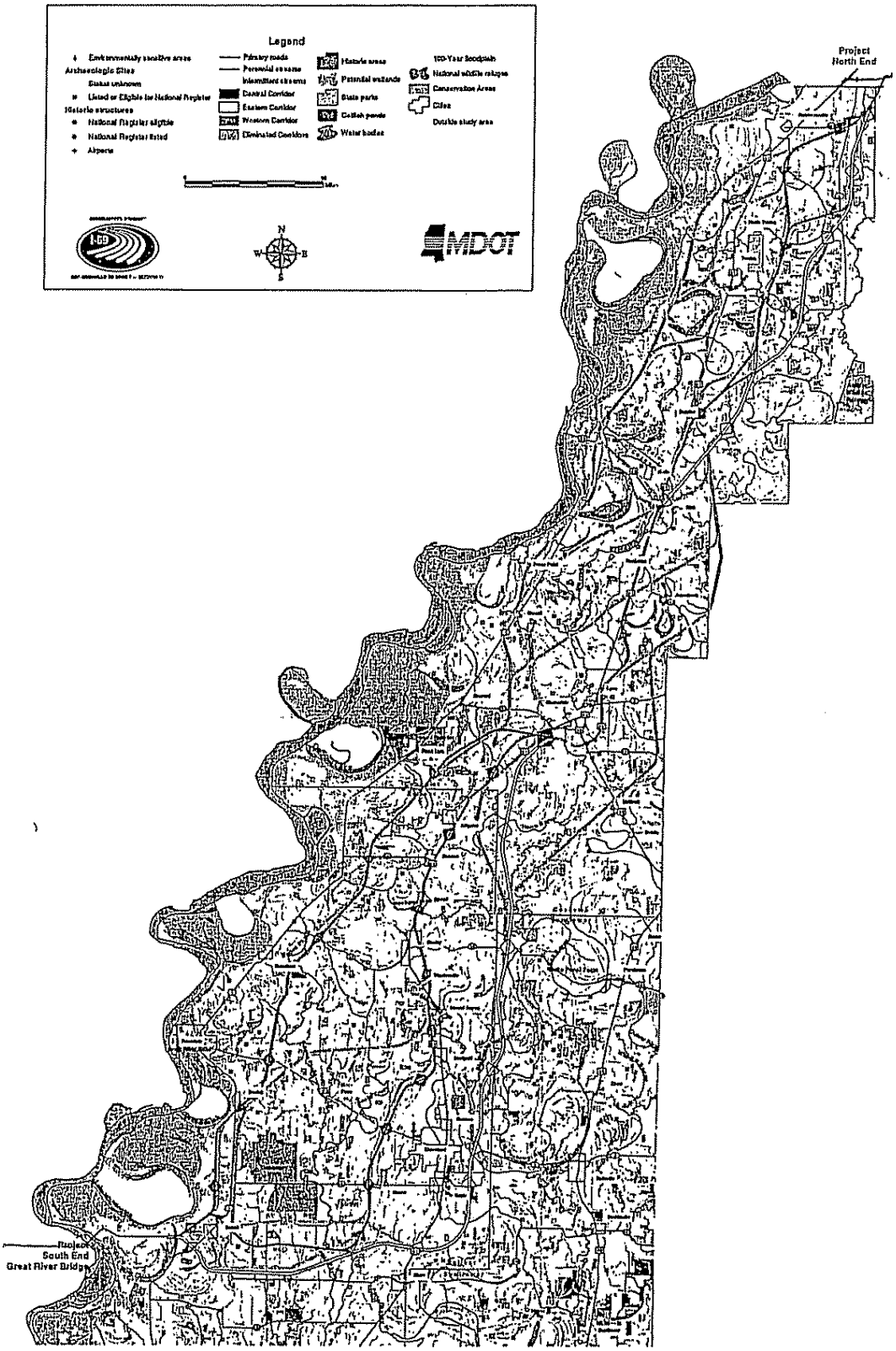


		West 1	West 2	Central 1	Central 2	East 1	East 2
Length (miles)	Existing Alignment	0.0	2.4	0.0	2.4	2.4	0.0
	New Alignment	35.2	32.9	34.9	32.8	32.1	33.7
	Total Length	35.2	35.3	34.9	35.0	34.5	33.7
Crossings	Intermittent Streams	47	46	39	37	41	37
	Perennial Streams	7	7	7	7	6	6
	Railroads	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Transmission Lines	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Gas Pipelines	3	5	3	5	4	1
Acreage within Corridor	Farmland	2,352.0	2,281.9	2,280.2	2,310.3	2,117.0	2,145.5
	Open Water	3.1	3.1	1.7	1.7	5.0	5.0
	Catfish Ponds	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	100-Year Floodplain	205.4	144.5	300.7	232.6	291.7	352.8
	Potential Wetlands	28.9	30.4	39.7	41.2	26.8	25.4
	Conservation Areas	78.4	73.5	111.7	106.6	61.8	84.7
Other	Archaeologic Sites	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Environmentally Sensitive Areas	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Historic Structures	0	0	0	0	1	1

Southern Alternatives

		West 1	Central 1	Central 2	East 1	East 2
Length (miles)	Existing Alignment	18.9	21.3	21.3	16.7	16.7
	New Alignment	53.4	42.0	42.0	65.8	66.2
	Total Length	72.4	63.3	63.3	82.5	82.9
Crossings	Intermittent Streams	65	76	76	87	86
	Perennial Streams	10	11	11	15	15
	Railroads	2	2	2	3	3
	Transmission Lines	3	3	3	5	5
	Gas Pipelines	8	1	1	11	9
Acreage within Corridors (acres)	Farmland	4,284.7	4,542.0	4,550.7	4,531.8	4,542.2
	Open Water	16.9	16.2	20.5	30.8	16.8
	Catfish Ponds	11.4	55.3	58.3	2.8	2.8
	100-Year Floodplain	258.5	850.1	857.7	821.8	871.2
	Potential Wetlands	210.2	124.0	98.3	144.7	173.6
	Conservation Areas	33.2	98.5	83.1	50.8	85.0
Other	Archaeologic Sites	1	1	1	0	0
	Environmentally Sensitive Areas	0	0	0	1	1
	Historic Structures	0	0	0	0	0


Legend
Environmentally sensitive areas
Archaeologic Sites
Status unknown
Listed or Eligible for National Register
Historic structures
National Register eligible
National Register listed
Airports
Primary roads
Perennial streams
Intermittent streams
Central Corridor
Eastern Corridor
Western Corridor
Eliminated Corridors
Historic areas
Potential wetlands
State parks
Golfish ponds
Water bodies
100-Year floodplain
National wildlife refuges
Conservation Areas
Cities
Double study area
N
W
E
S
MDOT
Project
North End
Project
South End
Great River Bridge

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY

I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
TELEPHONE: 601.948.3071 • FAX: 601.948.3178 • EMAIL: I69@neel-schaffer.com • WEBSITE: www.msdoti69.com

August 14, 2002

Mayor Robert Fava, Jr.
Town of Alligator
P.O. Box 95
Alligator, MS 38720

SUBJECT: MAYORS AND COUNTY SUPERVISORS COORDINATION MEETING
INTERSTATE 69-SIU 11; FROM NEAR BENOIT TO NEAR ROBINSONVILLE
PROJECT NUMBER NCPD-I-69(1); 103104 / 101000

Dear Mayor Fava:

The Mississippi Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration invite you to attend a coordination meeting for the referenced project The meeting will be conducted in Clarksdale at the Headquarters of the Delta Regional Authority, located in the old federal building, from 9:00 AM to Noor on Wednesday, September 4, 2002. Attached is a map from US 61 to this downtown meeting location at the corner of Third Street and Sharkey Street.

The meeting will update the mayors and county supervisors on the results of the public meetings conducted on July 16-18, 2002. For your information attached are the map and the screening analysis on the alternative corridors presented at those meetings.

The agenda for this coordination meeting is also attached. During the opening session, attendees will be furnished the project's status and presented th alternative corridors that the project team believes merit consideration for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Break-ou sessions will then be conducted concurrently for each of the counties represented at the meeting. At least one project team member will attend each session At these sessions, attendees will be encouraged to make comments and ask questions about the merited alternative corridors. The project team representative at the break-out sessions will address comments, answer questions, and take sufficient notes to furnish a report during the closing session. The closing sessio will consist of presenting and discussing the break-out session reports, and developing a plan to resolve issues delaying the selection of the alternativ corridors for detail study in the Draft EIS.

A field visit will be offered on September 5. To assist us in preparing for the meeting and possible field visit(s) the following day, please complete th attached post card and return it to us by Monday, August 26, 2002. If you have any questions, please give me a call at 601-948-3071.

Sincerely,

Robert Walker, P.E.
I-69 Project Manager

Attachments

pc: Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell – MDOT Environmental Division Engineer
Mr. Cecil Vick – FHWA, Mississippi Division

The following Bolivar County and municipal officials were mailed the same invitation correspondence to this meeting as that mailed to Mayor Robert Fava, Jr., of the Town of Alligator.

Bolivar County Board of Supervisors
Cleveland, MS

Mayor, Town of Benoit
Benoit, MS

Mayor, Town of Beulah
Beulah, MS

Mayor, Town of Boyle
Boyle, MS

Mayor, City of Cleveland
Cleveland, MS

Mayor, Town of Duncan
Duncan, MS

Mayor, Town of Gunnison
Gunnison, MS

Mayor, Town of Merigold
Merigold, MS

Mayor, City of Mound Bayou
Mound Bayou, MS

Mayor, Town of Pace
Pace, MS

Mayor, City of Rosedale
Rosedale, MS

Mayor, City of Shaw
Shaw, MS

Mayor, City of Shelby
Shelby, MS

Mayor, Town of Winstonville
Winstonville, MS

The following Coahoma County and municipal officials were mailed the same invitation correspondence to this meeting as that mailed to Mayor Robert Fava, Jr., of the Town of Alligator in Bolivar County.

Coahoma County Board of Supervisors
Clarksdale, MS

Mayor, City of Clarksdale
Clarksdale, MS

Mayor, Town of Coahoma
Coahoma, MS

Mayor, Town of Friars Point
Friars Point, MS

INTERSTATE 69
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY #11
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

MAYORS-COUNTY SUPERVISORS COORDINATION MEETING
DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY HEADQUARTERS
CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI
9:00 AM, SEPTEMBER 4, 2002

MEETING AGENDA

▪ OPENING SESSION	9:00 – 10:00 AM
• Welcome and Introductions	Claiborne Barnwell MDOT
• Project Status Update	Robert Walker Neel-Schaffer
▪ BREAK-OUT SESSIONS	10:00 – 11:00 AM
• Five One-Hour Sessions Conducted Simultaneously	
▪ CLOSING SESSION	11:00 AM – Noon
• Reports on Break-Out Sessions	Project Team Representatives
• Issues Needing Addressing Prior to Selecting the Alternatives for Detailed Study in the Draft EIS And an Action Plan for Addressing Those Issues	R. Walker, C. Barnwell & FHWA representative Cecil Vick will moderate
• Closing	Claiborne Barnwell

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY

I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

MAYORS-COUNTY SUPERVISORS MEETING SEPTEMBER 4, 2002
FIELD VISIT REQUEST SEPTEMBER 5, 2002

Please provide us the following information for the September 4 (Wed.) Meeting:

Municipality or County (Name): _____

Contact person and telephone number:

_____ _____
Name Phone Number

Number of representatives that will attend: _____

To request a field visit for September 5 (Thurs.), please provide us the following information:

Number of representatives that will attend: _____

Your requested field visit is to the following location (s): _____

_____

_____

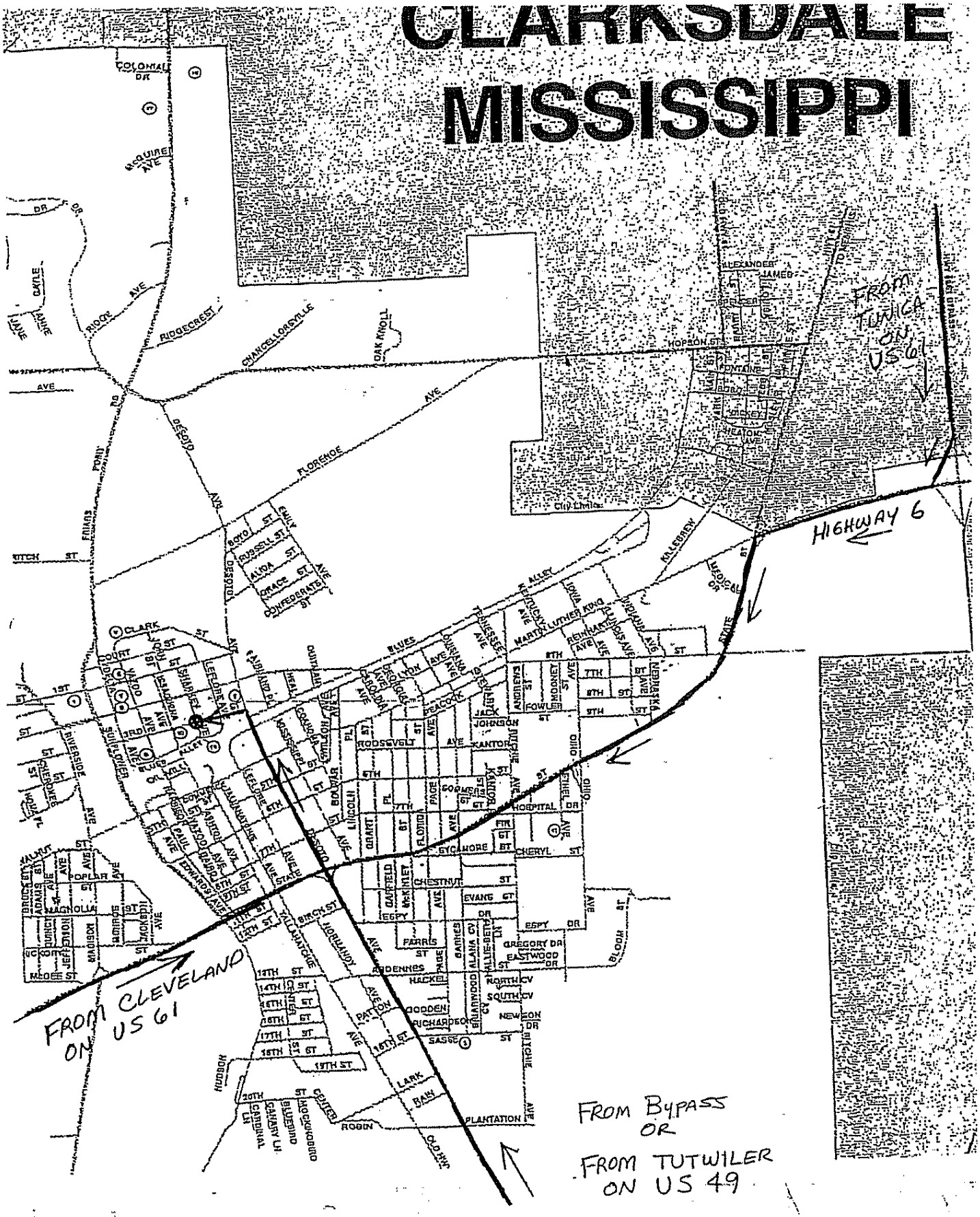
JACKSON AUG 14 '02 A

PB METER 8471961

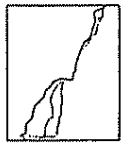
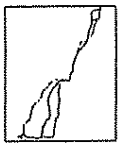
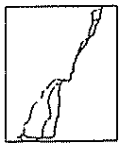
$ 0.25

U.S. POSTAGE

NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC.
I-69 Corridor Project Manager
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

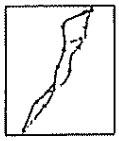

CLARKSDALE
MISSISSIPPI
FROM TUNICA ON US 61
HIGHWAY 6
FROM CLEVELAND ON US 61
FROM BYPASS OR
FROM TUTWILER ON US 49

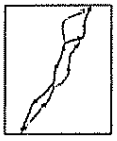
1,000-Foot Corridor Screening Analysis
I-69 Corridor: SIU 11
Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties
East, Central, and West Corridors

		West	Central	East
Length (miles)	Existing Alignment	19.3	31.3	16.7
	New Alignment	88.4	83.8	99.5
	Total Length	107.7	115.2	116.2
Crossings	Intermittent Streams	110	115	124
	Perennial Streams	17	18	20
	Railroads	4	4	5
	Transmission Lines	5	6	7
	Gas Pipelines	11	14	10
Acreage in Corridors	Farmland	8,578.7	8,822.2	8,577.1
	Open Water	22.0	19.2	35.8
	Catfish Ponds	11.4	56.3	2.8
	100-Year Floodplain	402.6	1,168.8	1,174.4
	Potential Wetlands	240.6	163.7	170.1
	Conservation Areas	108.7	210.2	117.5
Other	Archaeologic Sites	1	1	0
	Environmentally Sensitive Areas	0	0	1
	Historic Structures	0	0	1
	Economic Impacts	High	Highest	Higher

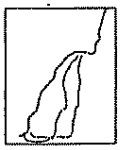
Northern Alternatives

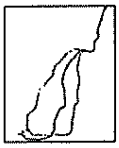
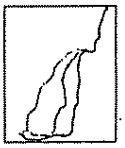
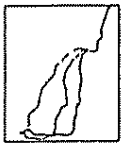




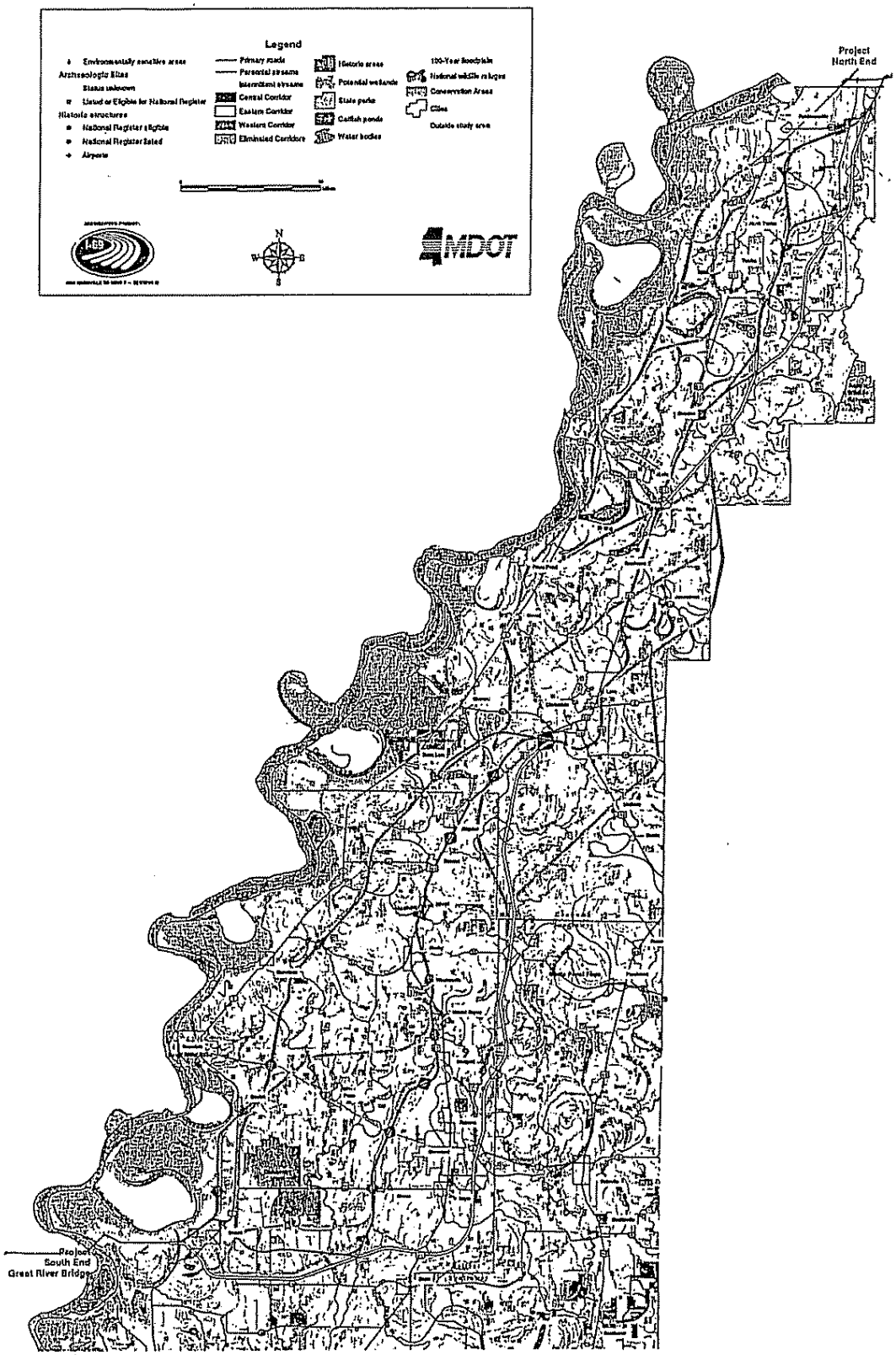
		West 1	West 2	Central 1	Central 2	East 1	East 2
Length (miles)	Existing Alignment	6.0	2.4	0.0	2.4	2.4	0.0
	New Alignment	35.2	32.9	34.9	32.6	32.1	33.7
	Total Length	35.2	35.3	34.9	33.0	34.5	33.7
Crossings	Intermittent Streams	47	45	39	37	41	37
	Perennial Streams	7	7	7	7	8	8
	Railroads	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Transmission Lines	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Gas Pipelines	3	5	3	5	4	1
Acreage within Corridor	Farmland	2,352.0	2,281.8	2,380.2	2,310.2	2,117.0	2,145.5
	Open Water	3.1	3.1	1.7	1.7	8.0	8.0
	Catfish Ponds	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	100-Year Floodplain	205.4	144.5	300.7	239.8	291.7	352.9
	Potential Wetlands	28.6	30.4	39.7	41.2	58.8	25.4
	Conservation Areas	78.4	73.5	111.7	106.5	61.8	66.7
Other	Archaeologic Sites	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Environmentally Sensitive Areas	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Historic Structures	0	0	0	0	1	1

Southern Alternatives



		West 1	Central 1	Central 2	East 1	East 2
Length (miles)	Existing Alignment	16.9	31.3	31.3	16.7	16.7
	New Alignment	55.4	49.0	49.0	65.8	66.2
	Total Length	72.4	80.3	80.3	82.5	82.9
Crossings	Intermittent Streams	65	76	76	87	86
	Perennial Streams	10	11	11	15	15
	Railroads	2	2	2	3	3
	Transmission Lines	3	3	3	5	5
	Gas Pipelines	8	1	1	11	9
Acreage within Corridors (acres)	Farmland	4,294.7	4,542.0	4,550.7	4,531.8	4,562.2
	Open Water	18.8	18.2	30.5	30.8	18.9
	Catfish Ponds	11.4	56.3	56.3	2.8	2.8
	100-Year Floodplain	258.5	806.1	857.7	821.8	871.9
	Potential Wetlands	210.2	124.0	98.3	144.7	173.8
	Conservation Areas	33.2	98.5	63.1	30.8	86.0
Other	Archaeologic Sites	1	1	1	0	0
	Environmentally Sensitive Areas	0	0	0	1	1


Legend
Environmentally sensitive areas
Archaeologic Sites
Status unknown
Listed or Eligible for National Register
Historic structures
National Register eligible
National Register listed
Airports
Primary roads
Perennial streams
Intermittent streams
Central Corridor
Eastern Corridor
Western Corridor
Eliminated Corridors
Historic areas
Potential wetlands
State parks
Catfish ponds
Water bodies
100-Year floodplain
National wildlife refuges
Conservation Areas
Cities
Outside study area
N
W
E
S
MDOT
Project
North End
Project
South End
Great River Bridge

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
Mississippi Division
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

IN REPLY REFER TO
HRW-MS

August 22, 2002

Chief Phillip Martin
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
P.O. Box 6010
Philadelphia, MS 39350

Dear Chief Martin:

Subject: Agency-Native American Scoping Meeting
Interstate 69, Section of Independent Utility Number 11
Project Number NCPD-I-69(1); 103104 / 101000

The Mississippi Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration invite you and/or your representative(s) to attend the above noted coordination meeting. The meeting will be conducted in Clarksdale, MS at the Headquarters of the Delta Regional Authority, located in the old federal building, from 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM on Wednesday, September 4, 2002. Attached is a map to this downtown meeting location at the corner of Third Street and Sharkey Street.

The purpose of the meeting is to update Native Americans, cooperating agencies, and other key governmental agencies on the status of the project and to obtain input on a limited number of merited alternative corridors that the project team believes should be taken forward for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). For your reference, attached are the map and the screening analysis for the alternative corridors the project team presented to the public on July 16-18, 2002.

The agenda for this coordination meeting is attached. During the opening session, attendees will be furnished the project's status and presented the alternative corridors that the project team believes merit further study. Break-out sessions will be offered for the Benoit to Clarksdale and Clarksdale to Robinsonville segments. The goal of the two break-out sessions is to discuss the alternative corridors in sufficient detail to develop organized comments for presentation in the closing session. The closing session will consist of presenting and discussing the break-out session comments, and developing a plan to resolve issues delaying the selection of the alternative corridors for detail study in the DEIS.

A field visit will be offered the following day on September 5. To assist us in preparing for the meeting, please complete the attached post card and return it to us by Monday, August 26, 2002. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Cecil Vick or Mr. Dickie Walters at (601) 965-4217.

Sincerely yours,

A.H. Hughes

Andrew H. Hughes
Division Administrator

Attachments:
Meeting Location Map; Meeting Agenda
Alternative Corridors Analysis; Field Visit Post Card

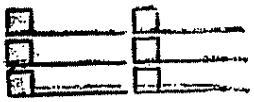
Cc: Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, 87-01

Pickering Environmental Consultants, Inc.

Mr. Jimmy Shirley
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

*Each person on the attached list received the same letter.

RECEIVED
NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC.
AUG 2 9 2002



Chief Phillip Martin
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
P. O. Box 6010
Philadelphia, MS 39350

Chief Gregory E. Pyle
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
P. O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

Mr. Olin Williams
Asst. NAGPRA Representative
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
P. O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

Ms. Christine Norris
Tribal Council Member
Jena Band of Choctaw
P. O. Box 14
Jena, LA 71342

Ms. Rena Duncan
Director of Cultural Preservation
Chickasaw Nation
P.O. Box 1548
Ada, OK 74821-1548

Mr. Earl J. Barbry, Sr.
Tribal Chairman
Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana, Inc.
P.O. Box 1589
Marksville, LA 71351

Mr. Brent Barbry, Sr.
Assistant Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana, Inc.
P.O. Box 1589
Marksville, LA 71351

Mr. James Bird, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Qualla Boundary
P. O. Box 455
Cherokee, NC 28719

Dr. Richard Allen, Research and Policy Analyst
Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 948
Tahlequah, OK 74464

Mr. Ken Carleton
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
P.O. Box 6257
Philadelphia, MS 39350-6257

Mr. Terry Cole
NAGPRA Representative
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
P. O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

Chief B. Cheryl Smith
Jena Band of Choctaw
P. O. Box 14
Jena, LA 71342

Ms. Stephanie Seeley
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Chickasaw Nation
P.O. Box 1548
Ada, OK 74821-1548

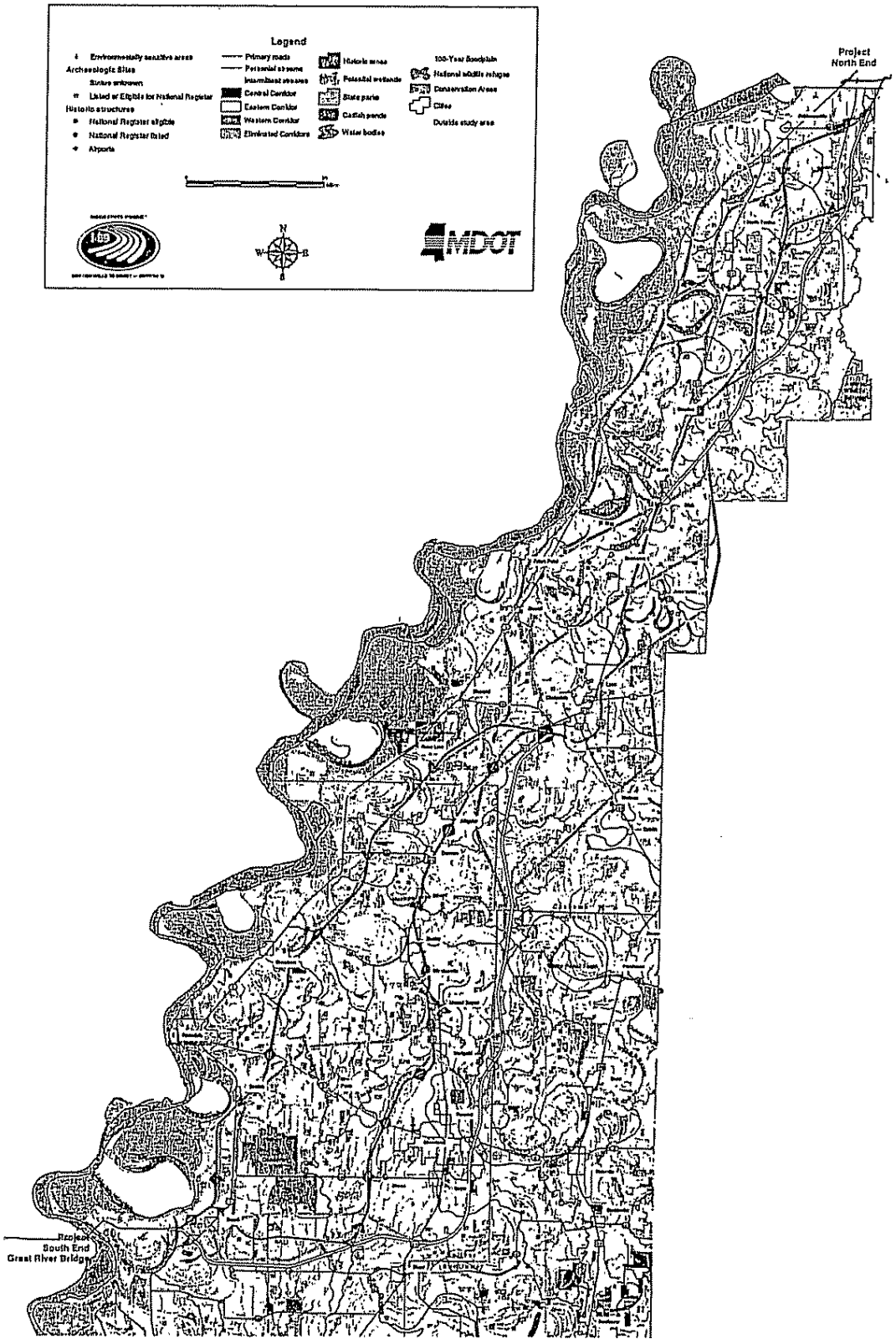
Mr. Kirk Perry, Administrator of Cultural Preservation
Chickasaw Nation
Tribal Chairperson - Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 765
Quapaw, OK 74363

Mrs. Carrie V. Wilson
NAGPRA Representative
Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
P. O. Box 765
Quapaw, OK 74363

Mr. Earl J. Barbry, Jr.
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana, Inc.
P.O. Box 1589
Marksville, LA 71351

Mr. Leon Jones, Principal Chief
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Qualla Boundary
P. O. Box 455
Cherokee, NC 28719

Mr. Chadwick Smith
Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 948
Tahlequah, OK 74464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Environmentally sensitive areas
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Project
South End
Great River Bridge

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY

I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT -- SECTION 11

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
TELEPHONE: 601.948.3071 • FAX: 601.948.3178 • EMAIL: i69@neel-schaffer.com • WEBSITE: www.msdoti69.com

April 10, 2003

Mr. Gaylon Lawrence
123 Bayou Road
Greenville, MS 38701

Subject: Interstate 69 (I-69); Benoit to Robinsonville
Follow-up Meeting on SR 1 and SR 448 Crossing Alternatives
Project Number NCPD-I-69(1); 103104 / 101000

Dear Mr. Lawrence:

The Mississippi Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the consultant team for the section of I-69 from Benoit to Robinsonville invite you to attend this special follow-up meeting. The 10:00 AM meeting will be conducted at Ray Brooks School in Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Hawley's office on Wednesday, April 30, 2003.

On January 29, 2003, you attended a meeting in Dr. Hawley's Office when alternative locations for I-69 between the Great River Bridge Mississippi River Crossing and two proposed crossings of the Bogue Phalia were displayed on mapping and discussed. The primary discussions at that meeting concerned the four crossings of SR 1 and the two crossings of SR 448 that were shown on the mapping displays. The purpose of the follow-up meeting is to update you on the actions taken since our previous meeting to arrive at a decision on the alternative segments that will be taken forward for further study.

We hope you will be able to attend this April 30th follow-up meeting.

Sincerely,

Robert Walker, P.E.
I-69 Project Manager

pc: Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell – MDOT Environmental Division Engineer
Mr. Cecil Vick – FHWA, Mississippi Division

The following people have received the enclosed I-69 letter:

Ms. Barbara Peeples
Benoit School District
P. O. Box 238
Benoit, MS 38725

Mr. Wayne Farmer
P. O. Box 239
Benoit, MS 38725

Mr. Delbert Farmer
P. O. Box 57
Benoit, MS 38725

Mr. Early C. Ewing, Jr.
Chairman
Benoit I-69 Committee
P. O. Box 60
Benoit, MS 38725

Mr. Gaylon Lawrence
123 Bayou Road
Greenville, MS 38701

Mr. Sam Crespino
336 S. Garmwyn Dr.
Greenville, MS 38701

Mr. Ken Weeden
Ken Weeden & Associates, Inc.
P. O. Box 3113
Wilmington, NC 28406

Mr. Walter G. Lyons
Third District Engineer
Mississippi Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 630
Yazoo City, MS 39194

Mr. Carl Middleton
Asst. District Engineer
Mississippi Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 630
Yazoo City, MS 39194

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Correspondence with Native American Tribes

the Chickasaw Nation HEADQUARTERS
Arlington at Mississippi / Box 1548 / Ada, OK 74821-1548 / (580) 436-2603

Bill Anoatubby
Governor

Jefferson Keel
Lieutenant
Governor

November 29, 2001

Mr. Robert Walker
Federal Highway Administration
Mississippi Division
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Dear Mr. Walker:

Thank you for your letter regarding proposed construction. We are not aware at this time of any culturally sensitive or sacred sites in or near the areas outlined for the I-69 Robinsonville to Benoit Corridor (Section 11) located in Bolivar, Coahoma and Tunica counties of Tennessee. However, please understand this project could lead to the uncovering of many more sites. We would then expect any inadvertent discoveries be brought to our attention immediately and all construction cease according to applicable federal laws.

Your sensitivity to these issues is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. 'Rena Duncan, historic preservation officer, at (580) 332-8685.

Sincerely,

Bill Anoatubby

Bill Anoatubby, Governor
The Chickasaw Nation

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☐ File ☐

NATIVE VOTE
Putting Our Vote to Work!

I 69-Co

Chad "Corntassel" Smith
ᎤᏓᏩᎢ
Principal Chief

Hastings Shade
ᎤᏔᏍᏏᏓ
Deputy Principal Chief

CHEROKEE NATION
P. O. Box 948
Tahlequah, OK 74465-0948
(918) 456-0671

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ENV

July 23, 2002

Mr. Andrew H. Hughes
Federal Highway Division
Mississippi Division
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, MS 39202

Dear Mr. Hughes:

The Cherokee Nation has received your letter dated July 5, 2002 wherein you requested assistance with your site review pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as amended regarding construction of the I-69 Interstate Project.

The Cherokee Nation is not presently aware of or able to identify any cultural resources affiliated with the Cherokee Nation within the proposed area of development. However, we are aware that inadvertent discovery may occur as a result of development, archaeological testing, or as project construction activities progress. Such activity has the potential to destroy, damage, or diminish the integrity of any Cherokee resources. Also, any such discovery may result in looting if not adequately protected. Therefore, the Cherokee Nation requests that:

1. In the event of inadvertent discovery of human remains, burial objects, or artifacts that all site surveys or other site activities cease pending notification of the Cherokee Nation;
2. Any and all remains, burial objects or artifacts must be properly secured and protected;
3. The Cherokee Nation opposes any laboratory testing, data retrieval, non-biodegradable shrouding, photographic documentation, public display, or unauthorized removal of ancestral remains or burial objects;
4. Sites known to possess or are discovered to posses ancestral remains or burial objects, or that have historical, cultural, or religious significance to the Cherokee people should be avoided.

There are three federally acknowledged Cherokee entities: the Cherokee Nation; the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians, and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Section 106 mandates tribal commentary, review or consultation with federally recognized tribal entities. Therefore, any consultation, commentary or review addressed to state recognized groups, entities, or self-identified individuals purporting to be American Indian representatives does not constitute valid tribal consultation in accordance with the authority and intent of federal legislation.

Should you desire to communicate with the designated tribal representative, you may contact me at (918) 456-0671, extension 2466.

Sincerely,

R. Butler for

Dr. Richard Allen
NAGPRA Representative

RECEIVED
NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC.
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RW
NA File
Project Mailings File
Misc Correspondence File (& G)

Jena Band of Choctaw Indians

P. O. Box 14 • Jena, Louisiana 71342-0014 • Phone: 318-992-2717 • Fax: 318-992-8244

December 3, 2004

Mr. Robert Walker, P. E.
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
666 North Street, Suite 201
Jackson, MS 39202

RE: DEIS FOR THE PROPOSED I-69 SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY # 11 PROJECT.

To Whom It May Concern:

Reference is made to your letter dated November 4, 2004, concerning the above-proposed project.

After thorough review of the document submitted, it has been determined that there will be no significant impact in regards to the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians. We have no objections to its implementation.

If I may be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Lillie Strange

Lillie Strange
Environmental Director
Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
Lilliestrange72@aol.com
318-992-8258

DEC -- 2004

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Invitation to Native American consultation meeting

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
TELEPHONE: 601 948 3071 • FAX: 601 948 3178 • EMAIL: i69@neel-schaffer.com • WEBSITE: www.msdoti69.com

January 8, 2004

Mr. Kirk Perry
Administrator of Heritage Preservation
Chickasaw Nation
P. O. Box 1548
Ada, OK 74821

SUBJECT: INVITATION TO CONSULT ON INTERSTATE 69
SIU #11 AND SIU # 9
BETWEEN BENOIT, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN

Dear Mr. Perry:

In accordance with the formal consultation process under 36 CFR 800, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), in concurrence with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), invites you and/or your representative(s) to attend a conference on these two sections of the proposed new Interstate 69. The conference will be held at the Grand Casino Tunica Hotel in Robinsonville on February 11-13, 2004.

The proposed Interstate 69 will eventually stretch from Canada to Mexico. Due to its length, the overall route has been divided into segments for individual environmental and cultural resource studies. The segments we would like to meet with you about are *Segment of Independent Utility (SIU) 11 and SIU 9*. SIU 11 is located from near Benoit, Mississippi to near Robinsonville, Mississippi, while SIU 9 is located from near Hernando, Mississippi to near Millington, Tennessee.

To better enable your participation, the MDOT and FHWA are offering to pay the travel expenses for you to send a maximum of two representatives to the conference. The reimbursable travel expenses include air fare, meals, and lodging. Additionally, travel from the Memphis Airport to Robinsonville, travel for the field visits, and travel from Robinsonville back to the Memphis Airport will be provided by the MDOT. After your travel expense receipts are submitted to the MDOT, the MDOT plans to provide the reimbursement. If you desire to drive to the conference, instead of fly, the MDOT will reimburse you at the government rate for your mileage not to exceed the equivalent cost of the lowest airfare rate. A block of rooms is reserved at the Grand Casino Hotel for the conference.

Depending on the travel arrangements for the representatives of the Native American Tribes, the conference will begin with a mid-afternoon meeting on Wednesday, February 11. Unless you are advised otherwise, 3:00 PM will be the starting time for conference. During the afternoon meeting, the alternatives being considered for both studies will be presented, and the attendees will be advised of the influences that environmental constraints had in the development of the alternatives. Detailed mapping displays and other displays will be available for viewing and discussions to supplement the presentations. Possible presenters/participants also will include the archaeologists for both studies along with Mississippi State University's look at the overall history of the areas. The agenda and discussions will be adjusted as requested and directed by the Native Americans. A reception and dinner will be held to conclude the day's activities.

On Thursday, February 12, a field visit is scheduled to tour the SIU 11 alternative locations in the Mississippi Delta between Robinsonville and Benoit. The field trip will begin and end at the Grand Casino Hotel. The tour will concentrate on areas of interest to the Native Americans, and it is anticipated the field visit will take the entire day. When the tour ends, an opportunity will be given for a round table discussion. A dinner will then conclude the activities for the day.

Friday, February 13, will be devoted to a site visit for SIU 9 between Hernando, Mississippi and Millington, Tennessee. The conclusion time for this visit will be determined as is deemed appropriate and agreeable. We suggest scheduling departure flight times in the mid-afternoon or later on Friday.

The following attached information on these two SIUs should benefit you in preparing for this conference:

- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 9;
- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 11; and,
- A copy of the map of alternatives handout presented to attendees at the last series of Public Meetings on SIU 11.

We are particularly interested in finding ways to identify historic properties of importance to Native Americans as well as properties to which one or more tribes may attach religious or cultural significance. After reviewing the attached material on these two SIUs, you may decide that more detailed information is needed before you can make a determination whether or not an alternative would impact one of these historic, religious, or culturally significant sites. If this is the case, please contact me so you can be provided the information at the conference.

In order for us to make the necessary final arrangements in planning the conference, please call me at (601) 948-3071 by January 30, and advise who you will have attending the conference.

Sincerely,

Robert Walker, P.E.
I-69 SIU 11 Project Manager
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

Attachments

pc: Mr. Andrew H. Hughes, MS Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. James Q. Dickerson, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Walter G. Lyons, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Bobby W. Blackmon, TN Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. Doug Delaney, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Tom Love, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Gerald Kline, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Ray Brisson, SIU 9 Project Manager, PBS&J

The following individuals were mailed the same correspondence as mailed to Mr. Kirk Perry:

Mr. Kirk Perry
Administrator of Heritage Preservation
Chickasaw Nation
P. O. Box 1548
Ada, OK 74821

Ms. Rena Duncan
NAGPRA Representative
Chickasaw Nation
P. O. Box 1548
Ada, OK 74821

Ms. Gigy Nail
Tribal Preservation Assistant
Chickasaw Nation
P. O. Box 1548
Ada, OK 74821

Mr. Terry Cole
Cultural Resources Director
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
P. O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

Mr. Olin Williams
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
P. O. Box 1210
Durant, OK 74702

Mrs. Carrie V. Wilson
NAGPRA Representative
Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
223 East Lafayette
Fayetteville, AR 72701

Mr. Chip Fisher
Transportation Director/Council Member
Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
P. O. Box 14
Jena, LA 71342

Mr. Earl J. Barbry, Sr.
Tribal Chairperson
Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana, Inc.
P. O. Box 1589
Marksville, LA 71351

Mr. Earl J. Barbry, Jr.
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana, Inc.
P. O. Box 1589
Marksville, LA 71351

Mr. Brent Barbry, Sr.
Assistant Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana, Inc.
P. O. Box 1589
Marksville, LA 71351

Mr. Ken Carleton
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
P. O. Box 6257
Philadelphia, MS 39350

Dr. Richard Allen
Research and Policy Analyst
Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma
P. O. Box 948
Tahlequah, OK 74464

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
TELEPHONE: 601.948.3071 • FAX: 601 948.3178 • EMAIL: i69@neel-schaffer.com • WEBSITE: www.msdoti69.com

January 9, 2004

Ms. Ntale Kajumba
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
Environmental Accountability Division - NEPA
Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

SUBJECT: INVITATION TO CONSULT ON INTERSTATE 69
SIU #11 AND SIU # 9
BETWEEN BENOIT, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN

Dear Ms. Kajumba:

In accordance with the formal consultation process under 36 CFR 800, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), in concurrence with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has scheduled a conference with the Native American tribal representatives concerning these two SIUs of the proposed new Interstate 69. The conference will be held at the Grand Casino Tunica Hotel in Robinsonville on February 11-13, 2004, and as a Cooperating Agency contact for one or both of these SIUs you are also invited to attend this important conference.

The sections of the proposed new Interstate 69 that will be discussed are *Segment of Independent Utility (SIU) 11 and SIU 9*. SIU 11 is located from near Benoit, Mississippi to near Robinsonville, Mississippi, while SIU 9 is located from near Hernando, Mississippi to near Millington, Tennessee. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Grand Casino Hotel for the conference.

Depending on the travel arrangements for the representatives of the Native American Tribes, the conference will begin with a mid-afternoon meeting on Wednesday, February 11. Unless you are advised otherwise, 3:00 PM will be the starting time for the afternoon meeting. During this initial meeting, the alternatives being considered for both studies will be presented, and you will be advised of the influences that environmental constraints had in the development of the alternatives. Detailed mapping displays and other displays will be available for viewing to supplement the presentations. Possible presenters/participants will also include the archaeologists for both studies along with Mississippi State University's look at the overall history of the areas. The agenda and discussions will be adjusted as requested and directed by the Tribes. A reception and dinner will be held to conclude the day's activities.

On Thursday, February 12, a field visit is scheduled to tour the SIU 11 alternative locations in the Mississippi Delta between Robinsonville and Benoit. The field trip will begin and end at the Grand Casino Hotel. The tour will concentrate on areas of interest to the Native Americans, and it is anticipated the field visit will take the entire day. At the conclusion of the tour, an opportunity will be given for a round table discussion. A dinner will then conclude the activities for the day.

Friday, February 13, will be devoted to a site visit for SIU 9 between Hernando, Mississippi and Millington, Tennessee. The conclusion time for this visit will be determined as the attendees deem

appropriate and agreeable. We suggest scheduling departure flight times, in the mid-afternoon or later on Friday.

The following attached information on these two SIUs should benefit you in preparing for the conference.

- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 9;
- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 11; and,
- A copy of the map of alternatives handout presented to attendees at the last series of Public Meetings on SIU 11.

We are particularly interested in finding ways to identify historic properties of importance to Native Americans as well as properties to which one or more tribes may attach religious or cultural significance. It is likely the Native Americans will ask questions and make comments or requests about the locations of alternatives relative to their concerns. The project team's response might be of interest to you, and the expertise that you could provide might be of assistance to the project team in responding to issues raised by the Native Americans.

In order for us to make the necessary final arrangements in planning for the conference, please call me at (601) 948-3071 by January 30, and advise who you will have attending the conference.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Walker, P.E.
I-69 SIU 11 Project Manager
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

Attachments

pc: Mr. Andrew H. Hughes, MS Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. James Q. Dickerson, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Walter G. Lyons, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Bobby W. Blackmon, TN Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. Doug Delaney, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Tom Love, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Gerald Kline, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Ray Brisson, SIU 9 Project Manager, PBS&J

The following individuals were mailed the same correspondence as mailed to Ms. Ntale Kajumba:

Ms. Ntale Kajumba
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Mr. David Felder
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
6578 Dogwood View Parkway
Jackson, MS 39213

Mr. Tom Waggener
Review and Compliance Officer
Miss. Department of Archives and History
P. O. Box 571
Jackson, MS 39205-0571

Mr. Benjamin F. Davis, Jr.
Special Programs Officer, Delta Initiatives
U. S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
200 Jefferson Avenue, Suite 1200
Memphis, TN 38103

Ms. Susan Jarvis
Regulatory Branch
Vicksburg District, Corps of Engineers
4155 Clay Street
Vicksburg, MS 39183-3435

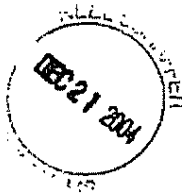
Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Agency comments on the DEIS

United States Department of Agriculture

NRCS
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Suite 1321, Federal Building
100 West Capitol Street
Jackson, MS 39269

December 15, 2004



Mr. Robert Walker, P.E.
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
666 North Street, Suite 201
Jackson, MS 39202

Dear Mr. Walker:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed I-69 Section of Independent Utility #11 project. The Natural Resources Conservation Service is responsible for insuring compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act.

In accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981, Federal Programs that contribute to the necessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses will be minimized. It follows that Federal programs shall be administered in a manner that, as practicable, will be compatible with state and local government and private programs and policies to protect farmland.

Section "4.2 Farmland," along with Appendix E in the DEIS, adequately address the Natural Resources Conservation Service's responsibility for insuring compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act. However, a couple of errors in terminology were noticed:

(1) National Resources Conservation Service should read Natural Resources Conservation Service.
(2) Form AD-1006 is actually Form NRCS-CPA-106. See Appendix E.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service concurs in your Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Sincerely,

Homer L Wilkes

Homer L. Wilkes
State Conservationist

cc: Kim Harris, State Conservation Engineer, NRCS, Jackson, MS
James Johnson, Area Conservationist, NRCS, Greenwood, MS
E. Claiborne Barnwell, Project Engineer, MDOT, Jackson, MS

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

Mr. Robert Walker, P.E.
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
666 North Street, Suite 201
Jackson, MS 39202

December 15, 2004

Dear Mr. Walker:

Subject: Comments, draft EIS: I-69 Mississippi project

Our Department staff has reviewed the relevant sections of the draft EIS on the effects on wildlife and fisheries resources. Since the final pathway alternative is not chosen, we offer some general comments on the plans as a whole and hope to work with you on refining our comments as the I-69 project continues to take shape. The highway corridor will follow some sections of U.S. 61 that are already developed for roadway use; and the corridor will develop some farmland, and some wetlands and other land into highway bed and right of way. Bridges at stream crossings will be of conventional design from all descriptions.

Our examination revealed that there was little discussion in the document of animal road crossings (especially bear crossings) in known travel corridors whether they are along streams and waterways or between adjacent wooded areas or other major pathways locally known as areas of high use or high probable use by wildlife. Our comments focus on the Black bear, but this species makes a good surrogate for other quadrupeds that will be crossing the new highway. In other words, any animal crossings designed into the I-69 roadway will serve not only bears, but a whole array of wildlife species. The bear is of particular importance because of ongoing efforts to foster the reintroduction of these animals into Mississippi.

The following paragraphs introduce the issues, give justification for a solution to road kills of bears (bear road kills are representative of other wildlife road kills), and provide some suggestions for incorporating wildlife crossings into the design of I-69.

The general area of northwest Mississippi through which I-69 is proposed is an area of increased activity by the Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*), a species listed as Endangered by the State of Mississippi. Over the past five years multiple sightings, human-bear interactions, and vehicular collisions, including road kills, have been documented and are obviously on the increase in the following counties within the project study area: Bolivar, Sunflower, Coahoma, Quitman, and Tunica.

One of the reasons for the apparently increasing bear numbers in this area appears to be the expanding bear population in adjacent southeast Arkansas and its natural dispersal across the Mississippi River. While this natural recolonization of bears into Mississippi is considered a

Preserving Natural Mississippi

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DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS

positive event given the current endangered status of Mississippi bears, it does not come without potential problems facing the bears once they begin their eastward and southeastward dispersal once in Mississippi. In the last four years, females with cubs have been documented crossing the Mississippi River into Mississippi; previously, only males, particularly subadult males, were known to swim the Mississippi River. Again, this is a significant development in bear population dispersal but not without potential negative consequences. In recent years, vehicular collisions with bears have occurred on MS Hwy. 3 in Quitman Co., MS Hwy. 1 in Bolivar Co., and MS Hwy. 8 in Bolivar Co. These unfortunate events can be expected to increase as more bears move into or through this area.

In Florida, the Florida Department of Transportation and the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission have developed and constructed wildlife underpasses along key areas of Florida roadways which have greatly reduced vehicular collisions with the federally-endangered Florida Panther (*Puma concolor coryi*), black bear and other native wildlife species. Other areas in North America, working with the U.S. Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration, have constructed various types of "critter crossings" (underpasses, culverts, funnel fences) to benefit many different species of wildlife. The I-69 project seems to be an ideal project in which to incorporate such design features not only in the interest of wildlife conservation but automobile passenger safety and property loss as well.

According to the FHWA website, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) provides funding support for such wildlife crossings as well as for habitat connectivity measures. A detailed analysis of our agency's database on the black bear as well as consultation with Florida DOT and Wildlife officials can allow us to pinpoint locations along the I-69 corridor that would be favorable for installation of wildlife underpasses. Our agency has already been consulting with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in recommending priority areas for Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) lands to provide forested corridors from the Mississippi River batture lands to large forest blocks such as Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge as well as other federal and state refuges and wildlife management areas.

I hope these comments will be helpful to you as the I-69 project moves forward. Please let me know if you require more information, or if we can be of assistance. My phone is(601) 354-7303, email: andrew.whitehurst@mmns.state.ms.us

Sincerely,

Andrew E. Whitehurst

Andrew Whitehurst, M.S., J.D.
W/F Coordinator, Environmental Reviews
Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
VICKSBURG DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
4155 CLAY STREET
VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI 39183-3435

RECEIVED
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REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

January 7, 2005

Operations Division
Regulatory

SUBJECT: Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Interstate 69, Section of Independent Utility 11, Robinsonville to Benoit, Mississippi

Mr. Robert Walker, P.E.
Neel-Schaffer, Incorporated
666 North Street, Suite 201
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

Dear Mr. Walker:

I am responding to your letter of November 4, 2004, concerning the subject project.

You asked for comments concerning the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. We have reviewed all the information you provided and have no specific comments to offer at this time.

We will need a copy of the draft intensive cultural resources survey report that is to be conducted once the preferred alignment is selected, and also an indication of how the tribal coordination is progressing.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. A. Susan Jarvis, telephone (601) 631-5146, fax (601) 631-5459 or e-mail address: regulatory@mvk02.usace.army.mil. In any future correspondence, please refer to identification No. MVK-2001-850.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth S. Guynes
Chief, Regulatory Branch

PO BOX 257

Stoneville, Mississippi

38776-0257

Phone (662) 686-3350

Fax (662) 686-3378

January 19, 2005

Commissioner Dick Hall
Mississippi Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215

Dear Commissioner Hall,

As we have been evaluating the Draft Report for Interstate 69 through the Delta, we have identified several questions and considerations which we would like for the Mississippi Department of Transportation to review as the process moves along without delay We appreciate very much the public meetings which the Department held at various locations in the Mississippi Delta and we want to compliment Clairborne Barnwell, Walter Lyons, Jimmy Dickerson, and the very competent staff from Neel Shaffer and Associates for their timely and very clear explanation of the alternatives considered in this project.

Although Delta Council is quite mindful of the environmental and economic considerations of right-of-way issues which accompany any public works project such as this, we are also very sensitive to the needs of local property owners who will be impacted by this project's construction. Compensation by MDOT, extended to local property owners and farm operators, should carefully consider the economic impact of partitioning farms from the standpoint of access, cost of production, safety, and farm management. While we have had no opposition to I-69 from individual or organized farm operators and landowners, the size of fields in the Delta region and the size of farm operations/equipment cause us to specifically remind MDOT that there are special considerations which might be extended to lessen the impact on farm operators and property owners, such as the option of frontage roads and overpasses located on reasonable intervals. It is our view that any such plan, including but not necessarily limited to frontage roads and overpasses at reasonable intervals, should be considered on the basis of a local option for the affected property owners and farm operators in that reach of the highway construction.

Another separate, but very important consideration which Delta Council would like to highlight, is the plan which MDOT will propose relative to the construction timeline on various segments. Since 2005 will represent the first time in history that the central Delta has been opened up to four-laning all the way to Memphis, we feel that any plan which includes reconstruction of existing four-lane U.S. 61 Highway to interstate specifications should also provide a detailed analysis of methods that might be used to avoid the effects of the Delta being returned to two-lane access to Memphis for any extended period of time. To the maximum extent practicable, we would prefer that MDOT develop a plan which would have the least impact on interrupting our current four-lane access to Memphis on U.S. 61. After waiting since passage of the 1987 four-lane act until 2005 for the completion of U.S. Highway 61 four-laning, it would be more than regrettable if we lost this four-lane access for any extended period of time, or if four-lane access was interrupted for years due to the reconstruction of certain segments of U.S. Highway 61 to interstate specifications.

Ken Murphree, *Tunica*
President

Vice Presidents

Jim Luckett, Dublin
Tom Turner, Belzoni
Tripp Hayes, Clarksdale

Mike Lamensdorf, Cary
Harry Simmons, Yazoo City

Joe Ricotta, Indianola, *Treasurer*
Chip Morgan, *Executive Vice President*

In a related matter, we would like to ask MDOT to carefully consider the Benoit-Coahoma County line segment of construction as the segment which has the least impact on disrupting four-lane traffic on U.S. Highway 61. Therefore, it might be helpful to consider the plan, design, and construction of this segment as the initial project activity. This could possibly avoid any disruption of the recently opened four-lane access afforded to the Delta by U.S. 61, for as long as possible.

And finally, we are aware of considerations, regulations, and statues which currently affect the transport of agricultural commodities from the field to the processing, storage, and shipment points located throughout the region. Weight, height, width and length restrictions are different on interstate highways than those enforced on non-interstate corridors. Certainly, we want these matters taken into consideration when MDOT is evaluating the alternate routes that will be utilized during those times that existing U.S. 61 is being reconstructed to interstate standards. Also, and of similar importance, we need for you to carefully consider the disparities which exist between interstate and non-interstate standards and restrictions on over-height, over-width, over-length, or overweight vehicles which are common during the harvest season in the Delta. These matters have received special consideration by MDOT and the Mississippi Public Service Commission in the past.

We appreciate your examination of these points and we will be happy to discuss them with you at any time in the future. We look forward to your response in this matter.

Sincerely,

Ken Murphree
President

Al Rankins, Chairman
Highway Improvement and
Transportation Committee

/tsm

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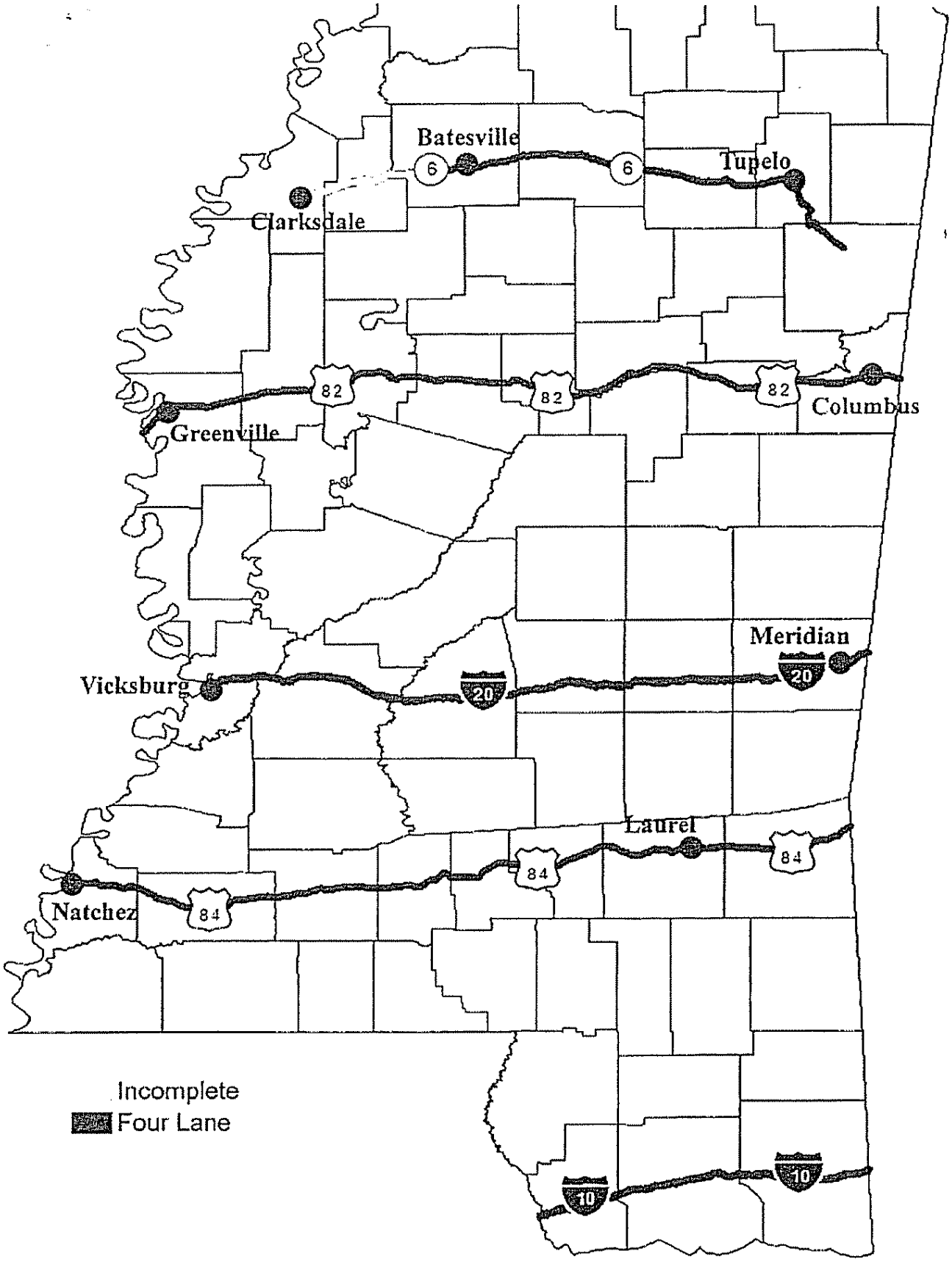
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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
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Mr Cecil W Vick, Jr
Environmental Team Leader
Federal Highway Administration
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202-3199

FEB 04 2005

SUBJECT: EPA Review of Interstate 69 (Segment 11)
Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
From Benoit to Robinsonville
Bolivar, Coahoma, Tunica, and Sunflower Counties, Mississippi
CEQ #: 040542 ERP #: FHW-E40802-MS

Dear Sir:

Pursuant to Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), EPA Region 4 has evaluated the consequence of constructing a 100-mile, multi-lane interstate highway between Benoit and Robinsonville, Mississippi The highway system is designed to meet traffic demands, increase accessibility to the region, and stimulate economic development

During this NEPA Process, EPA has participated in several scoping meetings and site visits, provided detailed scoping and pre-DEIS comments along with detailed ecological framework approach using GIS, and conducted and shared our independent alternatives screening analysis report which ranked alternatives based on their projected environmental impacts Recently, the project team for this proposal visited EPA Region 4 to provide an overview of the project, discuss additional project refinements and detail their interagency coordination efforts during the environmental process This presentation and discussion were very helpful

Based on this discussion and the DEIS, we are providing the following comments:

Alternatives: The DEIS examines a no build alternative, a transportation systems management alternative, other transportation modes alternative, and three build alternatives (Western, Eastern and Central). Each of the three build alternatives are then divided into a southern, middle, and northern section, resulting in nine potential alternative alignments Although, the DEIS does not identify a preferred alternative alignment, EPA recommends that the Central Alternative should be identified as the environmentally preferred alternative because it results, on balance, in the fewest overall environmental impacts

Impacts: EPA has primary concerns regarding water quality impacts, land-use/habitat loss and residential relocations The DEIS indicates that the proposed project, depending on the

alternative selected, may impact up to 207 acres of wetlands, 17,660 linear feet of perennial streams, 24 303(d)-listed streams, 1,507 acres of floodplains, 299 acres of wildlife/vegetative habitat, 8,296 acres of farmland, 26 conservation easements, 69 or 73 residential and 4 business relocations, and 16 or 17 archeological sites and 4 historic sites (adverse effect), 10 hazardous materials sites and 4 noise sensitive sites

EPA Assessment: Overall, the DEIS captures the extensive work that has been done on this project, particularly in terms of alternatives analysis screening and public and resource agency involvement It also provides a good overview of the project and attempts to address the issue of economic development However, the DEIS does not examine some of the resources to the degree that would be expected had a preferred alternative been selected Although we understand the difficulty of doing detailed site assessments of multiple alternatives, as a preferred alternative is identified, a more detailed environmental impact assessment needs to be conducted and documented in the Final EIS (FEIS) Further work is necessary to ensure that jurisdictional wetland determinations have been adequately conducted and that there is refined information available regarding the functional quality of the various wetlands along each of the alignments Once this information has been developed, further coordination with the cooperating agencies including EPA is recommended to ensure full avoidance and minimization refinements, and appropriate water resource (wetlands, streams and floodplains) mitigation has been achieved

Based on our review of this project, we have assigned an overall rating of EC-1 (environmental concerns, some information requested) to the document Even though, substantial avoidance and minimization efforts have been done, environmental impacts still remain EPA's primary environmental concerns relate to water resource impacts and refining mitigation commitments, land use changes/habitat loss, and residential relocations More detailed comments are attached to the letter regarding alternatives (preferred alternative), aquatic resources (jurisdictional delineation, quality of resource and mitigation), air quality and others

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this proposed action We look forward to working with FHWA and MDOT to address any identified concerns If we can be of further assistance, please contact Ntale Kajumba of the NEPA Program Office at (404) 562-9620 or William Ainslie of the Wetlands Protection Section at (404) 562-9297

Sincerely,

Heinz J Mueller, Chief
NEPA Program Office
Office of Policy and Management

Enclosure: Detailed Comments

EPA Comment Reviews on
Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
Interstate 69 between Benoit and Robinsonville, MS

Environmental Commitments/Requirements Table: EPA commends FHWA, USDOT and MDOT on the use of the matrix to describe both MDOT's environmental commitments and requirements for the proposed project, and the status of these commitments. However, the commitment status is either incomplete or left blank. In addition, some of the commitments are relatively general. For example, the DEIS states that floodplain impacts will be reduced through the use of bridges, pipes, and box culverts, but it is not specific as to the extent of bridging/pipe/culverts that will be used.

Recommendation: The status of the commitments should state when they will be fulfilled, i.e., phase of the project when commitments will be complete and the responsible official for ensuring the commitments are met. In addition, the environmental impact commitments should be as specific as possible. For example, it should state how much bridging; etc is anticipated to minimize floodplain impacts.

Summary Table of Comparison of Alternative Combinations and Summary of Impacts: There appears to be some minor inconsistencies with some of the number of impacts associated with the proposed projects when comparing the two tables (i.e., residential impacts, farmland, floodplains, and hazardous material impacts). These discrepancies may be due to later refinements in the alignments.

Recommendation: The FEIS should ensure that there is consistency in the number of impacts between the two tables. For example, table S-1 states that a maximum of 64 residences will be relocated; whereas table S-2 states that up to 69 residences will be relocated. If these discrepancies are the result of later refinements in the alignments, then the FEIS should state which table is most current.

Alternatives Considered: The DEIS does not identify an environmentally preferred alignment. It is difficult to fully assess the project impacts because refined environmental assessments of each of the alignments and their combinations are not thoroughly assessed over approximately 100 miles of proposed alignment. Consequently, more general as opposed to detailed information is provided regarding some of the environmental impact categories.

Recommendation: The FEIS should identify the environmentally preferred alignment. EPA recommends the Central Alternative because, on balance, it results in the fewest overall environmental impacts. However, in order to fully assess the project impacts, the environmental and social impacts for the alternatives carried forward in FEIS needs to be thoroughly analyzed.

3.7 **Air Quality:** The DEIS states that " The EPA Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (OAQPS) manages EPA programs both to improve air quality in areas where the current quality does not meet air quality standards and to prevent significant deterioration in areas where the air is relatively free of pollution. According to EPA OAQPS, Mississippi does not exceed air quality standards and is in attainment for all criteria air pollutants "

Recommendation: The FEIS should reference the regulatory citations/actions that determined that the area in question is attainment for the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) The reference for the 1-hour ozone standard and other NAAQS, with the exception of the 8-hour ozone and fine particulate matter standards, is 40 Code of Federal Regulation Part 81. The reference that announced the determination of this area as being attainment for the 8-hour ozone and fine particulate matter standards are 69 FR23857 (published in the Federal Register on April 30, 2004) and 70FR943 (published in the Federal Register on January 5, 2005), respectively

4.7. **Air Quality:** The DEIS indicates that a carbon monoxide analysis at the edge of existing and proposed rights-of-way (which are representative areas of routine human activity) was not conducted because the project area is in conformance with State Implementation Plan and would not cause violations of the air quality standards

Recommendation: The rationale for the exclusion of this assessment should be modified in the FEIS It is not sufficient to state that because the area is in conformance with the State Implementation Plan that the project would not cause violations of the air quality standards The section should be rewritten to address whether or not localized violations of the carbon monoxide standard, based on the different project alternatives, is anticipated.

4.8.1. **Design year (2030) Build alternative Noise Environment: Noise Methodology:** Noise levels were projected for 291 occupied facilities However, this analysis excluded relocations and abandoned buildings

Recommendation: The DEIS noise analysis should include the total number of facilities that could be impacted by the proposed project This includes those facilities that were excluded from the noise analysis because they were to be relocated. Following this, the DEIS could have stated that the facilities would be relocated due to the projected adverse impacts

4.17.1. **Archeological:** The DEIS examined 33 percent of the alternatives Based on the DEIS, the surveys were concentrated on the high probability areas Most of the sites were found in the Western Alternative (15), followed by the Central and Eastern Alternative (12 and 11), respectively

Recommendation: The remainder of the alternatives should be assessed for archeological impacts to develop more of a basis for selecting a preferred alternative More information is needed to refine alignment and to fully assess impacts Consultation and coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices regarding further

avoidance, minimization and mitigation should continue as noted in the document.

4.11 1. Wetlands and Streams Impacts: Wetland areas were estimated using USGS topographic maps, national Wetland Inventory maps, and aerial photography Field visits were conducted to verify and identify any additional wetlands The DEIS does not appear to identify the jurisdictional status of wetlands and streams Consequently, the functional values or the quality of the wetlands and streams are not discussed in this section The document states this information will be determined after a preferred alternative is selected However, more detailed aquatic resource information should be provided for each alternative carried forward in the DEIS, as a basis for selecting a preferred alternative Once selected, a more specific analysis should be provided to refine the wetland and stream impacts of the preferred alternative.

Recommendation: In order to fully assess proposed project impacts and alternatives, the FEIS needs to provide more details on jurisdictional wetlands and streams (i e. Waters of the United States) In addition to the quantities of each impact, this information should include the quality and functions of each wetland and stream and identify whether the resources are jurisdictional or isolated A wetlands functional assessment method such as Hydrogeomorphic Assessment Method or Index of Biological Integrity should be used These evaluations and results should be quantified and included in the FEIS EPA is willing to coordinate with the Vicksburg District Army Corps of Engineers, FHWA and MDOT on this process.

Aquatic Resource Mitigation: Compensatory mitigation should also be evaluated on a watershed-based approach The DEIS describes potential opportunities for wetland and stream mitigation near Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge Mitigation in this area, along the Mississippi River, or others maybe appropriate areas to mitigate However, the DEIS needs to include more information regarding resource quality, functions and values because this information will be important in determining the appropriate compensatory mitigation

Recommendation: The FEIS should include a draft mitigation plan to compensate for predicted wetland and stream losses that remain following efforts to avoid and minimize such impacts The document should discuss mitigation on a watershed basis using COE RGL 02-2 and 1995 EPA Mitigation Banking Federal Guidance and functional assessment based on EPA Region 4's Compensatory Mitigation Policy

Water Quality Impacts: The project area includes segments of the Harris Bayou, Hushpuckena River, and Coldwater River which are 303(d)-listed waters Such listed waters are impaired water bodies that do not meet water quality standards or their designated uses Section 230(c) prohibit discharges that cause or contribute to significant degradation of waters of the United States Significant degradation can include individual or cumulative impacts to human health and welfare; fish and wildlife; ecosystem diversity, productivity and stability; and recreational, aesthetic or economic values. Non-point source pollution associated with project construction can often cause erosion or sedimentation problems downstream Consequently, appropriate steps should be taken to address potential impacts to water quality within streams and wetlands and to not adversely impact the continued existence of critical habitat for endangered or threatened species in accordance with 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 230 10(b). FHWA

and MDOT are aware of the need for best management practices and the effect that construction can have on these aquatic resources. They plan to closely comply and monitor this situation

Recommendation: EPA notes that the DEIS commits that MDOT will work with MDEQ to determine what pollution control measures should be adopted to advance the state's nonpoint source management plans in the project area. All feasible means will be incorporated to reduce storm water runoff and siltation during and after the construction phase, including but not limited to the use of silt fences, barriers, buffers and storm water detention facilities, where appropriate. The status of development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for any waterways in the study area should be identified in the FEIS and how the proposed project could affect implementation of restoration efforts in these watersheds. Due to the presence of several impaired waterbodies in the area, we also request the opportunity to review and/or provide assistance in the development of an appropriate storm water management plan to ensure the effective control of polluted stormwater runoff both during and after construction.

Cumulative & Secondary or Indirect Impacts: One of the key purposes of the I-69 corridor is to promote economic development in the lower Mississippi Delta. However, the induced growth created by the new proposed I-69 project will also result in additional environmental impacts. Although the document has effectively outlined potential locations of induced growth, there does not seem to be a comprehensive plan of how the resulting secondary impacts will be addressed. The document does indicate that "MDOT will provide plans and coordinate with local governments, so that local officials can use the information to guide future land use decisions."

Recommendation: A watershed-based approach to protecting aquatic resources from secondary and cumulative impacts is needed. The EIS should include the type of comprehensive information discussed in the aquatic resource comments regarding project impacts and mitigation so that effective aquatic resource protection decision-making can be made. Conservation easements held by local governments should be considered once valuable aquatic resources are identified.

United States Department of the Interior
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

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Mr Cecil W. Vick, Jr.
Environmental Team Leader
Federal Highway Administration
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202-3199

Dear Mr. Vick:

As requested in your letter dated November 4, 2004, the Department of the Interior (Department) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for **I-69 Section of Independent Utility #11,** Robinsonville to Benoit; Bolivar, Coahoma, Tunica, and Sunflower Counties, Mississippi, NCPD-1069-00(001). The Department offers the following comments and recommendations for your consideration.

General Comments

We welcome this opportunity to cooperate with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) in evaluating a section of the proposed national Interstate 69 (I-69) Corridor. The I-69 Corridor was designated by the United States Congress as a High Priority Corridor of National Significance in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. It was further defined and formalized in the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century.

This proposed project represents one of the Sections of Independent Utility (SIU) that has been identified as part of the nationally designated I-69 Corridor that reaches from Port Huron, Michigan, to the Texas/Mexico border. The project was identified in the I-69 Corridor Special Environmental Study – Sections of Independent Utility as SIU No. 11. The DEIS contains a great deal of valuable information concerning human and natural resources and issues relating to the proposed I-69 Corridor from State Route 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County, to State Route 304 near Robinsonville in Tunica County, Mississippi

The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) will provide additional comments on wetland and stream impacts and appropriate compensatory mitigation for lost wetland and stream functions and values during the public notice review of the Corps of Engineers 404 permit application.

FWS would like to reiterate that field surveys for the presence of the federally listed endangered plant pondberry (*Lindera melissifolia*) and the federally listed threatened bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) must be conducted once the preferred alternative is selected. These surveys will be coordinated through the FWS Mississippi Field Office. These surveys should be conducted by qualified biologists/botanists during the appropriate season. Formal consultation pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act may be necessary.

Section 4(f) Comments

In the DEIS, FHWA and MDOT identified properties eligible for consideration under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 is in the project area. These included five historic properties listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Properties. It was determined that each of the three alternatives will have adverse effects to one or more of five historic properties under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Based on the information provided in the DEIS, none of the alternatives will directly use any land associated with these five historic properties but will impact them primarily through visual and noise intrusions.

The regulations for Section 4(f) define "constructive use" of a 4(f) property as proximity impacts so great as to impair the values or the purposes of the property. The FHWA and MDOT have determined there will be adverse effects under Section 106 to these properties through the impacts of visual and noise intrusions into the historic settings of these properties. We find no evidence in the DEIS that the Mississippi State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has concurred or not concurred with these effect determinations. However, should the FHWA and MDOT make the determination that visual or noise intrusions will adversely effect these properties and the SHPO concurs, the Department believes those effects constitute a constructive use.

Therefore, the Department does not concur with FHWA's and MDOT's determination that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the proposal that would result in impacts to Section 4(f) properties. The Department also does not agree with FHWA's and MDOT's conclusion that all possible planning needed to minimize potential harm to these resources has been employed.

Summary Comments

The Section 4(f) evaluation appears to conclude incorrectly there is no constructive use of Section 4(f) properties. Therefore, the Department does not concur with the Section 4(f) evaluation by the FHWA and MDOT for this project.

The Department has a continuing interest in working with the FHWA and MDOT to ensure impacts to resources of concern to the Department are adequately addressed. For continued consultation and coordination with the issues concerning Section 4(f) resources, please contact the National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta

Federal Center, 1924 Building, 100 Alabama Street, S.W., Atlanta, Georgia, 30303, telephone 404-562-3124, extension 660. For matters related to threatened and endangered species and other fish and wildlife resources, please contact Mr. David Felder in the Mississippi Field Office, Jackson, Mississippi, at 601-321-1139.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Willie R. Taylor
Director, Office of Environmental
Policy and Compliance

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Agency preferred alternative concurrence

EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION, SEPTEMBER 13, 2005

Upon motion duly made with Commissioners Wayne H. Brown, William R. Minor and Dick Hall each voting yes, under the authority of the Commission, in conformity with and as spread on its minutes, the "Environmental Impact Statement" (EIS) for Project Number NCPD-I069-00(001) is hereby approved, with the preferred location identified as the "Central Alternative", to provide a full control interstate facility for Interstate 69, SIU 11, Tunica, Coahoma, Sunflower and Bolivar Counties, from the SR 304 Spur near Robinsonville to the Great River Bridge crossing near Benoit.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

COUNTY OF HINDS

I, Amy K. Hornback, Secretary, Mississippi Transportation Commission, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of an Order of the Mississippi Transportation Commission of record in Minute Book 11, Page 755 of the Official Minutes of said Commission on file in its offices in the City of Jackson, Mississippi, duly adopted on the 13th day of September, A.D., 2005.

Witness my hand and official seal this the 21st day of September A.D., 2005.

AMY K. HORNBACK, SECRETARY
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

62-01

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
Mississippi Division
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, Mississippi 39202

IN REPLY REFER TO
HRW-MS

September 28, 2005

Mr. Larry L. Brown, Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 1850
Jackson, Mississippi 39205

Dear Mr. Brown:

Subject: Interstate 69, Section Of Independent Utility Number 11
Project Number NCPD – I - 69 (1)

As requested by your letter dated September 13, 2005, please note that we concur in the Department's recommendation that the "Central Alternative" be approved as the preferred location for the Section Of Independent Utility Number 11.

If you have any questions, please give me a call or Mr. Cecil Vick at (601) 965-4217.

Sincerely yours,

Andrew H. Hughes
Division Administrator

cc: Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, 87-01

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Memorandum of Agreement

I 69, SIU 11

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Preserving America's Heritage

July 17, 2006

Mr. Andrew H. Hughes
Mississippi Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, MS 39202

Ref: MOA for EIS for Proposed I-69, SIU 11, Robinsonville to Benoit, Mississippi, Federal-aid Project Number NCPD-1-69 (001)

Dear Mr. Hughes:

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) recently received your notification and supporting documentation regarding the adverse effects of the referenced project on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This letter is to inform you that the ACHP has decided not to participate in consultation for this undertaking. However, if we receive a request for participation from the State Historic Preservation Officer, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, or another consulting party, we may reconsider this decision. Additionally, should circumstances change, and you determine that our participation is needed to conclude the consultation process, please notify us.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.6(b)(1)(iv), you will need to file the final Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and related documentation with the ACHP at the conclusion of the consultation process. The filing of the Agreement with us is required in order to complete the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Thank you for providing us with your notification of adverse effect. Our office is moving towards transmitting correspondence electronically. Should you wish to correspond with us electronically, please include an e-mail address in all future correspondence with the ACHP. If you have any questions or require our further assistance, please contact me at 202-606-8585, cfesko@achp.gov, or Carol Legard, our FHWA Liaison, at 202-606-8522, clegard@achp.gov.

Sincerely,

Charlotte M. Fesko

Charlotte M. Fesko
Historic Preservation Technician
Office of Federal Agency Programs

Received Time Jul. 31. 9:28AM

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE CHICKASAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE JENA BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA,
AND
THE TUNICA-BILOXI TRIBE OF LOUISIANA
FOR THE PROPOSED ROUTE OF INTERSTATE 69
BETWEEN ROBINSONVILLE AND BENOIT
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, AND TUNICA COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI

THIS MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR MITIGATION OF ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED INTERSTATE 69 PROJECT (NCPD-I0-69(1)/103104/101000) TO SITES 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852 and is entered into by and between the FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (hereinafter FHWA); MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISION/MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (hereinafter MDOT), the MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE (hereinafter SHPO), the MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS (hereinafter MBCI), the CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA (hereinafter OK Choctaw), the CHICKASAW NATION (hereinafter Chickasaw), the JENA BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS (hereinafter Jena), the QUAPAQ TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA (hereinafter Quapaw), and the TUNICA-BILOXI TRIBE OF LOUISIANA (hereinafter Tunica-Biloxi).

WHEREAS the Federal Highway Administration is providing financial assistance to the Mississippi Transportation Commission/Mississippi Department of Transportation so that it may construct U.S. Interstate 69 and associated tie-ins and infrastructure improvements between Robinsonville and Benoit in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties, Mississippi (NCPD-I-69(1)/103104/101000); and

WHEREAS FHWA has determined the proposed project will have an adverse effect on nine archaeological resources (see the reports *Cultural Resources Survey of the Proposed Route of Interstate 69 Between Robinsonville and Benoit – Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties, Mississippi [NCPD-I-69(1)/103104/101000]* [2004] and *Addendum: Survey of the Preferred Alternative Route for the Proposed Interstate 69 Between Robinsonville and Benoit – Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties, Mississippi [NCPD-I-69(1)/103104/101000]* [2005] by Coastal Environments, Inc., [hereinafter CEI]); and
WHEREAS FHWA, pursuant to 36 CFR 15 800.4(c), has determined that Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821,

and 22CO852 are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (hereinafter NRHP) under Criterion D; and

WHEREAS FHWA has determined that all feasible and prudent measures have been taken into account to avoid adversely affecting/disturbing these sites; and

WHEREAS FHWA has consulted MDOT, the SHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (hereinafter Council), the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. § 470(f) (hereinafter NHPA), and its implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800) to resolve the adverse effects of the proposed project to Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800, FWHA acknowledges and accepts the advice and conditions outlined in the Council's "Recommended Approach for Consultation on the Recovery of Significant Information from Archaeological Sites," published in the Federal Register on June 17, 1999; and

WHEREAS the consulting parties agree that recovery of significant information from Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852 may be done in accordance with the published guidance; and

WHEREAS FHWA has notified the Council in writing of this revision to the proposed undertaking and invited their participation (awaiting response); and

WHEREAS in fulfillment of 36 CFR 800.6(a)(4) and 36 CFR 800.11(f), public involvement was solicited through a series of open forum public meetings (July 16, 17, and 18, 2002 in Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica, MS, respectively; and April 30 and May 1, 2003 in Cleveland and Clarksdale, MS, respectively) and open forum public hearings (December 13, 14, 15, and 16, 2004 in Benoit, Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica, MS, respectively); and

NOW, THEREFORE, FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi agree that upon FWHA's decision to proceed with the proposed undertaking, FWHA will ensure the following stipulations in order to take into account the effects of the proposed undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

FHWA shall ensure that the following stipulations are implemented:

1. Mitigation of Adverse Effects on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

a. Data Recovery Plan

(1) FHWA and MDOT have prepared a Data Recovery Plan (hereinafter DRP) for the archaeological investigations to result from this MOA. The DRP (Attachment A) is responsive to the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Documentation* (36 CFR Part 68) and consistent with the SHPO's *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations and Reports in Mississippi* (2001) and the MDOT's *Guidelines for Contractors on Archaeological Investigations and Reports* (2004);

(2) The SHPO and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi have reviewed the attached DRP and concur with the proposed research questions, field and laboratory methodology, curation and reporting procedures; and

(3) The MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, who may attach religious or cultural significance to Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852 have been afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the attached DRP.

b. Inadvertent/Accidental Discovery

(1) In association with 36 CFR 800.11(a), and prior to initiation of construction activities, FHWA shall ensure of a plan of action is in place should archaeological resources (here defined as cultural features and/or deposits) be inadvertently or accidentally discovered during the construction phase of the project. The plan shall provide for an assessment of the significance of the discovery in consultation amongst the SHPO and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and for data recovery/mitigation, if warranted, in accordance with the attached DRP;

(2) In the event of the discovery of Native American human remains, associated or unassociated funerary objects or sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony as defined in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation ACT (25 U.S.C. § 3001 et seq. [NAGPRA]) during the archaeological investigations for this MOA, FHWA and MDOT will follow procedures as outlined in the MOA with the tribes and follow guidelines as set forth by NAGPRA, the "Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act Final Regulations – Updated" (2003) (43 CFR 10), the Council's "Policy Statement Regarding Treatment of Burial Sites, Human Remains and Funerary Objects" (2007), and in accordance with Mississippi Code (hereinafter MC) §39-7-31, "The Antiquities Law of Mississippi" (1972, amended 1983) and §97-29-19, "Code Against Public Morals."

(3) In the event of discovery of Native American human remains, associated or unassociated funerary objects or sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony as described in (2) above, the MDOT will halt all fieldwork at the respective site and pursue submission and issuance of a determination of cultural affiliation within 60 days and submit to the Secretary, as requested and as set forth in NAGPRA, seeking approved Notices in order to initiate repatriation within the shortest possible time as it is determined and is approved; and

(4) FHWA and MDOT will provide security for said discoveries to prevent vandalism or inadvertent damage when archaeologists are not present on site; and

(5) No photographs will be taken of human remains or open graves other than photo-documentation needed for recording of the excavation, nor will destructive testing will be allowed; and

(6) No public access will be allowed and, to the extent possible, the ongoing excavation of said discoveries will be blocked from public view; and

(7) A secure facility will be provided for cultural items that are removed and must be temporarily stored off-site.

c. Curation. FWHA shall ensure that the MDOT will enter into negotiation with the MDAH for the curation of all materials and records resulting from the data recovery in accordance with 36 CFR Part 79.

d. Documentation. In furtherance of their responsibilities under Section 106 of the NHPA, FHWA shall ensure:

(1) That all final archaeological reports resulting from actions pursuant to this MOA are provided to the SHPO and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi; and

(2) That all reports are consistent with contemporary professional standards and with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Documentation* (36 CFR Part 68) and consistent with the SHPO's *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations and Reports in Mississippi* (2001) and the MDOT's *Guidelines for Contractors on Archaeological Investigations and Reports* (2004).

e. Milestones. FWHA shall ensure that the following milestones are met.

(1) Fieldwork at each site will be conducted in accordance with the DRP and will begin within 30 days following the issuance of a Notice to Proceed (hereinafter NTP) at each respective archaeological site;

(2) Within 90 days of the completion of all aspects of fieldwork at each respective site, FHWA will submit individual Management Summaries to MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi summarizing the results of field investigations at each site, respectively. These Management Summaries will contain sufficient information to demonstrate that the field investigation portion of the DRP has been fully implemented;

(3) Upon receipt of each individual Management Summaries, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi will respond within 30 days to the information contained within the individual documents;

(4) Upon MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi acceptance of/concurrence with each individual Management Summaries, FHWA will consider the field investigations at each completed and may proceed with construction in the respective site areas;

(5) Draft reports will be prepared for each site as provided for in the DRP and submitted to MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi within 16 months (480 days) of completion of all aspects of fieldwork;

(6) Upon receipt of the draft reports, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi will respond within 30 days to the information contained within the documents; and

(7) Final reports will be completed for each site as provided for in the DRP and submitted to MDOT, the SHPO, the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi within 45 days after receipt of MDOT, SHPO, and MBCI, OK Choctaw, Chickasaw, Jena, Quapaw, and Tunica-Biloxi comments on the drafts.

2. Administration Stipulations.

a. Definition of consulting parties. For the purposes of this MOA the term "consulting parties" means FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, each of which has the authority under 36 CFR 800.6(c)(8) to terminate the consultation process.

b. Professional supervision. FHWA and MDOT shall ensure that all activities regarding archaeology carried out pursuant to this MOA are carried out by or under the direct supervision of a person or persons meeting, at a minimum, the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualifications and Standards for Archaeology* (36 CFR Part 61).

c. Alterations to project documents. FHWA and MDOT shall not implement any action that results from an altered plan, scope of services, or other document that has been reviewed and commented on in draft without first affording the consulting parties to this MOA the opportunity to review the proposed change or changes and determine whether it or they shall require that this MOA be amended. If one or more such consulting parties determines that an amendment is needed, the consulting parties to this MOA shall consult in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6(c)(7) to consider such an amendment.

d. Dispute Resolution.

(1) Should any consulting party to this MOA object to any action or actions proposed by or carried out with respect to the implementation of this MOA, FWHA shall consult with the objecting party or parties to resolve the objection. If after initiating such consultation, FHWA determines that the objection cannot be resolved through consultation, FHWA shall forward all documentation relevant to the objection to the Council. Within 30 days after receipt of all pertinent documentation, the Council shall exercise one of the following options:

(a) Advise FHWA that the Council concurs with FHWA's proposed final decision, whereupon FHWA will respond to the objection accordingly;

(b) Provide FHWA with recommendations, which FHWA will take into account in reaching a final decision regarding their response to the objection; or

(c) Notify FHWA that the objection will be referred for comment pursuant to 36 CFR 800.7(c), and proceed to refer the objection and comment. The resulting comment shall be taken into account by FHWA in accordance with 36 CFR 800.7(c)(4).

(2) Should the Council not exercise one of the above options within 30 days after receipt of all pertinent documentation, FHWA may assume the Council's concurrence in FHWA's proposed response to the objection.

(3) FWHA shall take into account any Council recommendation or comment provided in accordance with this stipulation with reference only to the subject of the objection; FHWA responsibility to carry out all actions under this MOA that are not the subjects of the objection shall remain unchanged.

e. Duration. This agreement is in effect until final reports are submitted to the SHPO and federally-recognized consulting Indian Tribes, which is to be accomplished within three years (36 months/1,080 days) of completion of all aspects of fieldwork at each site. In the event final reports have not been submitted by this date, the consulting parties may elect to enter into negotiations for a new MOA regarding Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

f. Amendment. Any consulting party to this MOA may propose that the MOA be amended, whereupon, the consulting parties shall consider such amendment(s). 36 CFR 800.6 shall govern the execution of the amendment(s).

g. Termination.

(1) If FHWA determines that they cannot implement the terms of the MOA, or if MDOT, the SHPO, or the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi determine that the MOA is not being properly implemented, FWHA, MDOT, the SHPO, or the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi may propose to the other consulting parties that this MOA be terminated.

(2) The party or parties proposing to terminate this MOA shall so notify all consulting parties to this MOA, explaining the reason(s) for termination and affording them 30 days to consult and seek alternatives to termination.

(3) Should such consultation fail, FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, or the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi may terminate the MOA. Should the MOA be terminated, FHWA shall either:

(a) Consult in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6 to develop a new MOA; or

(b) Request the comments of the Council pursuant to 36 CFR 800.7.

Filing. This MOA is not valid until a signed copy of this agreement has been filed with the Council.

Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA has afforded the Council a reasonable opportunity to comment on the adverse effects of new construction on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852, and that FHWA has taken into account the effects if their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE CHICKASAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE JENA BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA,
AND
THE TUNICA-BILOXI TRIBE OF LOUISIANA
FOR THE PROPOSED ROUTE OF INTERSTATE 69
BETWEEN ROBINSONVILLE AND BENOIT
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, AND TUNICA COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI

Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA will ensure the aforementioned stipulations in order to mitigate the effects of their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

By: AH Hughes Date: 8/28/07

Andrew H. Hughes, Division Administrator

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE CHICKASAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE JENA BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA,
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THE TUNICA-BILOXI TRIBE OF LOUISIANA
FOR THE PROPOSED ROUTE OF INTERSTATE 69
BETWEEN ROBINSONVILLE AND BENOIT
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, AND TUNICA COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI

Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA will ensure the aforementioned stipulations in order to mitigate the effects of their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

By: H.T. Holmes Date: 09.24.2009

H.T. Holmes, State Historic Preservation Officer

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE CHICKASAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE JENA BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA,
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THE TUNICA-BILOXI TRIBE OF LOUISIANA
FOR THE PROPOSED ROUTE OF INTERSTATE 69
BETWEEN ROBINSONVILLE AND BENOIT
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, AND TUNICA COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI

Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA will ensure the aforementioned stipulations in order to mitigate the effects of their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

As approved by the Mississippi Transportation Commission on July 10, 2007.

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

By:_____ Date: 7-11-07
Larry L. "Butch" Brown, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
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THE CHICKASAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
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THE QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA,
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Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA will ensure the aforementioned stipulations in order to mitigate the effects of their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

By:_____ Date:_____
Honorable John M. Fowler, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
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THE CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE CHICKASAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE JENA BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
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Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA will ensure the aforementioned stipulations in order to mitigate the effects of their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

By:_____ Date:_____
Chief Beasley Denson, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
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FOR THE PROPOSED ROUTE OF INTERSTATE 69
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BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, AND TUNICA COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI

Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA will ensure the aforementioned stipulations in order to mitigate the effects of their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA

By:_____ Date:_____
Chief Gregory E. Pyle, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
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THE CHICKASAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
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BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, AND TUNICA COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI

Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA will ensure the aforementioned stipulations in order to mitigate the effects of their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

CHICKASAW NATION

By:_____ Date:_____
Governor Bill Anoatubby, Chickasaw Nation

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
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THE CHICKASAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
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FOR THE PROPOSED ROUTE OF INTERSTATE 69
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Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA will ensure the aforementioned stipulations in order to mitigate the effects of their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

JENA BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

By:_____ Date:_____
Chief Christine Norris, Jena Band of Choctaw Indians

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
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THE JENA BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA,
AND
THE TUNICA-BILOXI TRIBE OF LOUISIANA
FOR THE PROPOSED ROUTE OF INTERSTATE 69
BETWEEN ROBINSONVILLE AND BENOIT
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, AND TUNICA COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI

Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA will ensure the aforementioned stipulations in order to mitigate the effects of their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

By:_____Date:_____
Tribal Business Committee Chairman John Berrey, Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)
BETWEEN FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
MISSISSIPPI TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION/MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
MISSISSIPPI STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE,
THE MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE CHOCTAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE CHICKASAW NATION OF OKLAHOMA,
THE JENA BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS,
THE QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA,
AND
THE TUNICA-BILOXI TRIBE OF LOUISIANA
FOR THE PROPOSED ROUTE OF INTERSTATE 69
BETWEEN ROBINSONVILLE AND BENOIT
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, AND TUNICA COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI

Execution of this MOA by FHWA, MDOT, the SHPO, and the MBCI, the OK Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Jena, the Quapaw, and the Tunica-Biloxi, and implementation of its terms, evidences that FHWA will ensure the aforementioned stipulations in order to mitigate the effects of their undertaking on Sites 22BO584, 22BO669, 22BO808, 22BO814, 22BO825, 22CO731, 22CO795, 22CO821, and 22CO852.

TUNICA-BILOXI TRIBE OF LOUISIANA

By:_____ Date:_____

Tribal Council Chairman Earl J. Barbry, Jr. Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Cultural Resources Correspondence

MISSISSIPPI Department of
MDAH
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

HISTORIC PRESERVATION
PO Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205-0571
601-576-6940 • Fax 601-576-6955
mdah.state.ms.us

January 4, 2005

Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Engineer
Mississippi Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 1850
Jackson, Mississippi 39215

RE: Addendum, Cultural Resources Survey Report
Interstate 69 between Robinsonville and Benoit
MDOT Project No. NCPD-IO69-00(001);103104/101000
Bolivar, Coahoma, Tunica, and Sunflower Counties

Dear Mr. Barnwell:]

We have reviewed the October 2005, cultural resources survey report for the above referenced undertaking pursuant to our responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800. We concur with your determinations stated in your letter of November 1, 2005.

If you need additional information, please let us know.

Sincerely,

H. T. Holmes
State Historic Preservation Officer

Thomas H. Waggener

BY: Thomas H. Waggener
Review and Compliance Officer

cc: Clearinghouse for Federal Programs

Board of Trustees: William F. Winter, president / Arch Dalrymple III / Kane Ditto / Lynn Crosby Gammill / E. Jackson Garner
Gilbert R. Mason, Sr. / Duncan M. Morgan / Martis D. Ramage, Jr. / Rosemary Taylor Williams / *Department Director: H. T. Holmes*

MISSISSIPPI Department of
MDAH
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

HISTORIC PRESERVATION
PO Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205-0571
601-576-6940 • Fax 601-576-6955
mdah.state.ms.us

March 16, 2006

Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer
Mississippi Department of Transportation
P. O. Box 1850
Jackson, Mississippi 39215

RE: R. A. Butler House Evaluation
Interstate 69 between Robinsonville and Benoit
MDOT Project No. NCPD-1069-00(001)/103104/101000
Bolivar County

Dear Mr. Barnwell:

We have reviewed your letter of February 16, 2006, concerning the effect of I-69 on the R. A. Butler House. We concur that the construction and operation of I-69 will result in no adverse effect to the R. A. Butler House and the proposed interchange approximately 3600 feet south of the R. A. Butler House will have no effect on the same.

If you need additional information, please let us know.

Sincerely,

H. T. Holmes
State Historic Preservation Officer

Thomas H. Waggener

BY: Thomas H. Waggener
Review and Compliance Officer

Board of Trustees: William F. Winter, president / Arch Dalrymple III / Kane Ditto / Lynn Crosby Gammill / E. Jackson Garner
Gilbert R. Mason, Sr. / Duncan M. Morgan / Martis D. Ramage, Jr. / Rosemary Taylor Williams / *Department Director: H. T. Holmes*

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

RWD-600

RWD-600
Rev. Win 2.0 3 08/05

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ROADWAY DESIGN DIVISION
Project Design Data 2001 Design Manual

Date: 8/22/2006

Project Numbers:	FMS Numbers:	
PE: NCPD-I069-00(001)	PE:	County: Bolivar, Coahoma & Tunica
ROW:	ROW:	
CON:	CON:	

Route/Termini: I-69 from SR-1 near Benoit to SR-304 near Robinsonville
Length: 100 miles

DESIGN TRAFFIC DATA:

Year	ADT	Flex Rate	Rigid Rate
		/1000	/1000
		/1000	/1000
		/1000	/1000

Number of Lanes: 4 Lane Separation: 88 feet (Centerline to Centerline)

Type of Construction: New Construction/Reconstruction

Functional Classification: Freeway Rural/Urban: Rural DHV = D = % T = %

Grade __x__ Drain __x__ Bridge __x__ Pave __x__ Other _____

Number of Existing Interchanges: 0
Locations:
Number of New Interchanges: 25
Locations:

Bridge Information

Existing	New
Hydraulic	Hydraulic
Railroad	Railroad
Other	Other
Total	Total

Curb and Gutter Proposed: No Min Median Opening Spacing: Not Applicable

---------- Geometric Criteria for Rural Freeway (New Construction/Reconstruction) (Table 2-7B) ----------

*	1 Design Speed	70 mph
	2 Control of Access	Full (Type 1)
*	3 Lane Width	12 ft
*	4 Outside Shoulder Width, Usable	12 ft (See Footnote 1a)
*	4a Outside Shoulder Width, Surfaced	10 ft (See Footnote 1a)
*	5 Median Shoulder Width, Usable	8 ft (See Footnote 1)
*	5a Median Shoulder Width, Surfaced	4 ft (See Footnote 1)
*	6 Travel Lane Cross Slope	2%
*	6a Shoulder Cross Slope	4%
*	7 New Bridge Structural Capacity	HS-20
*	8 New Bridge Minimum Width	T.W. + 12 ft(Out) + 6 ft(Med)
*	9 Existing Bridge Structural Capacity	HS-20
*	10 Existing Bridge Minimum Width	T.W. + 10 ft(Out) + 4 ft(Med)(See Footnote 2)
*	11 Roadside Clear Zone (Obstruction)	30 ft (See Footnote 4)
	12 Cut Foreslope	6:1
	13 Depth of Ditch	4 ft
	14 Cut Backslope	3:1
	15 Safety Slope (Within Clear Zone)	6:1
	16 Fill Slope (Outside Clear Zone)	3:1
*	17 Stopping Sight Distance	615 ft
*	18 Maximum Horizontal Curve	3 Deg. 30 Min. (e = 0.10)
*	19 Superelevation Rate	See Table 3-4A (Emax = 0.10)
*	20 Horizontal Sight Distance	See Footnote 6
*	21 Maximum Grade	3% (Level Terrain) (See Footnote 7)
*	22 Vertical Curve K Factor (Crest)	285
*	23 Vertical Curve K Factor (Sag)	149
*	24 Minimum Vertical Clearance (New)	16.5 ft (See Footnote 8)
*	25 Minimum Vertical Clearance (Existing)	16.0 ft
*	26 Minimum Vertical Clearance (Sign Truss)	17.5 ft (See Footnote 8)

* - Indicates Controlling Design Criteria All Footnotes Refer to Design Manual (Table 2-7B)

+++ No Design Elements Have Been Changed From What Is Recommended In DESIGN MANUAL (Table 2-7B) +++

Remarks: Desirable Criteria Used

Approved Jene W. Stewart
District Construction Engineer

Approved Joseph C. Rivers
Roadway Design Section Engineer

Approved C Keith Purvis
Roadway Design Division Engineer

Date 8/25/06

GEOMETRIC DESIGN CRITERIA FOR Rural Freeway
(New Construction/Reconstruction)

Footnotes to Table (Table 2-7B)

1. Shoulder Width. For 3 or more lanes in one direction, the following will apply:

   a. Outside Shoulder. Where the truck volume exceeds 250 DDHV, a 12 ft. surfaced should be considered.

   b. Median Shoulder (Depressed Median). Where the two roadways are separated by a depressed median, provide a 12 ft. usable shoulder and a 10 ft. surfaced shoulder. Where the truck volume exceeds 250 DDHV, a 12 ft. shoulder should be considered

   c. Median Shoulder (Concrete Median Barrier). Where the two roadways are separated by a CMB, the desirable surfaced median shoulder width is 12 ft ; the minimum surfaced shoulder width is 10 ft Where the truck volume exceeds 250 DDHV, a 12 ft. width merits stronger consideration

2. Bridge Width. For existing brdiges to remain in place which are considered major structures (i e., lengths greater than 200 ft.), the minimum clear width is the width of the traveled way plus 3 5 ft on each side

3. Minimum Right-of-Way Width (Urban). The right-of-way limits in urban areas will be determined by build up, property values, etc

4 Roadside Clear Zone. The recommended clear zones are for design speeds of 60 mph - 70 mph, for 6:1 fill slopes or foreslopes and for an ADT > 6000. See Section 9-2.0 for other roadside conditions. All values are measured from the edge of traveled way or auxiliary lane, if present.

5. Slopes. If high-volume change soil is present, see Section 12-2.04.

6. Horizontal Sight Distance. The necessary middle ordinate will be based on the design speed and degree of curve. See Section 3-5.0 for the applicable criteria.

7. Maximum Grades Grades 1 percent steeper may be used on 1-way downgrades. Grades 1 percent steeper may also be used in restricted urban areas where development precludes use of flatter grades.

8. Minimum Vertical Clearances Table values include an additional 6in. allowance for future resurfacing.

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Water Management Unit and Conservation Easement Correspondence

Preferred Alternative
Wetland Reserve Program and Conservation Reserve Program Impacts

For the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) advised the Neel-Schaffer (N-S) consultant team that more information needs to be provided in the Final EIS on the Preferred Alternative's impacts on Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sites.

During the process of preparing this update, N-S learned that WRPs are conservation easements in the form of a legal agreement that ensures the property will be managed in such a way as to promote the restoration, protection, or enhancement of wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal land from agriculture. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soil Conservation Service administers the WRPs. CRPs are 10- to 15-year contracts to protect highly erodible and environmentally sensitive lands with grass, trees and other cover. The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) administers the CRPs.

In the Draft EIS, the study alternatives' impacts on Conservation Easements and Agreements (Contracts) were determined based on Geographical Information System (GIS) data provided by the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMVJV).

The LMVJV is a private, state, and federal bird conservation partnership conceived in response to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan of 1986. The Joint Venture established itself as a voluntary, non-regulatory partnership focused on increasing coordination of waterfowl and wetland conservation in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley. Part of its mission includes the development of GIS decision support models and mapping.

When beginning this task for the Final EIS, N-S contacted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and was again referred to the LMVJV. The LMVJV again agreed to provide N-S the GIS shapefiles they had for conservation easements and agreements. When the LMVJV representative was asked if WRPs and CRPs would be included in the shapefiles, he replied that WRPs would be included but shapefiles for CRPs are not available to the LMVJV.

Attached is a copy of a map developed by the N-S consultant team depicting the LMVJV shapefiles impacted by the Preferred Alternative selected for the location of I-69 and the widening of SR 8. Based on the attached map, the table below was prepared to indicate the number and type of LMVJV shapefiles that would be impacted. No WRP impacts would occur based on the LMVJV supplied data.

LMVJV Shapefile Description	**Shapefiles Impacted by I-69**	**Shapefiles Impacted by SR 8**
WRP Easements, USDA	0	0
Ducks Unlimited Conservation Easements	0	0
FSA Easements	0	0
State Waterfowl Management Units	0	0
Federal Waterfowl Management Units	0	0
Shorebird Water Management Units	0	0
Private Water Management Units, USFWS	3	1
Private Water Management Units, Ducks Unlimited	10	4

Since the USDA FSA administers the CRPs, the agency was contacted and the request was made for the agency to provide GIS shapefiles for the CRPs. The stated intent was to include the CRPs to the Preferred Alternative Map and to determine the impacts.

Through the attached correspondence and conversations with FSA personnel, N-S learned the following important points:

- CRPs are 10- to 15-year contracts to protect highly erodible and environmentally sensitive lands with grass, trees and other cover.
- Most of the CRPs in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica counties are along stream banks (minimizing stream impacts was one of the constraints N-S used when developing the alternatives for this study).
- Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica counties are among the 13 counties located in FSA District One. If a comparison were made between the number of CRPs in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica counties and the number of CRPs in District One's remaining 10 counties, the CRPs in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica counties would be less than those in most of the other 10 counties.
- The FSA does not have any GIS Files available in any format for their CRPs. To determine the CRPs that would be impacted would require a hand search at their offices in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica counties. Due to personnel shortages in two of the three offices, special permission would have to be granted for the search to be allowed.
- The attached letter provided to N-S by Mississippi FSA State Executive Director Mickey Black gave notice that CRP land under threat of condemnation or acquisition by eminent domain is considered an involuntary loss of land by the CRP participant. CRP contract acreage acquired through condemnation or eminent domain would be terminated. Under termination by eminent domain, CRP participants would not be required to submit any refund on annual rental payment or practice cost share payments, nor would contract liquidation penalties be assessed. All payments would be prorated based on the date the land was acquired.

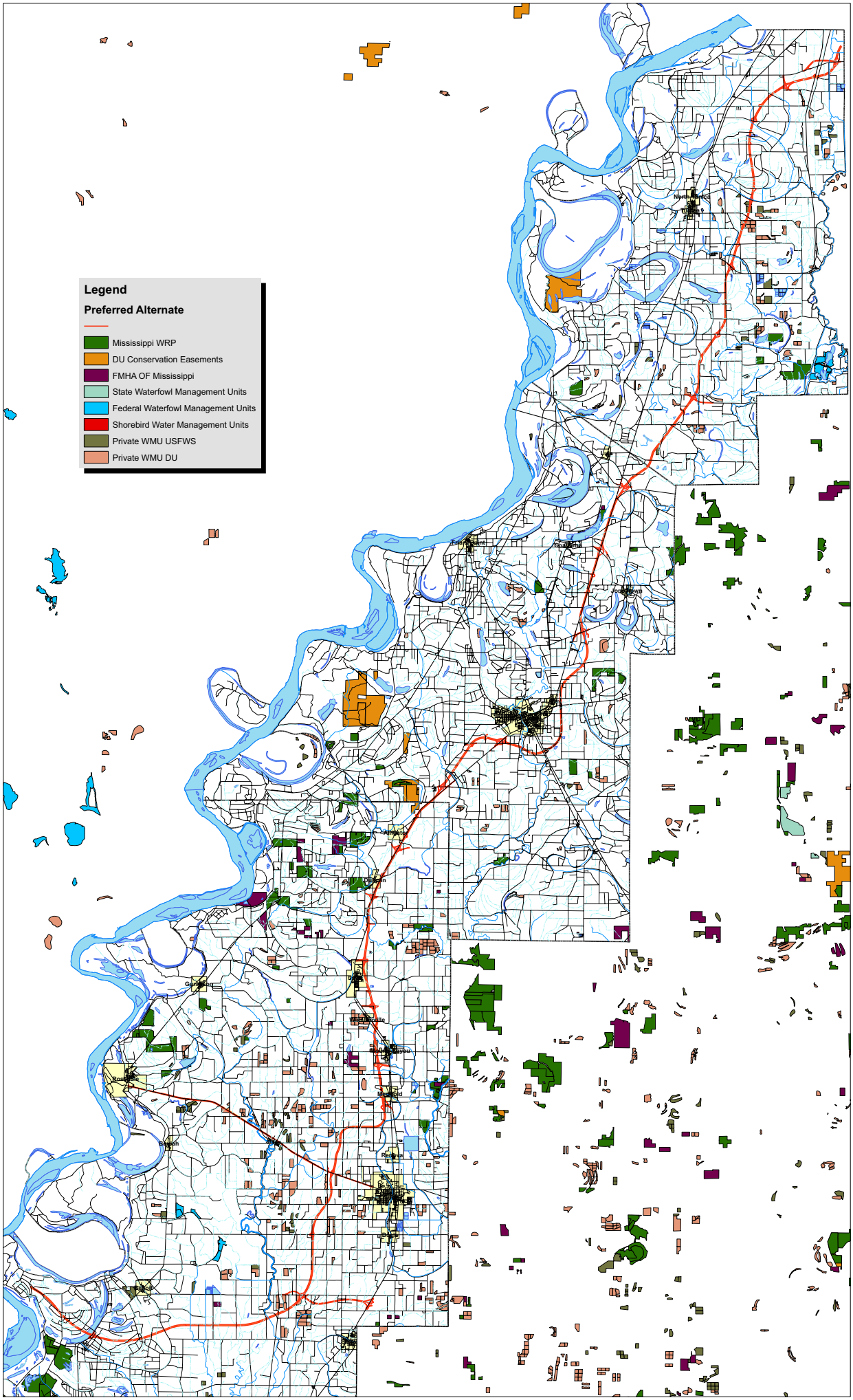
After reviewing the N-S findings on CRPs, the MDOT advised N-S that no further action was needed on CRPs.

When the MDOT reviewed the map and impacts based on data provided by the LMVJV, the MDOT requested N-S further research the USFWS Private Water Management Units (WMUs) that were coded on the map. In response, N-S learned the following.

- Between 1991 and 2000, the USFWS joined forces with Delta Wildlife Foundation and Ducks Unlimited to negotiate contracts with private landowners for the seasonal impounding of water for migratory birds. Most of the contracts were 10 or 15 years in length. The USFWS provided the pipe and miscellaneous materials the landowner would need to impound the water. The landowner was allowed to use the impounded water for duck hunting, and the landowner had control over who hunted on his property. The joint venture program is no longer in existence. Many of the contracts have expired and the last contract will expire in 2015.

- A check of the three WMUs impacted by the I-69 Preferred Alternative revealed the WMU contracts have expired. Attached is the information that was used to make that determination. Copies of the two expired contracts for the WMUs impacted in the middle portion of Tunica County are available at the Delta Wildlife Foundation. A copy of the expired contract for the WMU impacted in the southern portion of Tunica County is available from the Mississippi Chapter of Ducks Unlimited.
- N-S did not have the property ownership for the SR 8 widening. Therefore, the consultant team was unable to determine whether the contract is currently expired. However, since the MDOT's anticipated year for widening SR 8 is 2020 and all these particular contracts will expire by no later than 2015, the one impacted WMU for the SR 8 widening will expire prior to the MDOT's anticipated letting year.

After reviewing the N-S findings on USFWS WMUs coded on the map, the MDOT advised the N-S team that no further action was needed.


Legend
Preferred Alternate
Mississippi WRP
DU Conservation Easements
FMHA OF Mississippi
State Waterfowl Management Units
Federal Waterfowl Management Units
Shorebird Water Management Units
Private WMU USFWS
Private WMU DU

USFWS Private WMUs

The number designation is 192 on the spreadsheet for the northern Water Management Unit (WMU) contract in Tunica County of Mr. Charles Berry's that would be crossed south of Prichard Road. There are 56.352 acres contained in that contract. The contract start date was 8/13/1996 and 8/31/2006 was the contract end date. The Field Representative identified on the spreadsheet was Rob Ballinger, who now works for the Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Foundation in Leland. The work telephone number for Mr. Ballinger is 662-686-3375.

The number designation is 185 on the spreadsheet for the southern Water Management Unit (WMU) contract in Tunica County of Mr. Charles Berry's that would be crossed south of Prichard Road. There are 93.712 acres contained in that contract. The contract start date was 06/08/1994 and 06/08/2004 was the contract end date. The Field Representative identified on the spreadsheet was Rob Ballinger, who now works for the Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Foundation in Leland. The work telephone number for Mr. Ballinger is 662-686-3375.

On February 28, 2008, Jimmy Shirley and Mr. Ballinger discussed the WMUs. Mr. Ballinger provided Mr. Shirley his 662-820-2776 cell number and told Mr. Shirley that these WMUs were joint venture contracts with landowners for the seasonal impounding of water for migratory birds and that they were used primarily for duck hunting. The USFWS was the lead agency and provided the contracted landowners with pipes that the landowners placed to impound the water. He told Mr. Shirley that most of the contracts were for 10 years and that the landowners were not obligated to abide by the contract after the 10 years expired. He advised that Mr. Trey Cook with the Delta Wildlife Foundation would have a copy of the contract; he gave Mr. Shirley the 662-686-3370 telephone number for Mr. Cook; and offered his assistance if anything else was needed. Mr. Shirley telephoned Mr. Cook and he told Mr. Shirley the contracts were written with flexibility and contained no long-term commitments. He advised Mr. Shirley that it might take a while to find a copy of Mr. Berry's contracts, but he could do so if requested. When Mr. Shirley and Mr. Cook discussed the WMU on Mr. Allan Johnson's property that would be crossed by the Preferred Alternative in the southern portion of Tunica County, Mr. Cook advised the Mississippi Chapter of Ducks Unlimited would need to be contacted to obtain a copy of that expired contract. In conclusion, Mr. Cook advised Mr. Shirley the contract has expired, the joint venture agencies of the USFWS, Delta Wildlife Foundation, and Ducks Unlimited hope the landowners continue to abide by the contracts, and that the joint venture agencies do not have any rights relative to the future acquisition of the WMUs.

The number designation is 882 on the spreadsheet for Mr. Allan Johnson's Water Management Unit (WMU) contract in Tunica County that would be crossed north of Flea Harbor Road. There are 48.861 acres contained in that contract. The contract start date was 11/01/1991 and 03/01/2001 was the contract end date. The Field Representative identified on the spreadsheet was Bob Harris, who now works for Ducks Unlimited in

Grenada. The work telephone number for Mr. Harris is 662-226-6880, and his cell number is 662-417-4133.

On February 28, 2008, Mr. Shirley telephoned Mr. Harris and Mr. Harris verified what Mr. Ballinger and Mr. Cook had discussed with Mr. Shirley in their telephone conversations earlier in the day.

Ms. Hill,

This will confirm our telephone conversation this morning concerning Conservation Easement Impacts that need addressing in the Final EIS we are preparing for Section of Independent Utility Number 11 of the proposed Interstate 69. The Preferred Alternative is located in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica counties. In our telephone conversation, I neglected to let you know that the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service is a Cooperating Agency in this study.

The data we used for determining Conservation Easement Impacts in the Draft EIS was obtained from the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture (LMVJV). Earlier this week, we contacted Mr. Blaine Elliott of the LMVJV at their office in Vicksburg and asked him to provide us updated GIS data for determining the impacts in the Final EIS. When I contacted Mr. Elliott, I asked him if his updated GIS Data would reflect the data that we could obtain from you. He responded that he believed you had additional GIS Data that was not available to him. Attached is a map of the Preferred Alternative depicting impacts to Conservation Easements based on the updated LMVJV data. The Preferred Alternative is shown in a red color on the map.

In our telephone conversation this morning, we discussed the attached map and how the Preferred Alternative avoided as many impacts to known conservation easements as the study's constraints allowed. You advised me the map would be beneficial in processing our request for your GIS data.

Please review the impacts shown on the attached map against those easements that would be impacted based on your GIS Data. If the map accurately depicts all the impacts, please let us know. If the map does not depict all the impacts, please provide us your GIS Data in a form that would enable us to update the map to accurately depict the impacts. If you need additional information, let me know. Thank you for your help.

Jimmy

Jimmy R. Shirley
Engineer IV
Transportation Engineering
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625
Phone: 601.948.3071
Fax: 601.948.3178
jimmy.shirley@neel-schaffer.com
http://www.neel-schaffer.com

United States Department of Agriculture

Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

Farm Service Agency

Mississippi FSA
State Office
6311 Ridgewood Road, Suite W100
Jackson, Mississippi
39211-2035

February 6, 2008

Mr. Jimmy Shirley
Transportation Engineering
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, Mississippi 39225-2625

Dear Mr. Shirley:

This responds to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request received January 25, 2008, in the Mississippi Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Office.

Your request was for GIS CRP Data needed for determining the Conservation Easement Impacts for the Final EIS to be completed for the Independent Utility Number 11 of the proposed Interstate 69 project.

After consulting with the Conservation and GIS Specialists, it was determined that the GIS Data requested is not available from FSA.

However, in your conversation with District I Director Judy Rocconi on February 5, 2008, you revised the request and informed her that a letter would be sufficient to assist you in preparing the EIS.

Therefore, on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) you are hereby given notice that CRP land under threat of condemnation or acquisition by eminent domain for public use is considered an involuntary loss of land by the CRP participant. CRP contract acreage acquired through condemnation or eminent domain will be terminated. Under termination by eminent domain, CRP participants will not be required to submit any refund on annual rental payment or practice cost share payments, nor will contract liquidation penalties be assessed. All payments will be prorated based on the date the land was acquired.

You may appeal the "no record" response within 45 days after receipt of this letter. Both the letter and envelope should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal." The address is:

Administrator
United States Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency, Stop Code 0501
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-0501

Sincerely,

Mickey L. Black
State Executive Director

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

87-01

United States Department of Agriculture

NRCS
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Suite 1321, Federal Building
100 West Capitol Street
Jackson, MS 39269
Telephone: 601-965-5205
Fax: 601-965-4940

July 11, 2008

Mr. Andrew H. Hughes
Division Administrator, FHWA
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, MS 39202

Dear Mr. Hughes:

Thank you for the preliminary copy of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the section of Interstate 69 from near Benoit in Bolivar County to near Robinsonville in Tunica County, Mississippi.

After reviewing the document, NRCS has determined that no WRP easements will be impacted by the preferred alternative. Since the agency will not be impacted, we have no reservations with the project and request to be removed as a cooperating agency.

Thank you for including NRCS in the EIS process.

Sincerely,

Homer L. Wilkes
State Conservationist

cc:
Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT Environmental Division Engineer, 666 North Street, Suite 105, Jackson, MS 39202

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An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

Cooperating Agency Signature Sheets

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

VICKSBURG DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
4155 CLAY STREET
VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI 39183-3435

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

August 26, 2008

Operations Division

SUBJECT: Comments on the Final Environmental Impact Statement, Interstate 69, Section of Independent Utility 11, Robinsonville to Benoit, Mississippi

Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell, P.E.
Mississippi Department of Transportation
Environmental Division Engineer
Post Office Box 1850
Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1850

Dear Mr. Barnwell:

I am responding to your letter of July 28, 2008, concerning the subject project.

You asked for comments concerning the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). We have reviewed all the information you provided and have no specific comments to offer at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Enclosed is the signed Cooperating Agency page for the approval of the FEIS. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. A. Susan Jarvis, telephone (601) 631-5146, fax (601) 631-5459 or e-mail address: regulatory@mvk02.usace.army.mil. In any future correspondence, please refer to Identification No. MVK-2001-850.

Sincerely,

Kenneth P. Mosley
Acting Chief, Regulatory Branch
Regulatory Branch

FHWA-MS-FEIS-04-01-F 06/10/2008

I-69 FROM BENOIT TO ROBINSONVILLE
SIU-11
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, TUNICA AND SUNFLOWER COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI
NCPD-1069-00(001)

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c)
BY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
AND
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

COOPERATING AGENCIES:

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
U.S. NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

August 26, 2008
Date of Approval

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Mr. Mike McNair
Chief of Regulatory Branch
Vicksburg District, Corps of Engineers
4155 Clay Street
Vicksburg, MS 39183-3435

FHWA-MS-FEIS-04-01-F 06/10/2008

I-69 FROM BENOIT TO ROBINSONVILLE
SIU-11
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, TUNICA AND SUNFLOWER COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI
NCPD-1069-00(001)

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c)
BY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
AND
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

COOPERATING AGENCIES:

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
U.S. NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

Sept 18, 2008
Date of Approval

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Mr. Heinz J. Mueller, Chief
NEPA Program Office, Region 4
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Received Time Sep. 18. 2:39PM

I-69 FROM BENOIT TO ROBINSONVILLE
SIU-11
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, TUNICA AND SUNFLOWER COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI
NCPD-1069-00(001)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c)
BY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
AND
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

COOPERATING AGENCIES:

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
U.S. NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

Date of Approval	U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

Mr. Benjamin F. Davis, Jr.,
Special Programs Officer – Delta Initiatives
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
200 Jefferson Avenue, Suite 300
Memphis, TN 38103

FHWA-MS-FEIS-04-01-F 06/10/2008

I-69 FROM BENOIT TO ROBINSONVILLE
SIU-11
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, TUNICA AND SUNFLOWER COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI
NCPD-1069-00(001)

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT
42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c)
BY
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MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

Oct. 22, 2008 — Date of Approval

H T Holmes — Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Mr. H.T. Holmes
Mississippi State Historic Preservation Officer
Mississippi Department of Archives and History
P.O. Box 571
Jackson, MS 39205-0571

I-69 FROM BENOIT TO ROBINSONVILLE
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MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

9/25/08
Date of Approval

Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

Dr. Sam Polles
Executive Director
Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks
1505 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211-6374

I-69 FROM BENOIT TO ROBINSONVILLE
SIU-11
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, TUNICA AND SUNFLOWER COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI
NCPD-1069-00(001)

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MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

_____ _____

Date of Approval U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service

Mr. Homer L. Wilkes
MS State Conservationist
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
100 West Capitol Street, Suite 1321
Jackson, MS 39269

I-69 FROM BENOIT TO ROBINSONVILLE
SIU-11
BOLIVAR, COAHOMA, TUNICA AND SUNFLOWER COUNTIES, MISSISSIPPI
NCPD-1069-00(001)

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MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

8/13/08
Date of Approval

Ray Aycock
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mr. Ray Aycock
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
6578 Dogwood View Parkway
Jackson, Mississippi 39202-3199

Appendix B
Agency Correspondence

US Environmental Protection Agency Correspondence

Melinda L. McGrath
Deputy Executive Director/
Chief Engineer

Brenda Znachko
Deputy Executive Director/
Administration

MDOT
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Larry L. "Butch" Brown
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Director
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P. O. Box 1850 / Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1850 / Telephone (601) 359-7001 / FAX (601) 359-7110 / GoMDOT.com

March 25, 2009

Ms. Ntale Kajumba
Atlanta Federal Ctr, NEPA Prgm 13th Flr
61 Forsyth Street
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Re: Interstate 69, SIU 11, Environmental Impact Statement
Coahoma, Bolivar, and Tunica Counties, Mississippi

Dear Ms. Kajumba:

In response to your concerns expressed following the August 2008 Scoping Meeting we are providing the attached information. The format we chose includes a complete synopsis of the meeting and then addresses directly the points you presented. This report then will become a part of the final documentation of the FEIS.

This chapter is the last remaining task before requesting approval for distribution of the FEIS from Federal Highway.

Please call if any additional information is needed or if you wish to discuss any aspect of the responses.

Sincerely,

E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer

Cc: Dickie Walters, Federal Highway Administration

enclosures

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

July 11, 2001 scoping meeting – minutes
August 29, 2001 EPA meeting – minutes
April 2, 2002 agency meeting – minutes
May 8, 2002 agency meeting – minutes
August 16, 2002 National conference – minutes
September 4-5, 2002 Native American meeting – minutes
September 4-5, 2002 Mayors meeting – minutes
February 11-13, 2004 Native American conference – minutes
November 2003 – March 2005 Native American consultations and agency coordination
August 13, 2008 – Cooperating and Participating Agency Discussions

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

July 11, 2001 scoping meeting – minutes

MINUTES
JULY 11, 2001 – SCOPING MEETING
INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY #11

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted a Scoping Meeting at 1:30 PM on Wednesday, July 11, 2001, in Clarksdale at Clarksdale High School. This meeting's purpose was to solicit views from Federal, State, and local agencies – as well as private organizations or groups – which by law, interest, or expertise can assist the project planners with the timely identification of economic, social, and environmental opportunities and constraints within the study area. Utilizing environmental streamlining and a shared decisionmaking process, the project planners will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project. In order for environmental streamlining and a shared decisionmaking process to be effective, early lines of communication must be established and those lines of communication must be maintained throughout the process. This meeting formally initiated the environmental streamlining and shared decisionmaking process for this project.

In their invitation packet to the Scoping Meeting, the invitees were provided a map of the project's corridor study area and the agenda for the meeting. The invitees were requested to provide pertinent information they may have in their areas of expertise to the project planners. Since the length of the study corridor is approximately 100 miles, optional field visits were conducted on Thursday, July 12. These optional field visits offered a tour and viewing of a portion of the project area. The field visits also offered the invitees an opportunity to locate their specific concerns for the project planners. A list of the attendees at this meeting is attached.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the Mississippi Department of Transportation welcomed everyone to the Scoping Meeting for this project on Interstate 69 from State Highway 304 near Robinsonville in Tunica County to State Highway 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County. He encouraged innovation and consensus building from the large and diverse audience representing various human resources, natural resources, and political entities. Mr. Barnwell requested their input and the sharing of information to locate the best alternates that satisfy the needs of the people and the environmental interests.

Mr. Barnwell stated that as the MDOT Environmental Engineer on this project, he would ensure the document complies with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requirements for approval. NEPA requires this Scoping Meeting and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project. An EIS is the most comprehensive environmental document required for an environmental impact under NEPA. Sometimes, you cannot avoid all significant impacts. In such cases, one must conduct an EIS to satisfy the NEPA requirements and proceed with the project. This EIS process will follow the selection of different alternatives and the formulation of a matrix to determine the best alternative for the people and the environment. Early involvement, especially with the resource agencies, in analyzing impacts and working toward consensual agreement is important. This will save time by reducing some of the duplication of effort required to arrive at a consensus.

This Scoping Meeting was unusual due to the large number of people involved. The MDOT sent invitations to known agencies, governments, and individuals that have a direct and influential impact on the project. Public meetings will be held as part of the EIS process to address the desires of the general public.

MDOT hosts a website (goMDOT.com) where a link will be available to this I-69 project's website (msdoti69.com). The msdoti69.com website will provide continuous updates on the status of this I-69 project. Individuals interested in logging on to the msdoti69.com website will have the option of logging on directly or through the goMDOT.com website.

To closely monitor the work on the EIS for this project, a steering committee was established. This committee meets several times each month.

This initial Scoping Meeting has many purposes, which include:

- Obtain input from agencies/entities on what to avoid or take into account;
- Provide means for early and frequent communication of inputs from those favoring or opposing acceptable alternatives;
- Establish methods to facilitate and negotiate routes and alternatives;
- Evaluate need to change the project's scope of work based on inputs and comment sheets;
- Initiate the scoping process by laying the groundwork for future meetings with specific agencies or groups

Transcontinental I-69 Corridor History

Mr. Cecil Vick, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Environmental Coordinator for the Mississippi Division Office, gave a presentation on the history and significance of Corridor 18/I-69. To address the large volume of freight being moved from Canada to Mexico, a modal analysis study was performed from the South (Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas) to the North (Port Huron, Michigan) considering alternate modes of transportation. Those modes included rail, air and highways. The consensus of the report was that freight carried over highways by truck is the preferred mode for the transportation of goods across the country.

Since 1991, Congress has supported this initiative through legislation. That legislation includes the Intermodal Surface Transportation Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the National Highway System Designation Act (NHWSDA), and the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21), which provided the necessary funding for this EIS.

The I-69 Statement of Overall Purpose determined that the I-69 is needed for the following reasons:

- To improve international and interstate trade in accordance with national and state goals;
- To facilitate economic development in accordance with state, regional and local policies and plans;
- To improve surface transportation consistent with national, state, regional and local needs and with the congressional designation of the corridor.

The I-69 Steering Committee performed an Independent Study of the 1,600 mile length. Wilbur Smith and HNTB completed that study in 1999. Parts of the highway are already constructed and the remaining area was separated into Sections of Independent Utilities (SIUs), which if constructed alone, would work independently of the other 32 sections identified in the study. This EIS is being prepared for SIU # 11. This study has a strong freight component in response to the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1992 (NAFTA). The 2020 truck flow estimated in the study revealed the need for a major long haul truck route for Latin American Trade from Mexico to the industrial north/northeast sections of the United States and Canada.

This EIS is being prepared to satisfy NEPA requirements, which includes route location and its major design components (interchanges, frontage roads, etc.). NEPA's purpose is to collect data on the people and natural resources to best decide where the highway should be located. Unlike some EIS NEPA processes in the past, this location process will be conducted to determine concurrently the location and conceptual design of I-69. Other important aspects of this EIS

process will be to discuss the economic development potential for I-69 and to incorporate this highway system into the ongoing Delta Initiative.

The FHWA/NEPA Approval Process includes:

- National Purpose and Need – Previously Approved;
- Modal Choice – Previously Approved;
- Establish Sections of Independent Utility – Previously Approved;
- Establish Location/Conceptual Design – Determined through this EIS with concentration on design.

Challenges to this EIS include accelerated project management, conceptual design, and shared decisionmaking. To overcome these challenges, issues must be addressed early, frequently, and decisions made consensually.

I-69 Section of Independent Utility (SIU) # 11 Project Overview

Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the Neel-Schaffer Team, delivered an overview of this I-69 project on SIU # 11. A map was presented delineating the area comprising SIU # 11. The points of northern and southern termini were discussed as determined by the SIU study. The northern terminus or point of beginning is SR 304 east of Robinsonville. The southern terminus or the end point will be near the town of Benoit and will be coordinated with the on-going Great River Crossing study. These two points will be used to develop a minimum of three alternatives for further study.

Study Approach and Progress Schedule

Next, Mr. Jimmy Shirley of the Neel-Schaffer Team discussed the project approach and schedule. The project approach hinges on performing engineering and environmental studies in order to prepare conceptual plans and environmental documents of alternative locations for a portion of I-69 in Mississippi. The study is required to comply with NEPA, FHWA TA 6640.8A and applicable Executive Orders. As discussed previously, the environmental document will be an Environmental Impact Statement. The project will extend from SR 304, east of Robinsonville in Tunica County, to SR 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County (Approximately 100 Miles).

The basic design parameters will involve the Rural Interstate Standards and 2030 Design Year Traffic. Key elements in the production of this EIS are environmental streamlining and shared decisionmaking. The success of this EIS

will be dependent upon early and efficient coordination with regulatory agencies, governments, and the public.

The project will be accomplished in the following three phases:

1. Development, Evaluation, and Refinement of Preliminary Corridor Alternates
2. Preparing Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
3. Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD)

The Development, Evaluation, and Refinement of Preliminary Corridor Alternates Phase includes:

Development and Evaluation of Preliminary Corridor Alternates

- Kick off Meeting
- Base Mapping
- Identify Opportunities and Constraints
- Establish Initial Project Contacts
- Design Criteria and Conceptual Design
- Environmental Scoping Meeting
- Native American Consultation
- Establish Website (msdoti69.com)
- Define Some Wide-Banded Possible Alternatives
- Public Meetings
- Website Update

Traffic Analysis and Wide-Banded Alternate Refinements

- Alternate Refinement
- Future Traffic Projections
- Alternate Traffic Analysis

Alternate Evaluation Studies

- Determine Feasibility of Alternates
- Right-of-Way Requirements
- Construction and Maintenance Cost Estimates
- Develop Evaluation Matrix
- Public Meetings
- Website Update

The Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Phase includes:

Develop Selected Alternates

- Selected Alternates Traffic Analysis
- Revised Cost Estimates for Selected Alternates
- Website Update

Preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- Assemble and summarize information as required by NEPA and FHWA TA 6640.8A
- Conduct further detailed environmental evaluations
- Address Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Properties
- Conduct Phase 1 cultural resource survey for each alternate
- Develop Evaluation Matrix
- Submit Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Approval
- Public Hearings
- Website Update

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) Phase includes:

- Selection of Preferred Alternate
- Wetlands/Jurisdictional Waters Delineation and Report
- Prepare Final EIS and ROD
- Website Update

Initial Environmental Screening Findings

Natural Resources

Mr. Larry Meisner, who is with the Neel-Schaffer Team, spoke about issues concerning the natural resources and human environment of SIU # 11. These type studies of the natural and human resources typically involve two phases. The first phase is a screening process using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) databases, other desktop resources, and supplements from other agencies. Some natural resources may include oxbow lakes, wetlands, ponds, floodplains, and other environmentally sensitive areas. Some of the human environment concerns may be cities and towns, farmland, hazardous materials,

churches, cemeteries or cultural resources, and, something that is relatively new in the human environment, environmental justice. Several exhibits were on display showing types of information gathered during the initial efforts of this study. Those displays included:

- I-69 Typical Section;
- Aerial Photograph Map;
- Percent Minority Population Map;
- Median Household Income Map; and,
- Environmental Consequences Map.

Cultural Resources

Mr. David Kelley of the Neel-Schaffer Team spoke about the initial efforts concerning cultural resources. Data is currently being gathered on archeological sites and historical structures. This area is somewhat unique in that it is one of the most densely populated archaeological site areas in North America. The initial objective is to identify the known or existing sites and avoid these areas. An archeological survey will then be performed along the proposed right-of-ways to identify any unknown areas. Historical structures will be identified and this information will be used in determining the alternative routes. Finally, areas that may be traditional cultural properties (e.g., sacred ritual areas, a particular stand of trees, or a river used as a baptistery) will be screened and their significance reviewed and documented. Once alternatives are selected for the DEIS, a Phase 1 archeological study will be performed on the selected alternatives. After the preferred alternative is selected, all cultural resources along the preferred alternative will be further evaluated.

Community Involvement Outreach

Mr. Ken Weeden, who is with the Neel-Schaffer Team, spoke about environmental justice and community outreach. Mr. Weeden was born in Tunica County and is very aware of the environmental justice issues in the Delta.

Studies were conducted in the mid-80's which revealed that a disproportionate number of facilities with adverse environmental impacts were being located in areas of low income and high minority populations. Executive Order No. 12898 addressed this justice issue and made environmental justice an integral part of the NEPA EIS process.

There are four major points of this Community Outreach task:

1. Seek to identify disproportionate/adverse impact through an assessment;
2. Seek to avoid and/or mitigate the disproportionate/adverse impact;
3. Seek to ensure full/fair participation by the communities through outreach; and,
4. Seek to ensure fair distribution of impact or benefits of the project.

Part of the proposed outreach program will include identifying the minorities and low income community leaders and meeting with the leaders of the communities in the study area counties. The purpose of these meetings will be input, feedback, and the collection of additional cultural information. Ultimately, several individuals identified through the community outreach will be asked to participate in an I-69 environmental justice task force for this EIS.

Agency Coordination Plans

The FHWA is the lead agency for this EIS. Mr. Cecil Vick advised letters would be sent to the appropriate resource agencies inviting those agencies to be cooperating agencies in the development of this EIS.

Group Discussion of Questions

Finally, Mr. Robert Walker opened the floor for any general questions or comments the guests may have concerning the I-69 project. Mr. Cecil Vick and Mr. Claiborne Barnwell reminded those attending to please submit their comments in writing so that they can be made a part of the EIS record.

Question: How many alternatives are to be considered?
Answer: A minimum of three alternatives will be considered.

Question: Why is Parchman a boundary?
Answer: Parchman is the eastern edge of the study area for this EIS and outside of the study area as determined by the Corridor 18 Study.

Question: Is funding in place through 2004 or will additional funding be necessary?
Answer: Funding is in place through 2004 for the EIS.

Question: Will this section be ready for a construction contract by 2010?
Answer: It could take 10 years or more to complete the necessary actions before a construction contract could be let. Additional funding will be needed to complete those necessary actions and additional funding will be needed to let any construction contracts.

Comment: Several of the attendees commented that the I-69 should be placed near their towns to allow their areas a stronger chance for economic development.

Question: Will MDA (Mississippi Development Authority) be invited to participate in the I-69 process?
Answer: MDA has been notified of the I-69 project and they may be a formal or informal participant.

Question: Would it be helpful to get the communities' input on the location of the I-69?
Answer: Yes. Please submit your comments in writing.

Optional Field Trip (Thursday, July 12, 2001)

Information was announced for the optional field trip scheduled for the day following the Scoping Meeting. A visit to a portion of the study area south of Clarksdale was scheduled for the morning and north of Clarksdale for the afternoon. A headcount was taken to verify adequate transportation would be available for field trip participants.

Closing

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell closed by commenting that the exhibits already have a large amount of information on them and that these maps will only become more complex. The overall intent is to manage the information, weigh the needs of the communities, and make a sound decision while understanding the difficulties and challenges of finding the preferred alternative.

After Mr. Barnwell made his closing statements and dismissed the audience, representatives of the FHWA, MDOT, and the Neel-Schaffer Team were available to discuss the project with those from the audience who remained.

Field Trip (Thursday, July 12, 2001)

The following people attended all or part of the morning field trip to a portion of the study area south of Clarksdale: Ms. Ntale Kajumba and Ms. Stacy Fehlenberg, representing the Environmental Protection Agency; Messrs. Alex Levy and David Sullivan, representing the Federal Highway Administration – Southern Resource Center; Mr. Early Ewing, Jr., representing the Town of Benoit; Mr. Scot Luth, representing the Cleveland – Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Bob Eley, the Bolivar County Engineer; Messrs. Edgar Donahoe and Barry Bryant, Sunflower County supervisors; Ms. Lavelle Fitch and Mr. Ken Weeden, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Ken Weeden & Associates, Inc.); Messrs. David Kelley and Rich Weinstein and Ms. Renee' Badon, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Coastal Environments, Inc.); Mr. Larry Meisner and Ms. Beth Reed, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.); Messrs. Mark Bailey, Robert Walker, David Ruhl, and Jimmy Shirley, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Neel-Schaffer, Inc.).

The morning tour followed US 61 South from Clarksdale in Coahoma County into Bolivar County, around Shelby, Winstonville, Mound Bayou and Merigold, and on to SR 8 at Cleveland; SR 8 East into Sunflower County and on to Dockery; SR 8 West back to Bolivar County and Cleveland and on to Rosedale; SR 1 South to SR 446; SR 446 East to the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge; SR 446 West back to SR 1; SR 1 South to Benoit; Litton Road to the Shaw-Skene Road to Skene and on to SR 8 just west of Cleveland; SR 8 East to US 61 at Cleveland; US 61 North from Cleveland in Bolivar County to Clarksdale in Coahoma County.

This morning tour provided the group the opportunity to see the four-lane section of US 61 that is open to traffic and under construction between Clarksdale and Cleveland. Possible opportunities and constraints for using portions of this route between Clarksdale and the turnoff to the Renova community, located between Merigold and Cleveland, were discussed. The east and west limits of the study area along SR 8 were observed by stopping at Dockery in Sunflower County and by traveling to SR 1 at Rosedale in Bolivar County. The built-up area along SR 8 to the east of Cleveland extends to near the Bolivar/Sunflower County Line. The built-up area along SR 8 to the west of Cleveland extends to near the turnoff to Bayou Academy. The industrial park, port, and state park are obvious constraints at Rosedale. Due to these constraints and the location of the built-up area at Rosedale, it appears the western limits of any alternative for I-69 near Rosedale should be to the east of Rosedale. Any alternative that is developed along SR 1 and impacts the Town of Beulah, should probably bypass the Town. A visit on SR 446 to Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge afforded the group the opportunity to see one of the major project constraints. In the vicinity of Benoit, Mr. Ewing used his knowledge of the area to show the group where the HNTB I-69 Mississippi River Bridge Crossing Study on SIU # 12 will intersect SR 1 for their northern alternative under consideration. The I-69 intersection that is

eventually approved at SR 1 for the HNTB study will become a control for our study on SIU # 11, and impact the southern termini for our EIS. Mr. Ewing also showed the group a crop dusting operation near Benoit that could be a constraint to our study. In Skene, we observed an abandoned school that could be a constraint to our study.

The only person requesting the field trip in the afternoon to a portion of the study area north of Clarksdale was Mr. Ken Murphree, the County Administrator for Tunica County. The Neel-Schaffer Team made arrangements to meet Mr. Murphree at Tunica and tour his areas of concern. The following people made the tour with Mr. Murphree: Mr. Larry Meisner and Ms. Beth Reed, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Kimley-Horn & Associates Inc.); Messrs. Mark Bailey, Robert Walker, David Ruhl, and Jimmy Shirley, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Neel-Schaffer, Inc.).

In the Tunica area, Mr. Murphree showed us the following: a minority community located east of US 61 and north of SR 4, the expansion of the Tunica Airport that is under construction, an old abandoned landfill, and the new operating landfill. We viewed the northern limits of our study area. That termini is the intersection of existing SR 304 with a spur that will connect existing SR 304 with a new fully controlled access section of 304. Both the spur and the new section of SR 304 are under construction. The short distance between the intersections of existing SR 304 with the spur, the railroad, and SR 3 are constraints for our study.

Comments Received Through July 27, 2001, in Response to the Scoping Meeting

Comment: One of the comment cards received at the Scoping Meeting only made reference to the air conditioning malfunction during the Scoping Meeting.

Comment: Mr. Gary Fratesi of Indianola signed a comment card received at the Scoping Meeting. He wants to keep the south portion of this section of I-69 as far south and east as possible to better serve the larger populated areas.

Comment: A letter – signed by Mr. W.W. Gresham, Jr., for the City of Indianola, Sunflower County, the Town of Ruleville, the City of Greenwood, and Leflore County – was presented at the Scoping Meeting. The letter also supported an alternative that went south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and east of Cleveland.

Comment: Mr. David Sullivan, the Planning and Environment Team Leader for the Federal Highway Administration Southern Resource Center, attended the Scoping Meeting. He wants the impacted or impaired streams to be identified. Mr. Sullivan believes this EIS contains a lot of potential for stream restoration or mitigation by removing dams from these streams.

Comment: After the Scoping Meeting, the Clarksdale-Coahoma County Chamber sent a letter to Mr. Robert Walker at Neel-Schaffer. Their letter supported using the US 61 Bypass for I-69 around Clarksdale. The letter also supported using the four-lane section of US 61 north and south of Clarksdale as much as possible for I-69.

Comment: After the Scoping Meeting, Mr. Ken Murphree, the Chairman of the Transportation Committee for Delta Council, faxed a letter to Neel-Schaffer. Delta Council supports an alternative that will provide the most economic, social, and environmental benefits for the Delta region, while offering safety for the traveling public and commerce.

Comment: After the Scoping Meeting, Dr. David E. Lee, who is with the Sunflower County Economic Development District, mailed a comment card to Mr. Robert Walker, the I-69 Project Manager at Neel-Schaffer. On behalf of the Economic Development Board and a survey of citizens, Dr. Lee requested I-69 be located on the east side of Cleveland, Mississippi.

Comment: After the Scoping Meeting, Mr. Heinz Mueller, who is with the United States Environmental Protection Agency in their Region 4 Office in Atlanta, mailed a letter to Mr. Robert Walker. As Chief of the Office of Environmental Assessment for the Environmental Accountability Division, Mr. Mueller stated, "EPA's review of a prospective National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document will consist of examination of the proposed projects environmental impact on the water quality, air quality, natural resources, and socio-economic issues. Without more specific project information, it is not possible to provide detailed comments; however, the information provided in the attachment lists the contents of a NEPA document and may assist you in the preparation of a document. These topics should be addressed at a minimum commensurate with the project setting and magnitude of the impacts." His attachment topics contained comments on: project need, alternatives, wetlands, water quality, cultural resources, biodiversity, endangered species, cumulative impacts, noise, environmental justice, and air quality. For further questions or concerns, Mr. Mueller advised Mr. Walker to contact Ms. Ntale Kajumba at (404) 562-9620.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

August 29, 2001 EPA meeting – minutes

I-69 SIU # 11
Meeting with EPA Region 4
August 29, 2001

Meeting Minutes

Prepared By: Larry Meisner, Colleen Dunlevy Date Prepared: September 7, 2001

The following people attended this meeting: Colleen Dunlevy, Stacy Fehlenberg

During the meeting, the EPA provided KHA with additional GIS data for the I-69 project. The data included Primary Ecological Areas (PEAs), the product of GIS analysis of various environmental layers. PEAs are "areas of ecological significance" including hubs and connections, as was discussed at the meeting in Memphis. The EPA is currently working on the connections and will provide those at a later date, but PEA hubs were included in the GIS data given to KHA.

The Southeastern US Ecological Framework was completed a few years ago by the EPA in conjunction with researchers at University of Florida, where the research was begun. The I-69 corridor PEA analysis was based on the methods used in the Southeastern Framework. Base pixel size for the PEA analysis was 90m and environmental layers included land cover, forested areas, animal habitat, and others. Analysis extracted areas that were ecologically sensitive or highly valuable. Identifying these areas early in the planning process may present the planner with opportunities to avoid or minimize impacts to the PEAs. Because of the 90m pixel size, the EPA data is suitable for large area screening analysis rather than detailed impact assessment.

Data provided by EPA included the finished PEAs as well as some supporting layers used during GIS analysis to produce the final PEAs. Connecting corridors or links will be finished later this year. Links connecting the PEAs would provide wildlife with corridors to move from one PEA to another. These links may cross agricultural or other disturbed areas. Disturbed areas within PEAs may serve as potential mitigation sites that could link the PEAs.

Stacy will meet with Jerry Holden of Ducks Unlimited to discuss data that DU has produced. Some of that data may have been produced from data obtained from the Forestry service and may, therefore, be made available to the Forestry Service. If that is the case, Stacy will be able to share the data with others.

The USGS has recently revised their digital elevation mapping (DEM) program and is in the process of analyzing the DEM data for "sinks" or depressional areas. These depressional areas will likely correspond with wetland areas. The EPA began their own analysis of the DEM data but stopped when they discovered that the USGS would be doing the same processing for the entire country. USGS may charge for the DEM data. The EPA will check with USGS to see if the I-69 area has been finished. If so, they will request the data and pass it along. It is unclear when USGS will finish processing the data.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

April 2, 2002 agency meeting – minutes

MINUTES
AGENCY SCOPING MEETING
APRIL 2, 2002

INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY # 11
BETWEEN SR 304 EAST OF ROBINSONVILLE IN TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
AND SR 1 NEAR BENOIT IN BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted this meeting at 9:00 AM in the MDOT Auditorium in Downtown Jackson. This meeting's purpose was to update the Cooperating Agencies, as well as other key governmental agencies, on the status of the project and to obtain the agencies input on the alternative alignments being studied. Input from these agencies is needed to assist the MDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the consultant team in further refining the number of alternatives to move forward for more detailed study.

In a packet that was mailed prior to the meeting, the invitees were provided a map of the alternate alignments, an environmental screening analysis of the alignments, and a copy of the Draft Purpose and Need. In the mailing, the invitees were asked to review that information prior to the meeting. By using this approach, the agencies were provided a good opportunity to prepare for discussing their issues on these alignments at the meeting.

The length of the study corridor is approximately 100 miles and optional field trips were part of the initial Environmental Scoping Meeting conducted in Clarksdale on July 11, 2001. For these reasons, field trips were not planned for this meeting. However, if any agency wanted a field visit to review their concern(s), they were advised in their invitation letter that a visit would be scheduled for a later date.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the MDOT, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some brief opening comments on working together in a spirit of cooperation on this important project. At his request, the 31 people attending this meeting introduced themselves and whom they were representing at the meeting. The Federal governmental agencies represented were: the Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE); the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the FHWA; and the US Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The state governmental agencies represented were; the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWF&P); the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH); the MDOT; and the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD). The consultant team for this project on Section 11 had representatives from Neel-Schaffer, Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., and Coastal Environments Incorporated. The HNTB consultant team for the adjacent project on Section 12 also sent a representative to the meeting.

Mr. Barnwell advised this 100-mile section of I-69 is one of the 32 sections of the I-69 transcontinental project that would connect Canada to Mexico. He stated it has been years since the original interstate system was constructed, and said the I-69 transcontinental project is of the same order of magnitude as the original interstate system. Therefore, a high priority has been assigned to the I-69 environmental work. Mr. Barnwell stated this project on Section 11 is the largest single environmental contract the MDOT has ever awarded. He emphasized the importance of developing the best alternates that satisfy the needs of the people and the environment for study in the draft document. With a commitment of working together in an efficient and timely manner throughout the life of this project, Mr. Barnwell believes the proper and best decision will be made on selecting the preferred alternative in the final document.

Mr. Wendel Ruff, the Assistant Chief Engineer over Preconstruction for the MDOT, provided some comments. He also welcomed the attendees and that he was impressed with the turnout. Mr. Ruff stated his belief that the success for this project was in attendance at this meeting. He advised the MDOT is entering a new era of looking at projects differently. The MDOT is reaching out and seeking input at the beginning of project development, rather than waiting to the end. Mr. Ruff advised that now is the time to address question, problems, and concerns. He encouraged working together as a team to meet this mission.

Mr. Andy Hughes, the Division Administrator for the FHWA, provided his opening comments. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated his support of the opening remarks that Mr. Ruff and Mr. Barnwell had made. Mr. Hughes specifically reinforced the previous remarks concerning working together in a spirit of cooperation.

Mr. Barnwell advised the meeting is informal, and that the purpose of the meeting is to seek input and direction from the agencies. He stated some alternative alignments are not expected to be selected for further study, and that some alternative alignments made need adjusting before they are studied further. Mr. Barnwell believes the consultant team has done a good job to date in developing these initial alternatives. Although the interests of the agencies were considered in the development of these initial alternatives, he believes now is the time to concentrate on the details of modifying, adding, or reducing the initial alternatives. He then turned the program over to Mr. Walker.

Project Background, Schedule, and Status

Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the consultant team, advised the attendees of the progress that had been made on this project since the initial Environmental Scoping Meeting was conducted last year in Clarksdale. The one-mile wide corridors presented at the prior scoping meeting were studied further. Some corridors were added and some corridors were slightly modified. The widths of the revised corridors were then narrowed from one mile to 1,000 feet. Nine general corridors were located, and an environmental screening analysis was conducted on the anticipated right of way that would be required within those nine corridors that had a width of 1,000 feet. The mapping of the nine corridors and the environmental screening analysis spreadsheet were included in the mailing invitation packet for this meeting.

After the comments received in response to this meeting are evaluated, Mr. Walker stated the intent is to shorten the list of alignments from nine to three. He asked that the agencies furnish their comments on the alternatives within the next three weeks. In approximately two months, the three alternative alignments would be presented to the public for their comments at this project's second series of public meetings. Mr. Walker advised an economic study would also assist the consultant team in selecting the three general corridors for presentation at the public meetings. The economic study is expected to be complete in approximately one month.

Alignment Corridors Under Consideration

Mr. Walker used displays and handouts to present the nine alternative corridors being considered. He advised those corridors are designated alphabetically by the letters A through I. In addition to mapping displays, there was a display of the environmental screening analysis spreadsheet that was mailed to the invitees prior to the meeting. Mr. Walker made several comments about that display. When an alternative was on new location, a right of way width of 400 feet was assumed. To estimate the impacts, a factor of 40 percent was applied to the impacts within the 1000 feet wide corridor. When an alternative used the US 61 corridor, a factor of 20 percent was applied to the 1000 feet wide corridor. These factors were applied to more realistically show the impact of acquiring the necessary right of way for this new interstate. Mr. Walker also advised that the estimated farmland impacts shown on the spreadsheet are measured in acres instead of square miles.

Agency Coordination

Mr. Barnwell stated his appreciation for the good representation at the meeting of those agencies that agreed to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of this EIS. He advised that any information the agencies could provide to assist in this study would be appreciated. Mr. Barnwell advised that now is the time for the agencies to identify their real issues and how the issues relate to this interstate project. Because this is such a long and involved study, he advised we need the agencies help and early input. Mr. Barnwell wanted the agencies to be frank and offer their comments on the current status of this study. Due to personnel and budget constraints, Mr. Barnwell realizes the time the agencies will have to spend on this project is limited. Therefore, it is critical for that time to be efficiently utilized.

Mr. Andy Hughes, the Division Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration, again encouraged a spirit of cooperation throughout the development of this document. For examples, he cited the cooperation needed in selecting alternatives and determining mitigation requirements as key issues in the production of a satisfactory document.

Agency Comments on Alignment Corridors

Ms. Kathy Lunceford, with the USFWS, had the following comments.

- If the Preferred Alternative passes west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, she is concerned for two reasons. The first reason is the intention of the USFWS to acquire additional property west of the Refuge for expansion towards the Mississippi River. The second reason is the bisecting of the natural environmental corridor that exists between the Mississippi River and the Refuge.

- The acquiring of conservation easements is another concern of hers. An example she gave of those easements is Wetland Restoration Program sites. Her comment on Wetland Restoration Program sites led to a discussion on the legality of acquiring property for this project through those sites. The discussion ended with this being an issue that might have to be decided through the legal process. For mapping information on conservation easements, she advised Mr. Charles Baxter at their Vicksburg Field Office should be contacted.

- The overall bisecting of the Delta, in areas where restoration is being used or could be used to connect natural environmental areas, concerns her.

- The impact of providing adequate crossroad connectors between the interchanges and traffic generators adjacent to or near the corridor concerns her.

- She advised the pondberry is an endangered species located in the study area. She stated it should be identified and avoided where possible.

- As far as a preference on the nine alignments, she does not like the western alignments and favors the more eastern alignments that lessen the impact on bisecting natural environmental areas in the Delta.

Mr. Tom Mann, with the MDWF&P, had the following comments.

- He supports limiting the western alignments closest to the river to minimize habitat fragmentation at the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and lakes.

- He is concerned about the impact the western alignments closest to the river might have on the federally protected Louisiana Black Bear.

- He advises that costly underpasses would probably be required between the Mississippi River and the Dahomey Refuge. He gave what was done at Alligator Alley in Florida as an example.

- He supports staying to the east and using the US 61 corridor where feasible.

Mr. Chris Alonzo, with the MDWF&P, had the following comments.

- He prefers staying to the east and avoiding the bisecting of natural environmental areas.
- He suggested using US 61 as much as possible.
- He believes preserving the black bear habitat for the alternatives west of Dahomey will require costly underpasses and make those western options very expensive.

Ms. Ntale Kajumba, with the EPA, had the following comments.

- She shares the concerns of Kathy Lunceford about the alternatives west of Dahomey.
- She does not like alternatives near the Mississippi River and west of the Dahomey Wildlife Refuge. Those are Alternatives A, D, H, and I.
- She likes Alternative B, which uses the US 61 corridor.
- She advised their GIS Staff is trying to help set up an ecological framework for the project area.
- She would like more information on the quality of the wetlands. For example, whether they are forested or non-forested.
- She would like more information on the stream impacts. For example, whether they are channelized or non-channelized.
- She wanted to know noise impacts for alternates to the southeast near subdivisions and information on social impacts.

Mr. Philip Hollis, with the COE, had the following comments.

- He advised it appears a good job has been done to date on estimating the environmental impacts.
- He agreed with Kathy Lunceford and Ntale Kajumba about the alternatives near the Mississippi River and west of the Dahomey Wildlife Refuge.
- He advised the Vicksburg Office of the Corps of Engineers use the Charleston Method of assessing wetlands.
- He believes the floodplain impacts should be examined.
- Based on the initial data, he likes Alternative B, which uses the US 61 corridor.

- He was concerned about wiping out small communities and Environmental Justice issues. To address his Environmental Justice concern, he suggested getting non-profit groups involved. In response, Mr. Barnwell advised him that Mr. Ken Weeden is a member of the consultant team, and that Environmental Justice is Mr. Weeden's primary work assignment. Ms. Kajumba asked if the project had studied economic impacts on a local level. Mr. Meisner, with Kimley-Horn, advised her that at this level the consultant team has not investigated in depth the local impacts. He advised that, when the corridors are reduced and the alignments further refined, the consultant team will study impacts such as census data, poverty areas, etc. He also advised the consultant team has tried to avoid as many known negative impacts as possible, including negative impacts to communities.

Mr. Wayne Ellis, with NRCS, had the following comments.

- He is concerned about the impact to prime farmland.
- He likes the easternmost alternative because it appears to have the least impact to prime farmland.
- He is concerned that Alternatives B, E, and F may impact a recent sewer project his agency participated in for the Hambrick community. This community is located north and east of North Tunica. This prompted Mr. Barnwell to comment that connections are possible at some locations between alternative corridors to avoid a major impact and that entirely new corridors could be developed to avoid a major impact.
- He is concerned about the spanning of perennial streams. He wants the spans long enough to not impede flow. In response, Mr. Barnwell advised this would be investigated at the proper time by the appropriate trained personnel to make sure the project will not increase the potential for flooding.

Mr. Tom Waggener, with the MDAH, had the following comments.

- He does not believe any alternative is drastically better than the other alternatives.
- He thinks more Archives and History issues will emerge for the western alternatives near SR 1 than the alternatives farther east.
- He advised that encountering Civil War Sites, Civil Rights Era Sites, and Blues Sites must be considered due to the study area of this project.
- His agency just does not know every historical and archaeological site that is out there. He used the recent archaeological sites encountered at the proposed Welcome Center on US 49 in Coahoma County as an example of the many unknown sites there are in this part of the state.

- For associated development that the I-69 corridor is expected to generate, Mr. Cliff Jenkins, who is also with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, commented that he believes it might be better if the US 61 corridor is used as much as possible for I-69. This prompted Mr. Waggener to ask for an explanation of the concept for converting the US 61 corridor to I-69. In response, Mr. Barnwell referred his request to Mr. Jimmy Shirley with Neel-Schaffer. Mr. Shirley advised the present concept would be in some places to reconstruct both lanes of US 61 to interstate standards and provide frontage roads where required. In other places, due to known impacts that need to be avoided, the present concept would be to convert one set of the lanes of US 61 to a frontage road to avoid the impact(s). Then, the other set of existing lanes of US 61 would be reconstructed for one set of the lanes for I-69, a new set of lanes for I-69 would be constructed, and a frontage road would be constructed where required.

Mr. Walter Lyons, the Third District Engineer for the MDOT, had the following comments.

- He supports using a western option along the Mississippi River and drawing on the economic development potential of the river.
- If the US 61 corridor is used for I-69, he is concerned about the inconvenience the reconstruction will have on the local citizenry and the traveling public.
- He believes the most expensive alternative is using the US 61 corridor for I-69.

Mr. Jimmy Dickerson, the Second District Engineer for the MDOT, had the following comments.

- He supports Alternative G, which is the easternmost alternative.
- If the US 61 corridor is used for I-69, he is also concerned about the inconvenience the reconstruction will have on the local citizenry and traveling public.
- He pointed out that the long-term cost for maintaining both an interstate facility and a partially controlled four-lane facility must be evaluated in this study for locations where the US 61 corridor can be utilized for I-69.
- He is confident the work plan for this project will reveal the best alternative.

Mr. Marion Butler, the Division Head of the Environmental Division for the AHTD, had the following comments.

- He believes a holistic approach should be utilized. There is a need to provide a transportation facility to the public, and a need to protect and enhance the environment. No one will get everything they want. There will have to be give and take in order to serve both the public and the environment.

Follow-up General Project Discussion Comments

Mr. Tom Waggener, with the MDAH, had the following question.

- He wanted to know more about the project concept and schedule. Claiborne Barnwell advised the list of alternatives must be narrowed, and that the study will take another year to year and a half. Mr. Barnwell advised that in two to three months the next series of public meetings will be held, and those meetings will be very important in selecting the three alternatives for study in the Draft Environmental Statement.

Mr. Philip Hollis, with the COE, had the following comment.

- To prevent revisiting issues, he suggested obtaining concurrence from the Cooperating Agencies at key points in the development of the EIS. For an example, he used the Purpose and Need.

Ms. Kathy Lunceford, with the USFWS, had the following comment.

- She stated the document should identify an environmentally preferred alternative, address the secondary impacts associated with the connectors, and the impacts associated with reasonable foreseeable anticipated development.

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, the MDOT Environmental Division Engineer, made the following comment.

- He stated there are three sites being studied for intersecting SR 1 in or near Benoit in Bolivar County. This is because the three sites are the eastern limit of the study that HNTB is conducting for the State of Arkansas on Section 12. The study on Section 12 is closer to completion than this study. He asked for a status report on the Arkansas study on Section 12. Mr. Bill Richardson, the Assistant Division Head for the Environmental Division of the AHTD, made the following response to Mr. Barnwell's request. He advised a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for their project on Section 12 should be distributed next month to the agencies for comments. He estimates it will be late summer before a Preferred Alternative is selected for study in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Coordination is required between these two studies to finalize the crossing at SR 1. The final decision for determining that crossing will be made under the MDOT project on Section 11.

Mr. Eric Holsten, the HNTB representative for their project on Section 12 of I-69, made the following comments.

- He supported Mr. Richardson's response to Mr. Barnwell's status report request on Section 12.

- He believes the NEPA process exists to reach the right decision, and he believes good coordination is essential for the process to work well.

Mr. Bill Richardson, the Assistant Division Head for the Environmental Division of the AHTD, made another comment.

- He believes tourism attractions and access to recreational facilities should be major factors when considering alignment alternatives for Section 11 of I-69.

Mr. Larry Meisner, with Kimley-Horn, made the following comment.

- He wants the consultant team to continue receiving any data from the resource agencies they can provide to benefit this study.

Ms. Beth Reed, with Kimley-Horn, made the following comments.

- She thanked the agencies for the assistance they have provided in this project.
- She advised some Kimley-Horn field crews would be working next week assessing wetlands where the US 61 corridor could be utilized for I-69.

Mr. David Kelley, with Coastal Environments, made the following comments.

- He thanked the MDAH for the assistance they have provided in this study. If they have any other information that would assist in this study, he asked that it be forwarded to him.
- He advised the consultant team would have some field crews performing a Phase I Archaeological Study next week along the US 61 corridor that could be utilized for I-69.

Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with Neel-Schaffer, made the following comment.

- He advised the MDOT's two District Engineers that they might receive some telephone calls next week inquiring about the consultant team's fieldwork.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

May 8, 2002 agency meeting – minutes

MINUTES
FHWA/MDOT MEETING
MAY 8, 2002

INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY # 11
BETWEEN SR 304 EAST OF ROBINSONVILLE IN TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
AND SR 1 NEAR BENOIT IN BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley Date Prepared: June 17, 2002

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted this meeting at 9:30 AM in the 4th floor MDOT conference room in Downtown Jackson. The meeting's purpose was to update the MDOT and FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) on the status of the project and to obtain approval from these two agencies on the alternative alignments being recommended for further study. Input from these agencies and their approval is necessary to further refine the number of alternatives for analysis and presentation at the next public meetings.

The attendees were provided a handout containing a reduced size copy of the displays that were to be discussed at this meeting. This handout included the following:

- Two environmental feature maps of the initial 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors
- A spreadsheet of the environmental screening analysis conducted on the initial corridors
- A map of the economic study analysis corridors
- A map of the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors that are recommended for further study and presentation at the next series of public meetings

The two environmental feature maps of the initial 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors, as well as the spreadsheet for the screening analysis conducted of those initial corridors, were previously presented at a resource agency scoping meeting held on April 2, 2002. The attendees at that previous meeting were asked to review the information and provide any feedback though a letter or by calling the MDOT or Neel-Schaffer (N-S).

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Wendel Ruff, the Assistant Chief Engineer over Preconstruction for the MDOT, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some brief opening comments on the progress of the project and the purpose of the meeting. Mr. Ruff remarked that the maps on display were formed from several predecessors and that the project study was progressing well. He gave a special welcome to Mr. Bob Black, who is an attorney for the FHWA in Washington D.C., and Mr. Ruff advised that Mr. Black has been assigned to the I-69 transcontinental corridor studies as the FHWA reviewer for legal sufficiency. Mr. Ruff remarked that reviewing the development of the EIS and reviewing the EIS for consideration of alternatives are included in Mr. Black's job assignment for this project on Section of Independent Utility Number 11 (SIU 11).

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the MDOT, provided further insight into the nature of the meeting and the progress that has been made on the project. Mr. Barnwell commented that the meeting would disclose where the project is today and where the project is heading. He advised now is the time to make comments or suggestions, and that this information will be used to help determine which of the proposed alternative corridors will be presented at the next series of public meetings. Mr. Barnwell stated that the project has progressed well to date and that the range of alternatives considered appears to have covered all reasonable options. However, he remarked the alternates are still open for review.

Project Background, Schedule, and Status

Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the consultant team, provided a summary of the project background, schedule, and status. He began by advising the attendees of the progress that had been made on this project since the initial Environmental Scoping Meeting was conducted last year in Clarksdale. After reviewing comments received at the initial scoping meeting and analyzing known natural and human environmental data, he remarked several one-mile wide corridor alternatives were developed. Mr. Walker advised this information was then presented to the public and agencies at an initial series of public meetings in September of last year. Based on comments received in response to the initial public meetings and further study, he stated some alternative corridors were modified, some were added, and some corridors were eliminated. Mr. Walker advised nine general corridors were located, and the width of the nine general corridors under consideration was narrowed from one-mile to 1,000 feet. He remarked than an environmental screening analysis was then conducted on the anticipated right of way that would need to be acquired within those nine corridors. Mr. Walker advised the mapping of the nine corridors and the environmental screening analysis spreadsheet for those nine corridors were discussed at a second Agency Scoping Meeting held on April 2, 2002. He stated the comments received on the alternative corridors in response to the second agency meeting were reviewed to finalize the proposed corridors that are recommended for further study and presentation at the next series of public meetings.

To supplement the large displays that Mr. Walker used in his presentation, the handouts were distributed. The handout included two maps of the nine alternative corridors that were presented at the resource agency meeting on April 2, 2002. One of those maps depicted the nine corridors overlain on known natural resources information, and the other map depicted the nine corridors overlain on known information concerning physical features. The handout included an environmental screening analysis spreadsheet for the nine corridors. Also included in the handout was the economic study map. The final item contained in the handout was a map highlighting the proposed alternative corridors to take forward for further study and presentation to the public. Mr. Walker explained the alternative corridors considered cover several counties – Bolivar, Coahoma, Tunica, and small pieces of Quitman and Sunflower – and that the alternative corridors tie into two adjacent sections of I-69. He advised those adjacent sections are the Hwy 304 connection at the northern terminus, which is a terminus for SIU 10, and the Great River Bridge connections to SR 1 at the southern terminus, which is a terminus for SIU 12. Mr. Walker remarked that the new SR 304 section between US 61 and I-55 has been approved for I-69, and that the Great River Bridge Draft EIS should be completed before the end of summer.

Mr. Walker then provided a more detailed report on the project background, schedule, and status. He stated that this study on SIU 11 consists of an area approximately 100 miles long by 30 miles wide and the study has been underway for approximately one year. He advised the initial Environmental Scoping Meeting last July was well attended by the agencies, as well as local and area officials. After reviewing the comments that were made at this initial meeting and the comments that were received after the meeting, Mr. Walker stated the initial one-mile wide alternative corridors were developed. Prior to the development of the initial corridors, he advised the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) submitted comments concerning the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), and the sensitivity of the USFWS to an alternative between the Dahomey NWR and the Mississippi River because such an alternative could disrupt a planned expansion of the Dahomey NWR to the west.

After developing the initial possible alternatives, Mr. Walker stated that an environmental screening analysis of the one-mile wide alternative bands was performed. Since the estimated right-of-way width outside of interchange locations and grade separation sites is not expected to exceed 450 feet, Mr. Walker emphasized the one-mile wide analysis heavily overstated the actual impacts to the environment. He advised these one-mile wide alternative bands were presented to the public and resource agencies for comment in September of 2001 at the initial series of public meetings. After the series of public meetings, Mr. Walker remarked the one-mile wide alternative bands under consideration were further refined and modified into the nine 1000-feet wide corridors depicted on the maps in the handout. He advised the information contained on the environmental screening analysis spreadsheet for the nine corridors was estimated based on acquiring an approximate right-of-way corridor width of 400 feet for new alignments and 200 feet for when using existing alignments. Mr. Walker stated the study team believes such a spreadsheet better represents the estimated impacts, and that the agencies could provide better feedback based on this more accurate data.

Mr. Walker noted that some of the more vocal concerns by several of the resource agencies have been the opposition to a western route that uses the SR 1 corridor between the Mississippi River and the Dahomey NWR. He noted that more recently the USFWS expressed concern about a route south of Dahomey NWR and north of Litton Road. Mr. Walker remarked that a meeting was held on May 6, 2002, with the USFWS to discuss a possible southern expansion of Dahomey NWR to Litton Road. As a result of that meeting, he advised the current alternative corridor south of the Dahomey NWR and north of Litton Road will be reviewed for relocation south of Litton Road. Additionally, Mr. Walker remarked that concerns have been expressed by the two impacted MDOT district offices that location of I-69 along US 61 might be more expensive and is probably less desirable to most of the local citizenry than a location on new alignment. The districts are concerned that US 61 is currently being 4-laned, and their constituents have dealt with this construction for many years. To expose the local citizens, as well as the traveling public, to another reconstruction project along the US 61 corridor concerns the districts.

Other items discussed by Mr. Walker included Environmental Justice (EJ) issues, media issues, and the supplemental I-69 Economic Study. He stated EJ issues are important to this project and that an environmental justice specialist is part of the consulting team. Mr. Walker advised the EJ specialist has already formed county-wide EJ task forces to distribute and communicate the I-69 process to the communities. He also remarked that one intercounty task force will be formed later to further coordinate the local communication effort throughout the development of this EIS.

Media issues discussed included the work that Ms. Donna Lum, Public Affairs Director for the MDOT, and Mr. Barnwell are doing to deliver information on the I-69 process to the public. Mr. Walker showed the attendees a project brochure and folder which were prepared by a media consultant. He advised the brochure contains general information about the project and the EIS process, and that the brochure is appropriate throughout the life of the project. Mr. Walker remarked that the folder can be used to store the brochure and updated project information – such as fact sheets, press releases, maps, analysis spreadsheets, and comment sheets. He advised the updated information is made available through mailings and handouts at key times throughout the life of the project. Mr. Walker stated this updated information is also made available through the project website and that website's link to the MDOT's website.

Mr. Walker discussed an economic study being conducted on the I-69 Corridor. Unlike most major highway projects, he advised the majority of the communities in the study area want the interstate system near them. The economic study was begun approximately three months ago to determine, from an economic perspective, the most favorable route for economic benefit and development. The economists were tasked with studying a west, a central, and an east alignment and making a recommendation on which of these three alignments has the most potential for creating long-term economic benefit. The economists interviewed local, county, state, and federal economic development officials to gather information for their study. Mr. Walker stated that the Delta Council, the State Economist, and the Delta Regional Authority Director were also interviewed. He pointed out that the Economic Study Map depicts three general corridors, estimated interchanges locations, population centers, industrial parks and other factors the study considered. Mr. Walker advised a draft summary of the economic study was recently received for review.

Mr. Cecil Vick, Environmental Coordinator with the FHWA, stated that typically the primary location requirement for an interstate is to solve a transportation problem. However, he reminded everyone that an additional requirement for this section of the I-69 corridor is to provide economic development opportunities.

Mr. Walker then presented the final map of the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors that are recommended for further study. He stated that these alternates consist of three options (a west, central, and east alternate) from the south terminus at SR 1 in Bolivar County to the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County. He then advised the recommendation is for one alternative corridor from the Clarksdale Bypass to just south of the planned US 49 Welcome Center location in Coahoma County. This one alternative corridor would utilize US 61 except for a section that would be on new alignment between the northern portion of the bypass and the Clarksdale airport. From just south of the planned US 49 Welcome Center to the northern terminus of the project at SR 304 in Tunica County, two alternative corridors are recommended. An eastern alternative entirely on relocation is one of the recommended corridors and a central alternative, which would be mostly on relocation between US 61 and the east alternative, is the other recommended corridor.

Mr. Walker stated that due to major impacts on the natural and human environments only one alternative corridor was recommended between the Clarksdale Bypass and the planned US 49 Welcome Center. He also remarked that Clarksdale and Coahoma County have strongly indicated they would like I-69 to use the existing bypass, which has full control of access and meets most of the current design criteria for an interstate facility.

Mr. Walker remarked that Tunica has indicated that it does not prefer an alternate to the west of US 61 because of impacts to prime farmlands, natural resources, and large residential sites. Due to development along existing US 61, he advised that using the US 61 corridor through the City of Tunica would be difficult. Mr. Walker stated that Tunica County is expanding their airport, which is located east of US 61, and they are planning industrial type zoning from the airport to the east towards SR 3 and the main CN/IC railroad. Mr. Walker advised the County is also considering providing a railroad spur from the airport east to the CN/IC railroad. For these reasons, he stated the local officials of Tunica County prefer locating I-69 east of US 61 and the airport.

Comments on Alignment Corridors

Mr. Walter Lyons, the Third District Engineer for the MDOT, had the following question: "Has the SR 1 interchange location at Benoit been decided?"

Mr. Walker responded that comments received from the meetings favor a location either to the south or the north of Benoit. Mr. Barnwell added that most of the comments received from residents of Benoit favor a north interchange location to divert the interstate traffic around town. In addition, Mr. Barnwell stated that the southern interchange location has generated some negative comments from the local citizenry because of its location just south of a school.

Mr. Ruff had the following question: "Has the environmental screening analysis been conducted on the alternative corridors recommended for further study?"

Mr. Walker responded that the analysis for these recommended corridors has not been conducted. He advised the purpose of this meeting is to present the alternates for discussion and concurrence to move forward with the analysis to be presented at the next round of public meetings.

Mr. Ruff then asked the following question: "Would you identify the alternative corridors eliminated on the exhibit that depicts the corridors recommended for further study?"

Mr. Walker referred Mr. Ruff to Corridors A, D, F, G, H, and I on the mapping exhibits of the initial 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors. Mr. Vick added that these alternates were eliminated based on the data compiled. (This response by Mr. Walker and Mr. Vick was clarified later on at the meeting and is documented in these minutes.)

Mr. Jim Kopf, the Chief Engineer for the MDOT, then asked the following question: "Will the school on SR 1 south of Benoit be there for a long time...how old is the facility?"

Mr. Barnwell remarked that the facility is one of the nicer buildings in the Benoit area, and it is part of the local school district that has expressed its concern about locating the interchange near the school.

Mr. Jimmy Dickerson, the Second District Engineer for the MDOT, reminded the attendees that we must look at the long term impacts of this important project, and that major developments – such as casinos – may be locating along the river in the future.

Mr. Walker stated that during the interview process with county officials, questions on future expansion plans were addressed.

Mr. Ruff then asked for a clarification of which alternatives were eliminated.

Mr. Walker responded that in some cases only parts of Corridors A, D, F, G, H, and I were not recommended for further analysis. It was pointed out that the light grey portions on the alternative corridor mapping indicate specifically which corridors, or portions of corridors, are not being recommended for further evaluation.

Mr. John Pickering, Director of the Roadway Design Division for the MDOT, asked about the assigning of weights to the lines and categories.

Mr. Walker responded that a method for assigning weights to each alternate and category will be developed.

Mr. Andy Hughes, Division Administrator for the Mississippi Division of the FHWA, asked the following question: "What will happen now that these alternative corridors have been recommended for further analysis?"

Mr. Walker responded that the next step is to further refine the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors, update the spreadsheet for the environmental screening analysis on those corridors, and present the information for public comment at the next series of meetings. He advised those public meetings are tentatively scheduled for the end of June of this year. After the public meetings comments are addressed and the appropriate coordination is made with the resource agencies, Mr. Walker advised the alternative corridors will be selected for further study through the Draft EIS step. After the Draft EIS is approved for presentation at a public hearing, Mr. Walker stated a public hearing will be scheduled. Mr. Vick then advised an estimated date for completion of the Draft EIS is June or July of 2003, with a public hearing following later in the Fall.

Mr. Wayne Parrish, Port and Waterways Director for the MDOT, asked the following question: "When were the last public meetings conducted?"

Mr. Walker responded the last meetings were held in September of 2001.

Mr. Parrish responded that the Delta Council would probably be interested in this update at their meeting scheduled for June 25, 2002.

Mr. Hughes asked the following question: "Why were alternatives eliminated?"

Mr. Jimmy Shirley, engineer for the consulting team, replied the alternatives were eliminated based on the evaluation of known natural environmental information, field reviews, and public comments.

Mr. Hughes then asked this follow-up question: "Would the consultant team provide a brief summary of why each alternative or portion of alternatives was eliminated?"

Mr. Walker provided the following response by corridor alternate designation:

- Alternate F - The USFWS and others want an alternative that connects Benoit to the US 61 corridor as soon as possible to be located south of the Dahomey NWR.
- Alternate A - Natural resource impacts, environmental concerns, the expressed interest by Coahoma County officials to use the existing Clarksdale Bypass, and the expressed interest by Tunica County officials for location alternatives east of US 61 and their airport.
- Alternate D - Natural resource impacts, environmental concerns, the expressed interest by Coahoma County officials to use the existing Clarksdale Bypass, and the expressed interest by Tunica County officials for location alternatives east of US 61 and their airport.
- Alternate H/I - Natural resource impacts, environmental concerns, and the expressed interest by the Coahoma County officials to use the existing Clarksdale Bypass.
- Alternate G - Natural resource impacts, environmental concerns, and it does not use the Clarksdale Bypass.

Mr. Black asked the following question: "Is the project team comfortable about the wetlands and endangered species impacts?"

Mr. Barnwell stated that responses from the USFWS and Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks (MSWFP) to a recent review were that the alignments appeared in good shape. Cultural resources are more of an unknown condition and unrecorded sites will be discovered during the more detailed studies of the finalized alignments. Mr. Barnwell stated that the general rule of thumb is that the closer an alternate is located to the Mississippi River, the greater the potential for cultural resource impacts.

Mr. Mark Bailey, engineer for the consulting team, asked the following question: "What is the status of the Native American 106 regulations?"

Mr. Vick replied that the regulations were recently revised creating added responsibility to coordinate with Native Americans. Mr. Vick added that the FHWA is attempting to coordinate this effort on a broader basis and that, although the FHWA sent written invitations to the appropriate Native American tribal representatives, no Native Americans attended a Native American Scoping Meeting last year at the headquarters of Delta Council in Stoneville. The appropriate Native American tribal representatives were also invited to the initial series of public meetings and both governmental agency meetings, but none of the invited representatives chose to attend any of those meetings. He stated the FHWA did meet with Native Americans on the Great River Bridge Project for SIU 12 and that Native Americans will continue to be updated and invited to participate in the process throughout the life of this project. Although some of the Native American tribes were moved out of the Delta, as far away as Oklahoma, Mr. Vick added certain areas of the Delta remain very important to the Native American Culture; however, there has not been any Native American participation to date in this project.

Mr. Barnwell added that the Native Americans will continue to be invited to the meetings.

Mr. Vick remarked that if Native American remains are discovered, the Native Americans will become involved. He further pointed out the good relationship developed between the Native Americans, Mr. Barnwell, and the MDOT on the cultural resource area investigations recently conducted for the planned US 49 Welcome Center in Coahoma County near the Tunica County Line.

Mr. Walker added that the consultant team will explore more possible ways to encourage better communication between the study team and the Native Americans.

Mr. Black then asked the following question: "Have the secondary and cumulative impacts of the project been reviewed?"

Mr. Barnwell stated that these impacts would be reviewed after the alternates are selected for the Draft EIS. Although it may be at some cost to wildlife and other natural resources, he further added that the majority of the public perceives this project as a positive impact for the area.

Mr. Vick clarified that much of the area is agricultural; therefore, some or most of the conversion may be insignificant.

Mr. Hughes further pointed out that the Delta is a very impoverished area in need of great economic stimulus, which is part of the goal for I-69. Secondary/Cumulative impacts have not been reviewed for any of the routes to date and, excluding the Dahomey NWR, the USFWS does not appear to be concerned about the recommended alternative corridors. However, the Environmental Protection Agency still needs to address some of the route issues, and mitigation strategies will be one of the means developed to deal with some of those issues.

Mr. Black then asked the following question: "Are there any known impacts regarding the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Critical Habitat/Endangered Species Issues?"

> Mr. Barnwell responded that there is some concern, but these focus around Dahomey NWR and the area along the Mississippi River. The USFWS has remarked about the MS Black Bear and the Pondberry as endangered species that should be studied in this process. Mr. Hughes added that the major impacts to the Black Bear are along the river.

Mr. Ruff asked the following question: "How will maintenance costs be factored in this study?"

> Mr. Shirley stated that the consultant team would compare the costs for the alternatives selected for detail study in the Draft EIS. As part of that cost comparison, the consultant team must consider the cost of maintaining two separate multilane facilities in those locations where I-69 could use the US 61 corridor, but it does not. Mr. Shirley remarked that approximately one-third of the length of this I-69 project would be evaluated as part of an alternative using the US 61 corridor. Due to the project limits, commercial and residential development, pipelines and other utility impacts, and other factors, he advised it does not appear possible to consider anymore than one-third of US 61 for an I-69 corridor alternative.

Mr. Dickerson expressed his opinion that, for long-term planning purposes, more than one alternative corridor should be considered between the Clarksdale Bypass and the re-establishment of more than one alternative corridor south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line.

> Mr. Barnwell replied that if you look at the surrounding natural resources encountered on a new alignment, it is difficult to use any option other than the existing bypass and the US 61 general corridor. He also advised there appears to be a need to locate I-69 near the industrial areas, and that those areas have been strategically located adjacent to the existing bypass at Clarksdale.

Mr. Dickerson stated that he believed the project should look at an alternative corridor east of the bypass and that 5 miles on relocation should not pose a long-term adverse impact to the City of Clarksdale and other population centers.

> Mr. Barnwell replied that an eastern relocation alternate in this area would impact substantially more natural resources than the proposed alternate of using the Clarksdale Bypass and the US 61 general corridor. He gave floodplain areas and wetland reserve program sites as examples of natural resources that would be difficult for such an eastern location on new alignment to avoid.

Mr. Dickerson advised this length of having only one alternative corridor is approximately 15 miles of this 100 plus mile project, and he believes there should be sufficient documentation to support the decision. Mr. Dickerson expressed his concerned about compliance with the NEPA process and whether two options should be presented to the public.

> Mr. Barnwell replied that the decision to have one option at the Clarksdale Bypass at this time doesn't preclude introducing a second option at a later date (i.e., after the next series of public meetings). He clarified that the current recommendation is to have only one option through this area and that it has been studied and discussed in detail.

Mr. Ruff asked the following question: "Why are we looking at a western option in the economic study and what if the western option is favored?"

> Mr. Walker replied that the economic study for this section of I-69 was set up to be a non-biased study in determining the best location for economic development potential. Mr. Barnwell continued by stating the economic study was authorized with three alternative routes over the entire length of the project. The west, central, and east routes were selected for the economic study prior to this presentation of the recommended alternates. He stated that the draft results of the economic study indicate that the urban areas are critical to the location of the new I-69 interstate.

Mr. Walker asked Mr. Black the following question: "Do you foresee any problems with having only one alternative for a portion of this project on I-69?"

> Mr. Black responded that a lawsuit is always possible and that proper documentation is required to support the decision. He stated that as long as there are no critical habitats, or other critical impacts, it would be permissible.

Mr. Barnwell ended the meeting by thanking everyone for attending. He advised that anyone interested in commenting on the recommended alternative corridors should do so within the next few weeks, so as not to affect the final planning for the next series of public meetings. Mr. Barnwell stated that written or verbal comments should be furnished to him at the MDOT or to Mr. Walker. The deadline for furnishing comments is June 14, 2002.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

August 16, 2002 National conference – minutes

I-69 SIU # 11
I-69 Conference
August 16-17, 2001

Meeting Minutes

Prepared By: Larry Meisner Date Prepared: September 12, 2001

The following people from the Mississippi I-69 team attended this meeting: Claiborne Barnwell, Cecil Vick, Robert Walker, Jimmy Shirley, Ken Weeden, Larry Meisner

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the background and environmental process for the I-69 projects, and to coordinate with resource agencies regarding requirements and data. The following notes are not intended to provide a detailed record, but to summarize some of the major points as noted by the preparer. Items that apply particularly to the Mississippi portion of I-69 are italicized. Extensive material was distributed as part of the conference, which documents much of the discussion.

Purpose and Need
Gene Cleckley, FHWA and Joe Guyton, HNTB

The Corridor 18/I-69 purpose and need was based on freight movement, spurred by the NAFTA treaty that is expected to greatly increase freight movements between the US, Canada, and Mexico. The purpose and need should reflect trade, economic development, and consistency with national, state, regional, and local needs and congressional designation.

The Delta Initiative included numerous agencies, such as USDOT, Corps of Engineers, EPA, USFWS, and HUD.

NEPA Overview
Lamar Smith, FHWA

The challenges for I-69 are to
- Acceleration of project management, development, and decision making
- Integration of FHWA NEPA, State DOT and Local decision making
- FHWA/State/Local partnership
- Public outreach and involvement
- Interagency coordination and collaboration

We need to focus on the process, not the document. State and local needs are important as well as the national purpose.

FHWA/NEPA AND I-69
Bob Wheeler, FHWA

FHWA NEPA approval process will include
- Purpose and need
- Modal choice
- SIU/logical termini
- Location
- Conceptual design

We should use the NEPA/404 merger process. The I-69 national summit included FHWA, state DOTs, and resource agencies. FHWA sees this conference as a "mega-scoping meeting."

NEPA is applied at the project level, not at the system planning level (in response to comment from EPA).

There is no formula for determining secondary and cumulative impacts. We need to set both temporal and spatial limits for what is included. There is a difference between disclosure and responsibility, particularly in these areas.

The economic development purpose of I-69 is similar to that of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) highway system.

FHWA regulations are very liberal regarding use of highway funds for enhancements and mitigation.

Some segments may not be supported purely on local needs. We may need to rely primarily on national or regional basis for justification.

Steve Cecil, Indiana DOT presentation
Purpose and need was a key element in the original environmental movement – must justify the need for a project before it is committed. Local justification is needed, such as a statewide 20-year plan, economic growth plan, highway plan, and statewide mobility corridors. Items used to justify Indiana's section of I-69 include

Transportation measures:
- connectivity (time and distance comparison of straight line vs shortest existing path),
- accessibility (distance/time to population centers, employment centers, universities, airports, state capital), safety
- congestion.

Economic measures:
- USDA measure of "rural stress" – 2001 Rural Development Strategic Plan
- Poverty/income levels
- Comparative trends (employment and population growth)
- CUED rural development
- National I-69 projections of commerce and trade

Mississippi I-69 Presentation
- Cecil Vick: The Delta Initiative included 219 counties in states from Illinois to Louisiana. The Delta Regional Authority was based on ARC. One of their main conclusions was that roads and infrastructure are needed for economic development in the region.
- Ben Davis: The Delta area has been bypassed. Key points are job development, location of interchanges, socioeconomic impacts, and tourism. Tourism was discussed with other agency staff; Cecil will arrange meetings with tourism officials to discuss benefits of I-69.
- Ken Weeden: Environmental justice is a major part of the mission of this project. EJ includes avoiding or mitigating adverse impacts, full and fair participation by all, and fair distribution of benefits of the project.
- Ben Davis noted that relocations are a concern, decline in population has occurred in much of the Delta, and noted that Tunica runs buses to employment areas.
- Ken Murphree: The Delta Council includes 18 counties in Mississippi. It also includes areas designated as empowerment zones. Transportation is crucial to economic development in this area. We should focus on the greatest economic need.

Southeast Regional Resource Group (SNRLG)

EPA
Cory Berish
New approach included multiple agencies: TVA, EPA, COE, EPA, USFS, USFWS, NRCS, USGS, others. Looking at southeastern ecological framework and land use. Concern with habitat fragmentation, want to preserve large enough areas to support species, not a "living zoo."
Goals:

- Identify high priority ecological areas
- Identify potential mitigation sites
- Streamline process

Consider important habitat as hubs, with pathways to connect. Have developed priority and secondary ecological areas. EPA prefers to get proposed alignments digitally, so they can superimpose on their mapping.

Don't cut off Dahomey NWR from Mississippi. Consider overpasses for habitat connectivity if road takes this corridor. Highway 61 south of Tunica potentially cuts off link between habitats.

For mitigation and restoration, consider context, EPA prefers larger areas. Look for hydric soils, forest core areas, agricultural areas within National Forests and Wildlife refuges, fill in edges.

Consider impact on 303(d) water, which require additional controls to meet water quality standards, and important ecological areas.

David Parrish
EPA Region 6 (Texas)

Developed GISST (GIS Screening Tool) to evaluate impacts of alternatives. Layers include 303(d) waters, sole source aquifers, air quality attainment areas, national land cover data (1992-93) (from USGS Eris? Website), GAP data (USGS by vegetation type), T&E species habitat (USFS), wetland land cover, agricultural land cover, FEMA Q3 data, environmental justice indicators. Note: be aware of age of data. Used Louisiana project as case study.
Stacy Fehlenberg said EPA views GIS data as baseline to flag issues. FWS representatives agreed that it should be used as preliminary tool, and needs to be supplemented with detailed data further in process.

Ben West
EPA Region 4 (Atlanta)

Discussed partnering strategy (see handout). Three EPA Divisions are involved in review process. Need consistency of review, framework. Use NEPA/404 merger process (need to include SHPO) Developing checklist for guidance and standards, uniform policy. Important items to include are secondary/cumulative impacts, noise standards, GIS. EPA is currently working to resolve interagency differences. EPA training for states is a possibility.

Corps of Engineers
Col. Sean Wachutka, Cincinnati

Corps has close relationships with state agencies. Three Divisions involved in I-69. Will delegate I-69 to one division for overall responsibility (probably Vicksburg). Districts will work with states. Early notification is important. Check with Corps Districts for GIS data. Need to be consistent with definitions. Consensus building, cumulative impacts, websites. Remember 401 water quality certification from state environmental regulatory agency is needed in advance of 404 permit. FWS, EPA, or NMFS can elevate a

permit decision. Corps regulatory branch works with NEPA/404 merger process. Corps has staffing shortages and does not have any special funding to charge their I-69 review work. Cecil Vick asked if Corps would let I-69 project teams know when Corps is planning projects inside the I-69 Corridor so mitigation could be considered to improve Corps project in conjunction with the I-69 project. Corps may consider extending time frame that their permits are valid due to the length of time it will take to build this I-69 project.

USFWS
Cherry Grey, Kathy Lunceford

Main concerns are with secondary impacts (interchange locations is one example), habitat fragmentation, termini at state boundaries. USFWS wants to participate in decisions by being a cooperating agency. Additional funds are needed for reviewing this project. DOTs, FHWA should consider transfer from their budgets to support needed reviewers. DOTs need to consider acquisition boundaries of NWRs as well as existing boundaries, also consider T&E species and habitat. USFWS recommends using NEPA/404 merger process.

Specific Mississippi concerns: connection at Tennessee line. Connection at Arkansas has been resolved.

It will be a challenge to avoid restoration areas
Coordinate with Corps, NRCS, USFWS, MDOT
West of Dahomey NWR – migratory bird recovery area, black bear recovery area, acquisition area.

Secondary impacts: wildlife crossings (need to be practical, usable), habitat fragmentation.

Any alignment will have some issues. Endangered species: pondberry. There will be opportunities to avoid impacts with the correct alignment. The process will be slow. Consider historic and natural features. Ben Davis comment on tourism. Cecil Vick and Claiborne Barnwell propose a tourism summit in Miss to obtain input from individuals or groups representing tourism, consider ecotourism. Region 4 contact: Aaron Valenta in Atlanta. Need to plan for ecosystem.

TVA
Need to involve early when they may be involved, don't wait until the last minute.

Summary of Agency Discussion
Gene Cleckley, FHWA

Key points:
1. Use NEPA/404 merger process
2. List of key contact points for each agency
3. Agencies need dedicated staff
4. Review process needs to be known, consistent
5. Use technology and innovation to avoid natural and human environments
6. Collaboration is needed in establishing contacts and building trusts with tribal governments

Need to have collaborative process, develop consensus in procedures decisions. "We need to work together whether we like it or not." Leverage resources for efficiency. Include local governments, consider human impacts, avoid natural and human resources. We need creative designs, mitigation, utilize enhancement opportunities. K. Lynn Berry said she would be a key contact point for FHWA in Atlanta.

Next Steps
Gene Cleckley, FHWA

1. Federal stewardship consistency needs addressing
2. Collaboration in leveling resources needs addressing
3. NEPA processing, coordination, review and resolution of issues needs addressing
4. Interagency points of contact need addressing

Public Involvement
Judy Myer, HNTB 972-628-3172

Public meetings were held in 1994-1997. Included advocacy groups, environmental groups, elected officials (mayors and MPOs of named cities). Ken Weeden needs to contact Joe Guyton of HNTB for the names of those advocacy group leaders that have interests in SIU 11. Public involvement included in development of SIUs. National communications will be needed as well as local public involvement. HNTB is developing an I-69 video.

Documentation
Lamar Smith, FHWA

Documentation is important (despite what Gene says) because it provides a record of data, collaboration, decisions, issues (see Conference Manual for reference). Need to be innovative with our documentation. Lamar suggests combining affected environment and impact sections. EIS must contain good analysis, clear description of project and impacts. Pennsylvania produces "concise" EIS, can provide examples. CEQ says if an agency uses another format, the format must have cover sheet, summary, table of contents, list of preparers, EIS distribution, and index. Comments and coordination are needed somewhere in document. Appendices will cut down on the size of the document. Section 4(f) should be a separate section (chapter). 404(b)1 can be included in wetland section text or as separate chapter. Manage the process to shorten the time frame, FHWA can review pre-draft document. Prior concurrence is required when

- Project is highly controversial or involves issues of national significance
- Inadequate coordination or discussion
- Great impacts
- Unresolved issues
- Agency opposition

Legal Sufficiency
Bob Black, FHWA

Address all required items. Documentation (not necessarily in EIS document, can be in tech memos, files) is very important; "if it's not written, it doesn't exist." It is OK and desirable to include dissenting opinions in records, actually help build credibility. He looks for hot spots, "red flags." As a rule, draft material is not available to the public.

Record of Decision (ROD)
Bob Wheeler, FHWA

ROD is a decision document. It needs to explain the balancing of values, identify environmentally preferred alternative, describe environmental commitments and monitoring, and address any comments on the FEIS. EPA must review and assign rating to all EISs, as specified in Section 309 of Clean Air Act.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

September 4-5, 2002 Native American meeting – minutes

MINUTES

AGENCY-NATIVE AMERICAN SCOPING MEETING
SEPTEMBER 4, 2002

FIELD TRIP
SEPTEMBER 5, 2002

INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY # 11
BETWEEN SR 304 EAST OF ROBINSONVILLE IN TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
AND SR 1 NEAR BENOIT IN BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley Date Prepared: December 30, 2002

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted this coordination meeting from 1:30 PM to approximately 3:30 PM in Clarksdale at the Headquarters of the Delta Regional Authority. This meeting's purpose was to update the Cooperating Agencies, other key governmental agencies, and the Native Americans on the status of the project and to obtain their input on a limited number of merited alternative corridors the project team believes should be taken forward for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Using contact information obtained from previous Scoping, Cooperating Agency, and Native American meetings on this project, 46 invitation packets were mailed in mid-August. The packets contained the following:

- An invitation letter.
- A map providing directions to the meeting location.
- An agenda for the meeting.
- A map of the alternative corridors presented to the public for comment at a series of identical public meetings conducted on July 16-18, 2002.
- A spreadsheet screening analysis of the alternatives presented to the public at the series of identical meetings conducted on July 16-18, 2002.
- A post card that provided the invitees an opportunity to request a field trip to view any of the alternatives on the day after the meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the MDOT, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some brief opening comments. He expressed his appreciation to the attendees for the efforts they made enabling them to attend the meeting. The attendees represented the consultant team, the MDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and other governmental agencies. There were not any Native American representatives in attendance at the meeting. The consultant team representatives were from Neel-Schaffer, Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Coastal Environments, Inc., and Ken Weeden and Associates, Inc. At Mr. Barnwell's request, everyone present introduced themselves and whom they were representing at the meeting. Excluding the representatives from the MDOT, FHWA, and consultant team, nine people attended the meeting. Those nine people and the agencies they represented were:

- Mr. Mike Lilly with the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS)
- Ms. Eleanor Schnabel and Mr. John Sullivan with the Greenville Field Office of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH)
- Mr. John Connaway with the Clarksdale Field Office of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH)
- Ms. Ntale Kajumba and Mr. Darryl Williams with Region 4 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Messrs. Philip Hollis, Harold Lee, and Joseph Greenleaf with the U.S. Corps of Engineers

Mr. Barnwell advised the meeting is informal, and that the purpose of the meeting is to seek input and direction from the agencies on the alternatives selected for further study in the DEIS. He stated further refinement of the selected alignments will be made to reduce the normal width of the corridors from 1,000 feet to approximately 450 feet. Mr. Barnwell advised he believes the consultant team has done a good job to date in developing the alternatives. Although the interests of the local officials and governmental agencies were considered in the development of the alternatives, Mr. Barnwell stated now is the time to concentrate on the details of refining, adding, or reducing the alternatives. He then turned the program over to Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the consultant team.

Project Status Update

Utilizing displays mounted on easels, Mr. Walker advised the attendees of the following progress that had been made on the project.

- An initial Scoping Meeting was conducted in Clarksdale at Clarksdale High School on July 11, 2001. The meeting was well attended by representatives from the appropriate governmental agencies, local and area elected officials, and concerned citizens.

- A Scoping Meeting with the appropriate representatives of the Native American tribes was scheduled at the Headquarters of the Delta Council for August 23, 2001. Although some of the tribal representatives furnished a general written response to their invitation, none of the tribal representatives attended the meeting.

- Based on known information on the natural and human environment, initial one-mile wide corridor alternatives were developed and presented to the public for comment at the first series of identical public meetings. Those meetings were conducted on four successive evenings at Benoit, Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica on September 24-27, 2001.

- The comments received in response to the initial meetings were evaluated. Some alternatives were eliminated and others were added. The widths of the revised corridors were then narrowed from one mile to 1,000 feet. Nine general corridors were located, and an environmental screening analysis was conducted on the anticipated approximately 450 feet of right of way width that would be required for those nine corridors.

- The refined 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors and the screening analysis on those corridors were presented to the resource agencies for comment at a Scoping Meeting conducted at the MDOT on April 2, 2002.

- The Economic Study – comparing the potential economic development opportunities for a West Corridor, Central Corridor, and East Corridor – was completed, and it determined all three corridors have the potential to generate economic development. As to a ranking, the study determined the Central Corridor provided the highest opportunity for economic development followed by the East Corridor and then the West Corridor. A major reason the Central Corridor was chosen as having the highest potential was its location relative to established population centers. The following is a description of the three corridors evaluated in the study.

    - A West Corridor which proceeds north from Benoit following the SR 1 and/or the Mississippi River corridor as much as possible to between Tunica and Robinsonville. The corridor then turns east to cross US 61 and SR 3 before turning north to cross SR 304 and become concurrent with the existing SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville.

- ❖ A Central Corridor which proceeds east from Benoit and stays south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge before turning north to cross SR 8 east of Pace and west of Cleveland. Slightly north of the SR 8 crossing, the corridor turns northeast to become concurrent with US 61 near Merigold. The corridor uses US 61 as much as possible from Merigold to the Tunica area before turning northeast to intersect and become concurrent with the SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville.

- ❖ An Eastern Corridor which proceeds east from Benoit, and stays south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. After passing south of the Refuge, the corridor continues east to cross US 61 slightly north of Shaw and then the corridor turns to the north. The corridor continues in a northerly path on new location to the east of Boyle and crosses SR 8 between Cleveland and Ruleville. From Cleveland to southeast of Clarksdale, the corridor continues to the north on new location passing slightly west of the State Penal Farm. After crossing US 49 southeast of Clarksdale, the corridor continues to the north of relocation between US 61 and SR 3 to an area south of SR 304 between Tunica and Robinsonville. The corridor then makes a turn to the northeast to cross SR 3 and then SR 304 before becoming concurrent with the SR 304 Spur.

- o There were key members of the MDOT and FHWA staff that needed to know the work accomplished on the project. This staff also needed to be involved in approving the 1,000 feet wide refined alternative corridors for presentation at the second series of public meetings. For those reasons, an interagency meeting of the MDOT and FHWA with the consultant team was conducted at the MDOT on May 8, 2002. At that meeting, the consultant team presented the compiled information on the 1,000 feet wide corridors, and which corridors were recommended for presentation to the public at a second series of public meetings.

- o After a decision was made on the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors that would be presented at the second series of identical public meetings, the necessary preparations were made to schedule the meetings. The meetings were conducted on three successive evenings at Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica respectively on July 16-18, 2002. The alternatives presented at the public meetings were obtained by combining the following segment alternatives.

  - ❖ Three alternatives from Benoit in Bolivar County proceeding northeast to the US 61 Bypass south of Clarksdale in Coahoma County. The three alternatives are as follows:

    - A western alternative on relocation that passes west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, crosses SR 8 between Rosedale and Pace, crosses SR 32 between SR 1 and Shelby, crosses SR 444 between SR 1 and Duncan, and crosses US 61 to connect to the Bypass.

    - A central alternative that passes south of the Refuge, crosses SR 8 between Pace and Cleveland, uses as much of US 61 as possible from Merigold in Bolivar County to near the Bobo community in Coahoma County, leaves US 61 to the northwest near Bobo, and then after paralleling US 61 for several miles turns to the east to cross US 61 and connect to the Bypass.

- An eastern alternative on relocation that passes south of the Refuge, crosses US 61 slightly north of Shaw, crosses SR 8 between Cleveland and Ruleville, passes slightly west of the State Penal Farm, and connects to the Bypass.

❖ One alternative from the US 61 Bypass south of Clarksdale proceeding northeast, using US 61 as much as possible, to approximately three miles south of the Coahoma-Tunica County Line.

❖ The following two alternatives from approximately three miles south of the Coahoma-Tunica County Line proceeding northeast to approximately a mile south of Dubbs Road in Tunica County.

- A far-east alternative that leaves US 61 and proceeds northeast on relocation.
- A near-east alternative that continues to use US 61 for approximately five miles to near Crenshaw Road before proceeding northeast on relocation.

❖ The following three alternatives on new location from approximately a mile south of Dubbs Road proceeding northeast to the end of the project at existing SR 304 east of Robinsonville in Tunica County.

- A far-east alternative that crosses SR 4 at Little Texas, and then crosses SR 3 slightly north of Prichard Road on its northeasterly path to the SR 304 Spur. This alternative is farther away from Tunica than the other two alternatives.
- A near-east alternative that crosses SR 4 between US 61 and Little Texas. The alternative passes just east of the Tunica Airport and continues across Prichard Road and other county roads until near Arkabutla Dam Road. The alternative then turns east to cross Kirby Road, SR 3, and the railroad before turning north to cross SR 304 and become concurrent with the SR 304 Spur.
- An alternative that is a combination of the near-east and far-east alternatives. The combination alternative crosses SR 4 between US 61 and Little Texas. After passing just east of the airport and Prichard Road, the alternative turns east. The alternative turns north after crossing SR 3 and then joins the far-east alternative on a northeasterly path to the SR 304 Spur.

o The west alternative in Bolivar County, which is located between the Mississippi River and the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, is in the planned westward expansion of the Refuge, and this alternative has a high probability of containing undiscovered archaeological sites. For these reasons, the far west alternative will probably be eliminated. If the alternative is eliminated, there would not be a Western Alternative on relocation in Bolivar County. The intent in Bolivar County for the DEIS is to study a West Alternative on relocation, an Eastern Alternative on relocation and a Central Alternative that uses US 61 as much as possible. To ensure a western alternative is studied, an alternative segment, which avoids impacting the western expansion of the Refuge and the portion of the west alternative along the Mississippi River, will be added as described below.

❖ A segment from where the Central Alternative crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland to where the west alternative crosses SR 444.

Progress Schedule

Utilizing a project schedule display, Robert Walker advised the following.

- The work is proceeding on schedule to select the alternatives for study in the DEIS, refine those alternatives, and conduct the archaeological and other needed environmental studies on the refined alternatives this winter while the farmers are not working in the fields.
- The DEIS should be completed and approved for presentation at a Public Hearing by the summer or fall of 2003.
- An identical series of Pubic Hearings should be conducted on successive days during the fall of 2003.
- The current schedule for selecting a Preferred Alternative in early Calendar Year 2004 appears attainable.
- The current schedule for having a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) approved and obtaining a Record of Decision (ROD) in late Calendar Year 2004 or early Calendar Year 2005 appears attainable.
- He was turning the program over to Mr. Ken Weeden for an Environmental Justice Report.

Environmental Justice Report

Mr. Ken Weeden advised of the following in his report.

- The goals of Environmental Justice for this project are fair and full participation by all involved parties, particularly minority and low-income population; avoidance or mitigation of impacts on these affected populations; and the proportionate spread of benefits generated by the project.
- His role is to focus on the Environmental Justice Outreach efforts for the project.
- His outreach efforts will include meetings, interviews with community representatives of all races and incomes, "open-house" forums in conjunction with other scheduled public information meetings, and the establishment of the Four County I-69 Community Issues Committee.
- The Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee was formed in March of 2002. This committee is composed of representatives and citizens of Bolivar, Sunflower, Coahoma, and Tunica counties.

- Although the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee will consist of one large, four-county committee, the initial meetings were held with subgroups in each county, except for the combining of Bolivar and Sunflower counties. The initial meetings were held in March of 2002. The purpose of the initial meetings was to explain the proposed intent of the committees and how the citizens could help provide insight into environmental justice and community impact issues for this important project.

- At the initial subgroup meetings of the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee, all of the groups decided they would like to meet again after the second identical series of public meetings. Also, members of the county sub-groups expressed a desire to eventually meet members from the other county sub-groups members for a joint Community Issues/Environmental Justice Meeting.

- The second series of identical public meetings were conducted on July 16-18, 2002. The comments received in response to those meetings are currently being addressed to refine the alternatives recommended for detailed study in the DEIS. One part of the alternate refinement process is narrowing the width of the alternatives from 1,000 feet to a more realistic anticipated right of way width of 450 feet. After the alternative refinement process is completed, the next subgroup meetings of the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee will be scheduled.

Agency Coordination

The following comments on agency coordination were made by Mr. Barnwell and/or Mr. Cecil Vick, the Environmental Coordinator of the Federal Highway Administration for the Jackson Division Office.

- The agencies that agreed to become Cooperating Agencies in this EIS are:
  - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
  - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
  - The U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
  - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
  - The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
  - The Mississippi Department of Archives and History

- The alternatives presented at the last series of public meetings and this meeting are the alternatives selected for refinement and detail study in the DEIS.
- Any objections to refining these alternatives and studying them in the DEIS should be made as soon as possible. This will prevent delaying archaeological and other studies needed this winter to complete the DEIS in Calendar Year 2003.
- It is possible that an additional alternative segment, or segments, will be recommended for study in the DEIS. If this occurs, the Cooperating Agencies will be notified and the appropriate public meeting(s) will be conducted.
- The Cooperating Agencies will receive a Draft of the DEIS. Any issues the Cooperating Agency have will be resolved prior to processing the DEIS for approval and scheduling a Public Hearing.

Break-Out Sessions

Since there were only nine representatives from the resource agencies in attendance at the meeting, the Break-Out Sessions were eliminated.

Resource Agency Comments

The agency representatives asked questions and/or made comments during the informal presentations by Messrs. Barnwell, Walker, and Vick. Some of those questions and comments were of a general nature and do not require documentation. Others were more specific. The more specific questions or comments and any responses that were made by the MDOT, FHWA, or consultant team are as follows:

- COMMENT: Ms. Ntale Kajumba advised Mr. Darryl Williams had recently assumed Mr. Palmer Hough's supervisory position in Region IV of the EPA.
- COMMENT: Since Mr. Williams had not attended any of the previous meetings on this project and since he was not that familiar with the project, he asked several background or general type questions.
- COMMENT: Mr. Williams and Ms. Kajumba were the only agency representatives in attendance at this meeting to request a field trip for the following day.
- RESPONSE: Upon learning that Mr. Williams and Ms. Kajumba had an afternoon flight from Memphis the following day, it was decided a morning trip that would conclude around noon should be adequate to better acquaint them with the project.

- COMMENT: Mr. Williams and Ms. Kajumba asked for an explanation of how the Central Corridor portion that uses US 61 could be changed into I-69.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with the consultant team, advised the US 61 Bypass at Clarksdale is built to the access control standards for an interstate facility. For locations where widening would be required to use US 61 for I-69, he explained the concept by referring to a display depicting the northbound and southbound lanes of I-69, an East Frontage Road, and a West Frontage Road. He advised traffic would remain on the existing lanes of US 61, while widening is accomplished on one side of the existing lanes. If widening is accomplished to the east, the northbound lanes of I-69 would be constructed as well as any needed East Frontage Road. After the northbound lanes of I-69 are completed, the northbound lanes of US 61 would be closed and traffic would be shifted to the northbound lanes of I-69. The southbound traffic would remain on the southbound lanes of US 61. After the southbound lanes of I-69 are completed, the southbound lanes of US 61 would be closed and this southbound traffic would be shifted to the southbound lanes of I-69. During this time, temporary median openings would be provided to maintain access at intersecting driveways and roads. Then, the closed southbound lanes would be remarked for two-lane, two-way traffic, access control would be changed to only allow access at interchange locations, and frontage roads would be opened to two-lane, two-way traffic. He advised a similar concept would be used when accomplishing the widening to the west. Mr. Shirley advised that whichever side is chosen as the widening side, it would be important to not switch the widening sides anymore than necessary because of the disruptions it would cause to maintain four-lane traffic throughout the construction.

- COMMENT: Mr. Mike Lilly commented on the conservation easement areas. He wanted to know what type conservation area or areas were designated by the gold color on the mapping displays of the alternatives. For the Wetland Reserve Program easements, Mr. Lilly offered his assistance in placing the project team in contact with State Program Coordinator for the sites.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Robert Walker advised there were four different types of conservation easements, and they were all depicted by the gold color on the mapping. He noted the conservation easements could have been acquired from a landowner by a governmental agency, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service, or by a private organization, such as Ducks Unlimited. He noted that a high priority was given to avoiding or minimizing the impacts to these areas. However, it was impossible to avoid all of them. As soon as the alternatives selected for detail study in the Draft EIS are refined, the procedure to acquire the needed conservation areas or portions of those areas will be determined.

- COMMENT: Messrs. Philip Hollis and the other U.S. Corps of Engineers representatives advised it appeared the project team had done a good job in developing and selecting the alternatives for detail study in the Draft EIS.

Closing:

Mr. Barnwell asked if there were any other questions or comments, and there were not any that required documentation. He again expressed his appreciation to everyone for taking time from their schedule to attend the meeting. He concluded the meeting by asking the attendees to contact him or Mr. Walker if they later thought of any questions or comments.

Field Trip on September 5, 2002

The agency representatives attending the field trip were Ms. Ntale Kajumba and Mr. Darryl Williams, with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Mr. Benjamin Davis, with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mr. Davis did not attend the afternoon meeting with the agencies the prior day on September 4. However, he did attend the meeting that morning with the local elected officials. The field trip began at Clarksdale, proceeded south to Benoit, and then back north to Clarksdale. The trip started at approximately 8:00 AM and concluded around noon. Portions of the alternatives recommended for detail study were viewed and discussed. The agency representatives were also made aware of probable interchange locations. When proceeding to Benoit, the agency representatives traveled through the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge on SR 446. Questions from the agency representatives appeared to be answered to their satisfaction, and the agency representatives did not make any objections to the alternatives presented at the meeting the previous day for detail study in the Draft EIS.

This concludes the minutes for this meeting and field trip.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

September 4-5, 2002 Mayors meeting – minutes

MINUTES

MAYORS-COUNTY SUPERVISORS COORDINATION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 4, 2002

FIELD TRIP
SEPTEMBER 5, 2002

INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY # 11
BETWEEN SR 304 EAST OF ROBINSONVILLE IN TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
AND SR 1 NEAR BENOIT IN BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted this coordination meeting from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM in Clarksdale at the Headquarters of the Delta Regional Authority. This meeting's purpose was to update the mayors and county supervisors on the status of the project and to obtain their input on a limited number of merited alternative corridors the project team believes should be taken forward for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Using contact information obtained from available records and previous meetings, 45 invitation packets were mailed in mid-August. The packets contained the following:

- An invitation letter.
- A map providing directions to the meeting location.
- An agenda for the meeting.
- A map of the alternative corridors presented to the public for comment at a series of identical public meetings conducted on July 16-18, 2002.
- A spreadsheet screening analysis of the alternatives presented to the public at the series of identical meetings conducted on July 16-18, 2002.
- A post card that provided the invitees an opportunity to request a field trip to view any of the alternatives on the day after the meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the MDOT, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some brief opening comments. He expressed his appreciation to the attendees for the efforts they made enabling them to attend the meeting. The attendees represented the consultant team, the MDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), mayors, county supervisors, and representatives of the invited mayors and supervisors. The consultant team representatives were from Neel-Schaffer, Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Coastal Environments, Inc., and Ken Weeden and Associates, Inc. At Mr. Barnwell's request, everyone present introduced themselves and whom they were representing at the meeting. Excluding the representatives from the MDOT, FHWA, and consultant team, nine people attended the meeting. Those nine people and whom they represented were:

- Mr. Wayne Cole – City of Cleveland
- Coahoma County Beat 5 Supervisor Ms. Katherine Furr – Coahoma County
- Mr. Pete Roncali – City of Shaw and Greenville Mayor Paul Artman
- Mound Bayou Mayor Kennedy Johnson – City of Mound Bayou
- Clarksdale Mayor Henry Espy – City of Clarksdale
- Tunica County District 4 Supervisor Jim Tucker – Tunica County
- Tunica County District 5 Supervisor Billy Pegram – Tunica County
- Mr. Charlie Williams – Tunica County
- Mr. Benjamin Davis – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Delta Initiatives

Mr. Davis is a governmental official who was unable to attend the agency meeting, scheduled for later in the day during the afternoon, so he attended this morning meeting instead.

Mr. Barnwell advised the meeting is informal, and that the purpose of the meeting is to seek input and direction from the local officials on the alternatives selected for further study in the DEIS. He stated further refinement of the selected alignments will be made to reduce the normal width of the corridors from 1,000 feet to approximately 450 feet. Mr. Barnwell advised he believes the consultant team has done a good job to date in developing the alternatives. Although the interests of the local officials and the governmental agencies were considered in the development of the alternatives, Mr. Barnwell stated now is the time to concentrate on the details of refining, adding, or reducing the alternatives. He then turned the program over to Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the consultant team.

Project Status Update

Utilizing displays mounted on easels, Mr. Walker advised the attendees of the following progress that had been made on the project.

- An initial Scoping Meeting was conducted in Clarksdale at Clarksdale High School on July 11, 2001. The meeting was well attended by representatives from the appropriate governmental agencies, local and area elected officials, and concerned citizens.

- A Scoping Meeting with the appropriate representatives of the Native American tribes was scheduled at the Headquarters of the Delta Council for August 23, 2001. Although some of the tribal representatives furnished a general written response to their invitation, none of the tribal representatives attended the meeting.

- Based on known information on the natural and human environment, initial one-mile wide corridor alternatives were developed and presented to the public for comment at the first series of identical public meetings. Those meetings were conducted on four successive evenings at Benoit, Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica on September 24-27, 2001.

- The comments received in response to the initial meetings were evaluated. Some alternatives were eliminated and others were added. The widths of the revised corridors were then narrowed from one mile to 1,000 feet. Nine general corridors were located, and an environmental screening analysis was conducted on the anticipated approximately 450 feet of right of way width that would be required for those nine corridors.

- The refined 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors and the screening analysis on those corridors were presented to the resource agencies for comment at a Scoping Meeting conducted at the MDOT on April 2, 2002.

- The Economic Study – comparing the potential economic development opportunities for a West Corridor, Central Corridor, and East Corridor – was completed, and it determined all three corridors have the potential to generate economic development. As to a ranking, the study determined the Central Corridor provided the highest opportunity for economic development followed by the East Corridor and then the West Corridor. A major reason the Central Corridor was chosen as having the highest potential was its location relative to established population centers. The following is a description of the three corridors evaluated in the study.

    - A West Corridor which proceeds north from Benoit following the SR 1 and/or the Mississippi River corridor as much as possible to between Tunica and Robinsonville. The corridor then turns east to cross US 61 and SR 3 before turning north to cross SR 304 and become concurrent with the existing SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville.

- ❖ A Central Corridor which proceeds east from Benoit and stays south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge before turning north to cross SR 8 east of Pace and west of Cleveland. Slightly north of the SR 8 crossing, the corridor turns northeast to become concurrent with US 61 near Merigold. The corridor uses US 61 as much as possible from Merigold to the Tunica area before turning east to cross SR 3 and then north to cross SR 304 and become concurrent with the SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville.

- ❖ An Eastern Corridor which proceeds east from Benoit, and stays south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. After passing south of the Refuge, the corridor continues east to cross US 61 slightly north of Shaw and then the corridor turns to the north. The corridor continues in a northerly path on new location to the east of Boyle and crosses SR 8 east of Cleveland and west of Ruleville. From the crossing of SR 8 to southeast of Clarksdale, the corridor continues to the north on new location passing slightly west of the State Penal Farm. After crossing US 49 southeast of Clarksdale, the corridor continues to the north on relocation between US 61 and SR 3 to an area south of SR 304 between Tunica and Robinsonville. The corridor then makes a turn more to the east to cross SR 3 and then SR 304 before becoming concurrent with the SR 304 Spur.

- There were key members of the MDOT and FHWA staff that needed to know the work accomplished on the project. This staff also needed to be involved in approving the 1,000 feet wide refined alternative corridors for presentation at the second series of public meetings. For those reasons, an interagency meeting of the MDOT and FHWA with the consultant team was conducted at the MDOT on May 8, 2002. At that meeting, the consultant team presented the compiled information on the 1,000 feet wide corridors, and which corridors were recommended for presentation to the public at a second series of public meetings.

- After a decision was made on the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors that would be presented at the second series of identical public meetings, the necessary preparations were made to schedule the meetings. The meetings were conducted on three successive evenings at Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica respectively on July 16-17, 2002. The alternatives presented at the public meetings were obtained by combining the following segment alternatives.

  - ❖ Three alternatives from Benoit in Bolivar County proceeding northeast to the US 61 Bypass south of Clarksdale in Coahoma County. The three alternatives are as follows:

    - A western alternative on relocation that passes west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, crosses SR 8 between Rosedale and Pace, crosses SR 32 between SR 1 and Shelby, crosses SR 444 between SR 1 and Duncan and crosses US 61 to connect to the Bypass.

    - A central alternative that passes south of the Refuge, crosses SR 8 between Pace and Cleveland, uses as much of US 61 as possible from Merigold in Bolivar County to near the Bobo community in Coahoma County, leaves US 61 to the northwest near Bobo, and then after paralleling US 61 for several miles turns to the east to cross US 61 and connect to the Bypass.

- An eastern alternative on relocation that passes south of the Refuge, crosses US 61 slightly north of Shaw, crosses SR 8 between Cleveland and Ruleville, passes slightly west of the State Penal Farm, and connects to the Bypass.

❖ One alternative from the US 61 Bypass south of Clarksdale proceeding northeast, using US 61 as much as possible, to approximately three miles south of the Coahoma-Tunica County Line.

❖ The following two alternatives from approximately three miles south of the Coahoma-Tunica County Line proceeding northeast to approximately a mile south of Dubbs Road in Tunica County.

- A far-east alternative that leaves US 61 and proceeds northeast on relocation.

- A near-east alternative that continues to use US 61 for approximately five miles to near Crenshaw Road before proceeding northeast on relocation.

❖ The following three alternatives on new location from approximately a mile south of Dubbs Road proceeding northeast to the end of the project at existing SR 304 east of Robinsonville in Tunica County.

- A far-east alternative that crosses SR 4 at Little Texas, and then crosses SR 3 slightly north of Prichard Road on its northeasterly path to the SR 304 Spur. This alternative is farther away from Tunica than the other two alternatives.

- A near-east alternative that crosses SR 4 between US 61 and Little Texas. The alternative passes just east of the Tunica Airport and continues across Prichard Road and other county roads until near Arkabutla Dam Road. The alternative then turns east to cross Kirby Road, SR 3, and the railroad before turning north to cross SR 304 and become concurrent with the SR 304 Spur.

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❖ A segment from where the Central Alternative crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland to where the west alternative crosses SR 444.

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Utilizing a project schedule display, Robert Walker advised the following.

- The work is proceeding on schedule to select the alternatives for study in the DEIS, refine the alternatives, and conduct the archaeological and other needed environmental studies on the refined alternatives this winter while the farmers are not working in the fields.
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- An identical series of Pubic Hearings should be conducted on successive days during the fall of 2003.
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- The current schedule for having a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) approved and obtaining a Record of Decision (ROD) in late Calendar Year 2004 or early Calendar Year 2005 appears attainable.
- He was turning the program over to Mr. Ken Weeden for an Environmental Justice Report.

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Mr. Ken Weeden advised of the following in his report.

- The goals of Environmental Justice for this project are fair and full participation by all involved parties, particularly minority and low-income population; avoidance or mitigation of impacts on these affected populations; and the proportionate spread of benefits generated by the project.
- His role is to focus on the Environmental Justice Outreach efforts for the project.
- His outreach efforts will include meetings, interviews with community representatives of all races and incomes, "open-house" forums in conjunction with other scheduled public information meetings, and the establishment of the Four County I-69 Community Issues Committee.
- The Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee was formed in March of 2002. This committee is composed of representatives and citizens of Bolivar, Sunflower, Coahoma, and Tunica counties.

- Although the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee will consist of one large, four-county committee, the initial meetings were held with subgroups in each county, except for the combining of Bolivar and Sunflower counties. The initial meetings were held in March of 2002. The purpose of the initial meetings was to explain the proposed intent of the committees and how the citizens could help provide insight into environmental justice and community impact issues for this important project.

- At the initial subgroup meetings of the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee, all of the groups decided they would like to meet again after the second identical series of public meetings. Also, members of the county sub-groups expressed a desire to eventually meet members from the other county sub-groups members for a joint Community Issues/Environmental Justice Meeting.

- The second series of identical public meetings were conducted on July 16-18, 2002. The comments received in response to those meetings are currently being addressed to refine the alternatives recommended for detailed study in the DEIS. One part of the alternate refinement process is narrowing the width of the alternatives from 1,000 feet to a more realistic anticipated right of way width of 450 feet. After the alternative refinement process is completed, the next subgroup meetings of the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee will be scheduled.

Break-Out Sessions

Since there were only eight local official representatives in attendance at the meeting, the Break-Out Sessions were eliminated.

Local Official Representatives Comments

The representatives asked questions and/or made comments during the informal presentations by Messrs. Barnwell, Walker, and Vick. Some of those questions and comments were of a general nature and do not require documentation. Others were more specific. The more specific questions or comments and any responses that were made by the MDOT, FHWA, or consultant team are as follows:

- COMMENT: On behalf on Tunica County, Mr. Charlie Williams requested an interchange in the south part of the county at Dubbs Road.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with the consultant team, advised the possibility of providing an interchange at Dubbs Road would be evaluated.

- COMMENT: Coahoma County Supervisor Katherine Furr owns property in the southeast part of Coahoma County. She advised the eastern alternative divides her farmland. She stated her concern about the access problems and decrease in property value that alternative could cause. She commented the eastern alternative within her property crosses Young Road, and that road is used by school buses.

- RESPONSE: The consultant team advised Ms. Young that dividing farmland and impacting access are problems of concern throughout the project for all the alternatives, and that the project team intends to address those problems in a fair and uniform manner.

- COMMENT: Mr. Cole asked for an explanation on of how the Central Corridor portion that uses US 61 could be changed into I-69.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with the consultant team, advised the US 61 Bypass at Clarksdale is built to the access control standards for an interstate facility. For locations where widening would be required to use US 61 for I-69, Mr. Shirley explained the concept by referring to a display depicting the northbound and southbound lanes of I-69, an East Frontage Road, and a West Frontage Road. He advised traffic would remain on the existing lanes of US 61, while widening is accomplished on one side of the existing lanes. If widening is accomplished to the east, the northbound lanes of I-69 would be constructed as well as any needed East Frontage Road. After the northbound lanes of I-69 are completed, the northbound lanes of US 61 would be closed and that traffic would be shifted to the northbound lanes of I-69. The southbound traffic would remain on the southbound lanes of US 61, and during this time temporary median openings would be required to maintain driveway and county road access. After the southbound lanes of I-69 are completed, the southbound lanes of US 61 would be closed and this southbound traffic would be shifted to the southbound lanes of I-69. The closed southbound lanes would be remarked for two-lane, two-way traffic, access control would be changed to only allow access at interchange locations, and frontage roads would be opened to two-lane, two-way traffic. He advised a similar concept would be used when accomplishing the widening to the west. Mr. Shirley stated that whichever side is chosen as the widening side, it would be important to not reverse the widening sides anymore than necessary because of the disruptions it would cause to maintain four-lane traffic throughout the construction.

- COMMENT: Mr. Charlie Williams, on behalf of Tunica County Administrator Ken Murphree, requested the project team to make a field trip the following day with Mr. Murphree. He advised the purpose of Mr. Murphree's request was to review with Mr. Murphree a portion of the alternatives in Tunica County.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Walker advised he would make the necessary arrangements to accommodate Mr. Murphree's request.

- COMMENT: Mr. Davis, with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, requested a field visit for the following day.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Walker advised Mr. Davis that the project team welcomed his participation on the field visit.

Closing:

Mr. Barnwell asked if there were any other questions or comments, and there were not any that required documentation. He again expressed his appreciation to everyone for taking time from their schedule to attend the meeting. He concluded the meeting by asking the attendees to contact him or Mr. Walker if they later thought of any questions or comments.

Meeting Follow-up on September 4, 2002

After lunch and prior to the agency meeting, Ms. Katherine Furr hand-delivered a copy of her property map to consultant team representatives Messrs. Jimmy Shirley and David Ruhl.

Field Trip on September 5, 2002

The project team concluded their morning field trip with the governmental agency representatives around noon. During that trip, the agency representatives were shown a portion of the selected alternatives between Clarksdale and Benoit. After lunch, the project team then traveled to Tunica and met with Mr. Murphree.

Mr. Murphree accompanied the project team on a driving tour of portions of the selected alternatives in Tunica County between SR 4 and SR 304. During this tour, the following occurred.

- The project team viewed the Tunica Airport, which is currently undergoing expansion, and Mr. Murphree made the team aware of the County's long-range plans for industrial development adjacent and east of the airport.

- The project team viewed the area to the east of the airport where Mr. Murphree advised providing a railroad spur is part of the long-range industrial plan.

- The project team viewed the area east of Robinsonville along the five-lane section of SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3. Widening SR 304 to five lanes in this area was accomplished to accommodate expected future development along this section of highway.

- The project team was aware of the casinos and development that has occurred in the Robinsonville area west and north of the US 61/SR 304 intersection. The casinos are major overnight tourist destinations, and this area also generates a large number of local trips from Memphis and the surrounding areas of south Tennessee, northeast Arkansas, and north Mississippi.

- Considering the gaming related traffic generated at Robinsonville and the county's long-range industrial planning for the area immediately east of the airport, Mr. Murphree stated his belief that the alternative passing just east of the airport and closest to Robinsonville is the best alternative for the north part of the County.

The field trip with Mr. Murphree ended around 3:00 PM.

This concludes the minutes for this meeting and field trip.

Note: Several weeks after this meeting and field trip, Mr. Hugh Jack Stubbs telephoned Robert Walker. As County Administrator for Coahoma County, Mr. Stubbs asked Mr. Walker to consider an interchange location in Coahoma County for the east alternative at the county road east of Bobo.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

February 11-13, 2004 Native American conference – minutes

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
TELEPHONE: 601.948.3071 • FAX: 601.948.3178 • EMAIL: i69@neel-schaffer.com • WEBSITE: www.msdoti69.com

January 9, 2004

Ms. Ntale Kajumba
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
Environmental Accountability Division - NEPA
Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

SUBJECT: INVITATION TO CONSULT ON INTERSTATE 69
SIU #11 AND SIU # 9
BETWEEN BENOIT, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN

Dear Ms. Kajumba:

In accordance with the formal consultation process under 36 CFR 800, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), in concurrence with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has scheduled a conference with the Native American tribal representatives concerning these two SIUs of the proposed new Interstate 69. The conference will be held at the Grand Casino Tunica Hotel in Robinsonville on February 11-13, 2004, and as a Cooperating Agency contact for one or both of these SIUs you are also invited to attend this important conference.

The sections of the proposed new Interstate 69 that will be discussed are *Segment of Independent Utility (SIU) 11 and SIU 9*. SIU 11 is located from near Benoit, Mississippi to near Robinsonville, Mississippi, while SIU 9 is located from near Hernando, Mississippi to near Millington, Tennessee. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Grand Casino Hotel for the conference.

Depending on the travel arrangements for the representatives of the Native American Tribes, the conference will begin with a mid-afternoon meeting on Wednesday, February 11. Unless you are advised otherwise, 3:00 PM will be the starting time for the afternoon meeting. During this initial meeting, the alternatives being considered for both studies will be presented, and you will be advised of the influences that environmental constraints had in the development of the alternatives. Detailed mapping displays and other displays will be available for viewing to supplement the presentations. Possible presenters/participants will also include the archaeologists for both studies along with Mississippi State University's look at the overall history of the areas. The agenda and discussions will be adjusted as requested and directed by the Tribes. A reception and dinner will be held to conclude the day's activities.

On Thursday, February 12, a field visit is scheduled to tour the SIU 11 alternative locations in the Mississippi Delta between Robinsonville and Benoit. The field trip will begin and end at the Grand Casino Hotel. The tour will concentrate on areas of interest to the Native Americans, and it is anticipated the field visit will take the entire day. At the conclusion of the tour, an opportunity will be given for a round table discussion. A dinner will then conclude the activities for the day.

Friday, February 13, will be devoted to a site visit for SIU 9 between Hernando, Mississippi and Millington, Tennessee. The conclusion time for this visit will be determined as the attendees deem

appropriate and agreeable. We suggest scheduling departure flight times, in the mid-afternoon or later on Friday.

The following attached information on these two SIUs should benefit you in preparing for the conference.

- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 9;
- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 11; and,
- A copy of the map of alternatives handout presented to attendees at the last series of Public Meetings on SIU 11.

We are particularly interested in finding ways to identify historic properties of importance to Native Americans as well as properties to which one or more tribes may attach religious or cultural significance. It is likely the Native Americans will ask questions and make comments or requests about the locations of alternatives relative to their concerns. The project team's response might be of interest to you, and the expertise that you could provide might be of assistance to the project team in responding to issues raised by the Native Americans.

In order for us to make the necessary final arrangements in planning for the conference, please call me at (601) 948-3071 by January 30, and advise who you will have attending the conference.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Walker, P.E.
I-69 SIU 11 Project Manager
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

Attachments

pc: Mr. Andrew H. Hughes, MS Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. James Q. Dickerson, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Walter G. Lyons, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Bobby W. Blackmon, TN Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. Doug Delaney, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Tom Love, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Gerald Kline, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Ray Brisson, SIU 9 Project Manager, PBS&J

The following individuals were mailed the same correspondence as mailed to Ms. Ntale Kajumba:

Ms. Ntale Kajumba
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Mr. David Felder
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
6578 Dogwood View Parkway
Jackson, MS 39213

Mr. Tom Waggener
Review and Compliance Officer
Miss. Department of Archives and History
P. O. Box 571
Jackson, MS 39205-0571

Mr. Benjamin F. Davis, Jr.
Special Programs Officer, Delta Initiatives
U. S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
200 Jefferson Avenue, Suite 1200
Memphis, TN 38103

Ms. Susan Jarvis
Regulatory Branch
Vicksburg District, Corps of Engineers
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Mr. Andy Hughes
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, MS 39202-3199

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY

I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
TELEPHONE: 601.948.3071 • FAX: 601.948.3178 • EMAIL: i69@neel-schaffer.com • WEBSITE: www.msdoti69.com

January 8, 2004

Mr. Kirk Perry
Administrator of Heritage Preservation
Chickasaw Nation
P. O. Box 1548
Ada, OK 74821

SUBJECT: INVITATION TO CONSULT ON INTERSTATE 69
SIU #11 AND SIU # 9
BETWEEN BENOIT, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN

Dear Mr. Perry:

In accordance with the formal consultation process under 36 CFR 800, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), in concurrence with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), invites you and/or your representative(s) to attend a conference on these two sections of the proposed new Interstate 69. The conference will be held at the Grand Casino Tunica Hotel in Robinsonville on February 11-13, 2004.

The proposed Interstate 69 will eventually stretch from Canada to Mexico. Due to its length, the overall route has been divided into segments for individual environmental and cultural resource studies. The segments we would like to meet with you about are *Segment of Independent Utility (SIU) 11 and SIU 9*. SIU 11 is located from near Benoit, Mississippi to near Robinsonville, Mississippi, while SIU 9 is located from near Hernando, Mississippi to near Millington, Tennessee.

To better enable your participation, the MDOT and FHWA are offering to pay the travel expenses for you to send a maximum of two representatives to the conference. The reimbursable travel expenses include air fare, meals, and lodging. Additionally, travel from the Memphis Airport to Robinsonville, travel for the field visits, and travel from Robinsonville back to the Memphis Airport will be provided by the MDOT. After your travel expense receipts are submitted to the MDOT, the MDOT plans to provide the reimbursement. If you desire to drive to the conference, instead of fly, the MDOT will reimburse you at the government rate for your mileage not to exceed the equivalent cost of the lowest airfare rate. A block of rooms is reserved at the Grand Casino Hotel for the conference.

Depending on the travel arrangements for the representatives of the Native American Tribes, the conference will begin with a mid-afternoon meeting on Wednesday, February 11. Unless you are advised otherwise, 3:00 PM will be the starting time for conference. During the afternoon meeting, the alternatives being considered for both studies will be presented, and the attendees will be advised of the influences that environmental constraints had in the development of the alternatives. Detailed mapping displays and other displays will be available for viewing and discussions to supplement the presentations. Possible presenters/participants also will include the archaeologists for both studies along with Mississippi State University's look at the overall history of the areas. The agenda and discussions will be adjusted as requested and directed by the Native Americans. A reception and dinner will be held to conclude the day's activities.

On Thursday, February 12, a field visit is scheduled to tour the SIU 11 alternative locations in the Mississippi Delta between Robinsonville and Benoit. The field trip will begin and end at the Grand Casino Hotel. The tour will concentrate on areas of interest to the Native Americans, and it is anticipated the field visit will take the entire day. When the tour ends, an opportunity will be given for a round table discussion. A dinner will then conclude the activities for the day.

Friday, February 13, will be devoted to a site visit for SIU 9 between Hernando, Mississippi and Millington, Tennessee. The conclusion time for this visit will be determined as is deemed appropriate and agreeable. We suggest scheduling departure flight times in the mid-afternoon or later on Friday.

The following attached information on these two SIUs should benefit you in preparing for this conference:

- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 9;
- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 11; and,
- A copy of the map of alternatives handout presented to attendees at the last series of Public Meetings on SIU 11.

We are particularly interested in finding ways to identify historic properties of importance to Native Americans as well as properties to which one or more tribes may attach religious or cultural significance. After reviewing the attached material on these two SIUs, you may decide that more detailed information is needed before you can make a determination whether or not an alternative would impact one of these historic, religious, or culturally significant sites. If this is the case, please contact me so you can be provided the information at the conference.

In order for us to make the necessary final arrangements in planning the conference, please call me at (601) 948-3071 by January 30, and advise who you will have attending the conference.

Sincerely,

Robert Walker, P.E.
I-69 SIU 11 Project Manager
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

Attachments

pc: Mr. Andrew H. Hughes, MS Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. James Q. Dickerson, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Walter G. Lyons, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Bobby W. Blackmon, TN Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. Doug Delaney, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Tom Love, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Gerald Kline, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Ray Brisson, SIU 9 Project Manager, PBS&J

The following individuals were mailed the same correspondence as mailed to Mr. Kirk Perry:

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Marksville, LA 71351

Mr. Ken Carleton
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✓ Ms. Rena Duncan
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✓ Mr. Terry Cole
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Mr. Brent Barbry, Sr.
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Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell
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Nashville, TN 37211

Mr. Andy Hughes
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, MS 39202-3199

INTERSTATE 69, SECTION 9
FROM HERNANDO, MS TO MILLINGTON, TN

The Tennessee Department of Transportation, the Mississippi Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are continuing to develop the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Segment of Independent Utility 9 (SIU 9) of Interstate 69 (I-69) extending from Hernando, Mississippi to Millington, Tennessee. This section is a part of the larger I-69 endeavor that extends from Port Huron in Michigan to the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas.

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed to evaluate information from the project studies and make decisions about the project. The TAC is made up of representatives from the Mississippi and Tennessee Departments of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration representatives, and a representative of the Memphis Metropolitan Planning Organization.

In the initial evaluation of alternatives for this segment, three major build alternatives were identified. One alternative passed through Memphis, another bypassed Memphis to the east, and another was a system approach alternative that followed the existing interstate system through Memphis and provided relief to the overburdened existing system by providing a bypass around Memphis to the east. As the study has sought the best solution to the problem of bringing I-69 though Memphis, the facts have clearly shown that the only solution that will meet the overall purpose and need for the project is a highway system approach. Therefore, the DEIS is being developed with only one build alternative (the system approach) and the no-build alternative.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Memphis is one of the "named cities" in the federal legislation, and the law requires that it be connected to the new I-69 corridor. Memphis is a multi-billion dollar hub of multi-modal transportation and one of the top ten distribution centers in the United States. In order to maintain and grow a stable economic environment for its citizens, Memphis needs to expand its services, infrastructure and economic opportunities.

The defined purpose and need of the overall corridor of I-69 from Canada to Mexico is:

- *To improve international and interstate trade in accordance with national and state goals;*
- *To facilitate economic development in accordance with state, regional, and local policies and plans; and*
- *To improve surface transportation consistent with national, state, regional, and local needs with the Congressional designation of this corridor.*

The purpose and need is best accomplished by providing the most direct route between the project termini. Bringing the I-69 traffic through Memphis on existing interstates would provide the most direct route and offer the best connections to the Mississippi River Bridges (I-40 West and I-55 North), the Port of Memphis, the Memphis International Airport, and other intermodal connections in Memphis. Studies of the projected I-69 traffic and freight movement show that a large proportion of I-69 commercial traffic will have an origin or destination in Memphis. The existing interstates through Memphis currently experience high volumes of traffic and operate at congested levels during certain periods of the day. During these congested periods, through-traffic on I-69 would experience delays and a low "Level-of-Service". Through traffic on I-69 and traffic destined for the major highways leaving Memphis to the

east would not be adequately served without an eastern bypass.

The defined purpose and need of I-69, SIU 9 from Hernando, Mississippi to Millington, Tennessee is:

- *To increase accessibility of the region and stimulate economic development;*
- *To respond to local traffic growth and travel demands of the public by providing a high speed type access control facility that accommodates the traffic usage, reduces travel time, improves safety, and enhances access between communities within the study area; and*
- *To enhance the ability to connect to other key US Highways such as US 78, US 72, US 64, and US 51 to accommodate regional freight movements.*

The Memphis Long Range Transportation Plan identifies the need for an eastern outer loop to provide additional regional transportation access to the smaller cities and municipalities around Memphis and to connect to other key US Highways such as US 78, US 72, US 64, and US 51. While much of the highway corridors proposed for I-69 will use existing highways, environmental studies including social, economic, ecology, cultural resources, air quality and traffic noise have been completed for the sections of the corridors on new location. From an analysis of these and other factors, the project development committee has concluded that, to meet both the national and local needs of I-69, a system approach will be required. The committee proposes directing I-69 traffic both through Memphis on the existing interstate system and around Memphis to the east on the eastern bypass anticipated in the Memphis Long Range Transportation Plan. All other alternatives that have been considered will not meet the project's purpose and need and have, therefore, been dismissed from further consideration.

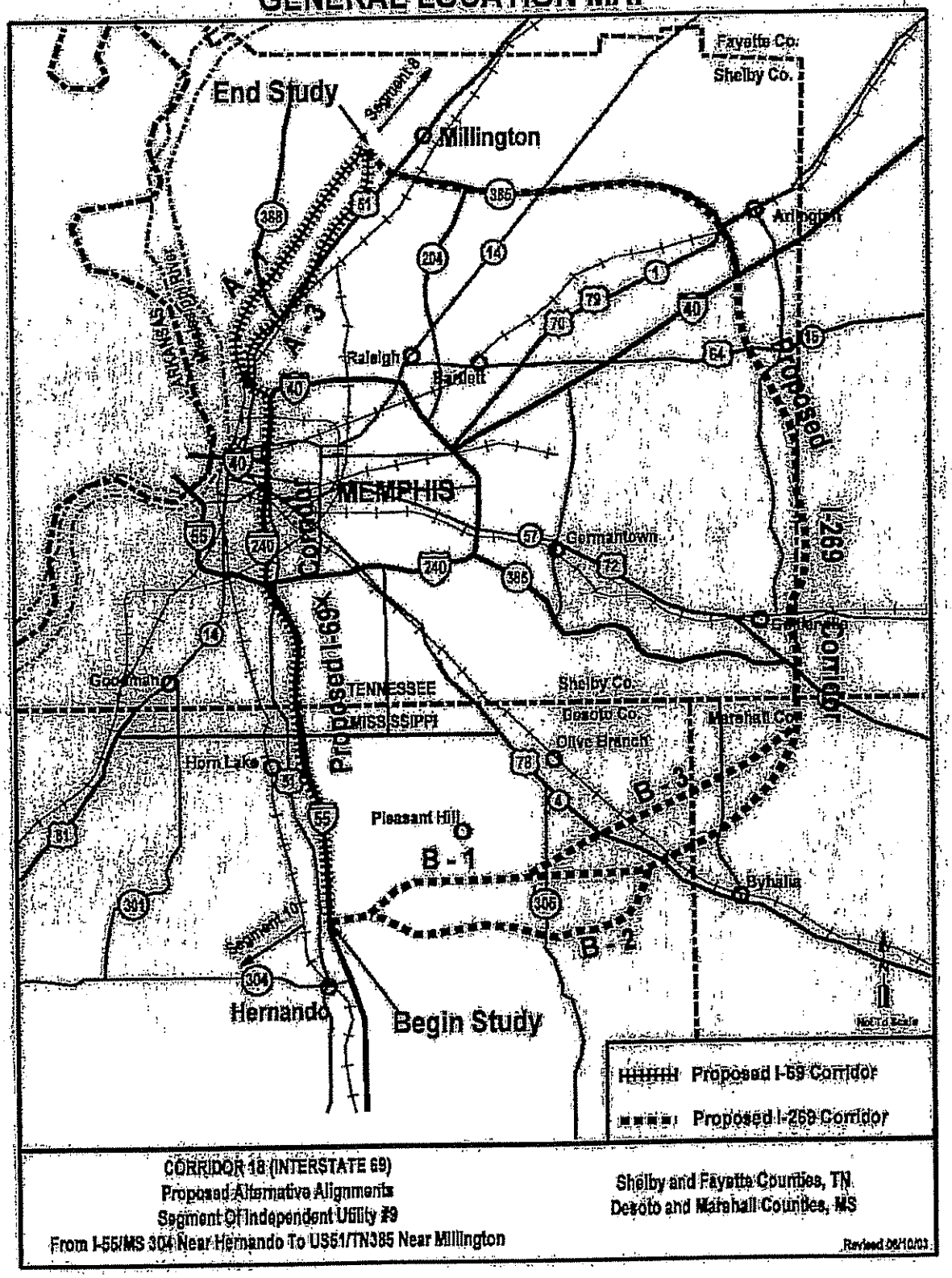
SYSTEM APPROACH

The system alternative will be the only Build Alternative presented in the DEIS with the No-Build Alternative.

The primary route for proposed **I-69** will begin at the I-55/MS 304 Interchange, currently under construction, in Hernando, Mississippi and follow existing Interstates 55, 240 and 40 through central Memphis. The alignment will then follow TN State Route 300 to its junction with US 51. At this point, it will follow one of two proposed new location construction sections west of US 51 into Millington. The I-69 system will also include an outer loop, proposed to be designated as **I-269**, which will proceed east and then north from the I-55/MS 304 Interchange in Hernando and follow one of three proposed new location construction sections into Tennessee to a connection with TN State Route 385 at Collierville. The portion on new location will follow the corridor identified as MS 304 in the Memphis Long Range Transportation Plan. The eastern part of the system will then follow the approved route for TN State Route 385 from Collierville to I-40 at Arlington (under development) and the completed section of TN 385 from I-40 into Millington. See attached map identified as "System Approach Alternative".

Within the system approach alternative, there are two new location sections that would be constructed as part of this project. There are multiple alignment options under consideration for these two new location sections along each corridor. The decision to be made from the Environmental Impact Statement/Public Involvement process is the selection of the preferred alignment within each new construction section. These alignment options are identified as A-1 and A-3 for the section in Tennessee and B-1, B-2, and B-3 for the section in Mississippi. See attached map identified as "System Approach Alternative".

GENERAL LOCATION MAP



SYSTEM APPROACH ALTERNATIVE MAP

The traffic study performed for the preliminary DEIS shows that by using both routes as the Build Alternative, the result would be some improvement in traffic operations along the existing route through Memphis. There would be a corresponding increase in the amount of travel forecast for the already planned eastern bypass, but the slight increase would not change its operational characteristics.

Activities Completed To Date

Environmental studies including ecology, cultural resources, air quality and traffic noise, have been completed for the portions of the alignment on new location. A Traffic Study, an Environmental Justice Report and an Economic Development Study have been completed for the project.

A technical analysis of the previously identified new construction alignments has been completed, environmentally sensitive areas have been avoided to the extent practical, and the unavoidable impacts have been calculated. The number of business and family displacements, stream crossings, wetlands, air and noise impacts, historical impacts, and potential archaeological impacts has been documented. Functional drawings have been developed, and a 300-foot wide right-of-way footprint for each alignment has been identified and will be presented at the Corridor Public Hearings.

Schedule

The DEIS is tentatively scheduled to be submitted to the FHWA in late 2003. Once the DEIS is approved by the Federal Highway Administration, it will be made available at area libraries prior to the Corridor Public Hearings. The DEIS will also be available at Tennessee Department of Transportation offices, Mississippi Department of Transportation offices, Federal Highway Administration division offices and the local Memphis Metropolitan Planning Organization office. It is anticipated the Corridor Public Hearings will be held early next year.

For more information, please visit the Tennessee Department of Transportation website at www.tdot.state.tn.us and click on "Hot Projects".

TDOT MDOT

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

PBS&J
Two International Plaza Drive, Suite 810
Nashville, TN 37217

INTERSTATE 69

SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY #9 AND #11 BETWEEN BENOIT, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

NATIVE AMERICAN CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 11-13, 2004

GRAND CASINO & RESORT, TUNICA – VERANDA HOTEL ROBINSONVILLE, MISSISSIPPI

DRAFT AGENDA

Wednesday – February 11

▪ **FIRST SESSION**	**4:00 – 5:30 PM**
• **Welcome**	**Butch Brown, MDOT**
• **SIU 11 Opening Comments**	**Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT**
• **SIU 11 History and Status**	**Robert Walker, Neel-Schaffer**
• **SIU 11 Archaeological and Cultural Resource Findings**	**David Kelley, Coastal Environments**
• **Open Discussion**	**Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT**
▪ **BREAK**	**5:30 – 5:45 PM**
▪ **SECOND SESSION**	**5:45 – 6:30 PM**
• **SIU 9 Discussion**	**Ray Brisson, PBS&J**
▪ **DINNER**	**7:00 PM**

Thursday – February 12

▪ CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST	7:00 – 7:30 AM
▪ MORNING FIELD REVIEW OF SIU 11 ALTERNATIVES FROM ROBINSONVILLE TO CLEVELAND/BENOIT AREA	8:00 – 12:00 NOON
▪ LUNCH AT CLEVELAND	NOON – 1:00 PM
▪ AFTERNOON REVIEW OF SIU 11 ALTERNATIVES FROM CLEVELAND/BENOIT AREA TO ROBINSONVILLE	1:00 PM – 5:30 PM
▪ DISCUSSION ON SIU 11 FIELD REVIEW AT DINNER	7:00 PM

Friday – February 13

▪ CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST	7:00 – 7:30 AM
▪ FIELD REVIEW & DISCUSSIONS OF SIU 9 ALTERNATIVES BETWEEN HERNANDO, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN	8:00 – 12:00 NOON
▪ CONFERENCE CONCLUDES	12:00 NOON

MINUTES

I-69 NATIVE AMERICAN CONFERENCE
SECTIONS OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY 9 AND 11
BETWEEN BENOIT, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN
FEBRUARY 11-13, 2004

GRAND CASINO & RESORT
TUNICA-VERANDA HOTEL
ROBINSONVILLE, MS

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley Date Prepared: May 13, 2004

In accordance with the formal consultation process described in 36 CFR 800, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) hosted this Native American Conference for Sections of Independent Utility (SIU) # 9 and #11 of the proposed Interstate 69 (I-69). Alternatives have been selected for detail engineering and environmental studies for both these SIUs and Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statements have been prepared. The conference was directed towards the Native American tribal representatives who could possibly identify properties of importance to Native Americans, as well as properties to which one or more tribes may attach religious or cultural significance, relative to the alternatives undergoing further study. The Mississippi Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), and Tennessee Division Office of the FHWA concurred in the MDOT scheduling and hosting this conference. To provide a good cross section of representation for issues involving the natural and human environments, some representatives from Federal and State Cooperating Agencies were also invited to the conference.

By updating and using available contact information, 28 invitation packets containing the following information were mailed on January 8, 2004.

- An invitation letter;
- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 9;
- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 11; and,

- A copy of the map of alternatives handout presented to attendees at the last series of public meetings on SIU 11.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the MDOT, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some brief opening comments. He then introduced Mr. Robert Walker, the I-69 Project Manager for the SIU 11 Study, and Mr. Walker provided a welcome on behalf of the SIU 11 Consultant Study Team. When Mr. Walker concluded his welcoming comments, Mr. Barnwell asked everyone to introduce themselves and state their affiliation with the project.

The attendees represented the MDOT, TDOT, Mississippi and Tennessee Division Offices of the FHWA, the consultant teams for SIU 9 and SIU 11, three Native American tribes, Mississippi State University, and some of the SIU 11 Cooperating Agencies. Excluding the 22 representatives from the MDOT, TDOT, FHWA, and consultant teams, 13 people attended the First Session. Those 13 people and the agencies they represented were:

- Mr. Benjamin Davis with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- Mr. David Felder with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Ms. Susan Jarvis, Ms. Beth Guynes, Mr. Harold Lee, and Mr. Joe Greenleaf with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District;
- Ms. Ntale Kajumba with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency;
- Messrs. John Connaway and Cliff Jenkins with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History;
- Dr. Evan Peacock with Mississippi State University;
- Mr. Ken Carleton with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians;
- Mr. Terry Cole with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma;
- Ms. 'Rena Duncan with the Chickasaw Nation

Mr. Barnwell asked Mr. Butch Brown, the MDOT Executive Director, if he would like to make some opening comments on behalf of the MDOT. Mr. Brown expressed his appreciation for the good attendance at the Conference, and the importance of the I-69 Project to the State of Mississippi. He commented there are numerous individuals or groups representing various human and environmental interests that are involved in the review process for this project, and Mr. Brown emphasized the need for everyone involved to maintain a spirit of cooperation throughout the project review process. If the cooperative spirit is maintained, Mr. Brown stated his belief that the project could be advanced through the review process in a timely and efficient manner that balanced the needs for the project with the project's impacts on the human and natural environments. Mr. Brown commented that cooperation between state highway agencies and Native Americans was very important if the interests of these two groups are to be addressed in a timely and efficient manner that satisfactorily meets these two groups' expectations. Mr. Brown advised the MDOT conducted a recent conference with the Native Americans in Philadelphia, Mississippi, and the MDOT has emphasized involving the MDOT's Native American contacts in more project reviews. He advised these are two of the actions the MDOT has taken recently to establish and maintain a good working relationship with the Native Americans. Mr. Brown stated he hoped this conference would help to further improve the MDOT's working relationship with the Native Americans.

Mr. Ken Carleton, the tribal representative for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, commented on the Federal Law as it pertains to consultation with Native American tribes on highway projects, and the importance of early involvement with the Native Americans.

SIU 11 Presentation on Archaeological Study and Findings

Mr. David Kelley, with Coastal Environments, Inc., presented a report that included the following information.

- Project began in Spring 2001 with collection of existing data on archaeological sites and historic structures in the study area corridor from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Corridor examined was about 100 miles

long and varied from 10 to 20 miles wide. At that time there were over 800 sites and 400 historic structures recorded in the corridor. Despite the large number of known resources, only small portions of the corridor had been systematically surveyed.

- The data on recorded archaeological sites and historic structures were entered in the project GIS, and this information, along with a variety of other environmental data, was used by project planners to help select potential alignments for the highway. Sites that were listed or eligible for the National Register and those that had not been evaluated were avoided if possible.
- Several alternative alignments were presented at a series of public meetings in the Fall of 2001. Those alignments were then modified based on comments received at the public meetings and at a meeting with regulatory agencies, and a second round of public meetings was held in the Spring of 2002. Following those meetings a final series of alternative alignments were selected for more detailed study in the EIS.
- In order to obtain comparable data from all of the alignments, sample surveys were conducted on approximately 33% of each of the final alignments. The samples were not randomly selected, but focused on high probability areas. In the case of the archaeological survey this consisted of the natural levees of abandoned river channels, which are the most common setting of sites in this area. The intent was to locate as many sites as possible early in the planning process so that these data could be used in the selection of the preferred alignment. The archaeological survey examined a right-of-way that was generally 450 ft or about 150 m wide. Most of the area is in cultivation and crew members walked transects spaced 30 m apart and excavated shovel or auger tests in areas where the ground surface was obscured by vegetation or where there was a potential for site burial below the depth of plowing.
- The sample surveys located 217 archaeological sites, 90 percent of them newly recorded. Sixty percent of the sites have Native American occupations. They range in age from a Late Paleo-Indian occupation (ca. 8000-9000 B.C.) at one site to a number of Late Mississippi period occupations that date between A.D.

1400 and 1700. On the basis of the artifacts recovered, the majority of the occupations date to some portion of the Woodland stage (ca. 800 B.C.-A.D. 1200), and most are assignable to the Baytown period (ca. A.D. 400-800). Occupations dating to the Mississippi period (ca. A.D. 1200-1700) are also common, but not as numerous as those of the Baytown period. Small numbers of Archaic stage occupations (ca. 8000-800 B.C.) are also present, but in most cases these are represented by only a few dart points. The numbers of these occupations are limited in part by the fact that the landforms in over 35 percent of the study area are too recent to have sites of this age on them.

- The Native American sites range in size from numerous small sites that cover less than an acre to a few sites that are over 20 acres in area and have one or two mounds. The smallest sites may represent short-term occupations by one or two households. The largest sites are small villages that were occupied for hundreds of years.
- Eighty-two percent of the archaeological sites have historic period occupations. These sites date predominantly to the late 19th or early 20th centuries, but a few early to mid-19th century occupations have also been identified. Most of the sites probably represent the former locations of the houses of plantation workers.
- A sample survey was conducted for historic structures. This survey focused on areas that on the basis of early maps and aerial photographs had the potential for containing substantial numbers of structures greater than 50 years old. In this case the survey examined a mile-wide corridor in order to include potential visual and noise effects and was conducted by car.
- The standing structure survey located 287 historic structures. Two-thirds of these are houses. The remainder includes 39 commercial buildings, 20 churches, 13 cemeteries, 12 barns, and 5 schools. Most of these structures date to the early twentieth century, a few date to the late 19th century, and one, Hollywood Plantation, dates to the middle 19th century.
- Initial evaluations have been made of the archaeological sites located in the sample surveys and 43 sites that appear to have research potential are being

recommended for avoidance or further testing. Where possible project planners are attempting to avoid these sites; however, in some cases this may not be possible due to other constraints. In those cases test excavations will be necessary, and if the site is determined eligible, data recovery will be required. The historic structures are also being evaluated and those that are considered eligible for the National Register are being recommended for avoidance or some type of mitigation.

- Once the preferred alignment for the highway has been chosen, the remaining portion of that alignment will be surveyed. As additional sites or structures are found in this alignment, these will also be evaluated and, if necessary, further adjustments to the alignment may be made to avoid these as well.

Mississippi State University Presentation by Dr. Evan Peacock

Dr. Peacock provided a brief presentation on a project Mississippi State University has received from the MDOT for conducting detailed archaeological studies on the Preferred Alternatives for sections of I-69 within Mississippi. Their project is very important because it provides the opportunity of locating additional unknown sites prior to construction activities.

SIU 9 Status Report by Mr. Ray Brisson of PBS&J

Mr. Brisson discussed the status of their contract on SIU 9 of I-69 between I-55 near Hernando, Mississippi, and US 51 near Millington, Tennessee. He discussed the two general alternatives being studied. Mr. Brisson advised one of the general alternatives utilizes the existing interstate corridor system through Memphis and the other general alternative provides a new interstate loop to the east of Memphis. Based on traffic demand, Mr. Brisson stated the recommendation was to provide both alternatives. He commented the alternative using the existing system would probably be designated as I-69 while the loop could possibly be designated as I-169. Based on input received from the Native American tribal representatives, it was decided the SIU 9 field visit would be made as scheduled on Friday, February 13th.

SIU 11 Field Visit on February 12, 2004

Coastal Environments coordinated the field visit to archaeological sites they believed would be of interest to the Native American tribal representatives. Some of the sites were previously recorded and some had been discovered by Coastal Environments. The arrival of the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma's representative, Ms Carrie Wilson, was delayed the previous day due to bad weather, but she was able to attend the SIU 11 and SIU 9 field visits. Mr. Terry Cole, the representative for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, had a family emergency and left the conference on February 12th prior to this field visit.

The site visit began in Tunica County, continued south into Coahoma County and concluded near the Town of Merigold in Bolivar County. Along with viewing selected sites, the field visit also provided the group an opportunity to view portions of the alternatives recommended for further study. The Native American representatives made the following key points during the field visit.

- Sites sensitive to the Native Americans exist to the west of US 61 north and south of the intersection with US 49 near Lula. They asked that these sites be avoided.
- When sites border an alternative and if that alternative becomes the Preferred Alternative, consideration should be given to expanding the right of way at the site to encompass the entire archaeological site. This would provide a means of protecting the site.

After the field visit concluded, the conference attendees traveled back to the Grand and held a brief meeting. For the Native American representatives' review and comments, it was agreed the Native American would be provided copies of all alternatives as soon as Coastal completed the archaeological studies and all adjustments in the alternatives have been made. In the meantime, the Native American representatives were encouraged to provide the project team any comments they deem noteworthy.

This concluded the SIU 11 portion of the conference.

SIU 11 Native American Comments Received on the Conference

Dr. Richard Allen, Research and Policy Analyst for the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, advised prior to the conference the Cherokee Nation does not have any concerns with SIU 11 of I-69.

Mr. Terry Cole, of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, provided a letter dated April 5, 2004. The Comments portion of his letter stated, "After further review of the above mentioned project(s), to the best of our knowledge it will have no adverse effect on any historic properties in the project's area of potential effect. However, should construction expose buried archaeological or building materials such as chipped stone, tools, pottery, bone, historic crockery, glass or metal items, this office should be contacted immediately @ 1-800-522-6170 extension 2137.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

November 2003 – March 2005 Native American consultations and agency coordination

CONSULTATIONS WITH NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES, AND AGENCY COORDINATION ACTIONS FROM NOVEMBER OF 2003 TO MARCH OF 2005

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

INCLUDES

MINUTES FOR PROJECT TEAM/EPA MEETING ON JANUARY 21, 2005

MINUTES FOR PROJECT TEAM/MDAH MEETING ON FEBRUARY 3, 2005

MINUTES FOR NEEL-SCHAFFER/MDOT/FHWA MEETING ON FEBRUARY 16, 2005

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley

Month/Year Prepared: March/2005

3-21-05 Action Update.doc

Agency Coordination Action

Mailout within MDOT and FHWA on November 26, 2003

Subject: Internal Review of Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The MDOT Environmental Division mailed a copy of the Preliminary DEIS to the Jackson Office of the FHWA and the appropriate MDOT Offices and Divisions. The people receiving this information were asked to furnish their comments and/or concurrence by January 9, 2004.

Consultation with Native American Tribes

Conference on SIU 9 and SIU 11 at Tunica, MS on February 11-13, 2004

Subject: Minutes for Conference and Field Visits

The minutes for the Conference are contained in the Draft EIS.

Agency Coordination Action

Received Letter from Mr. Terry D. Cole of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma dated April 5, 2004

Subject: Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Cultural Resources Survey of Study Alternatives

Based on further review of this project, Mr. Cole's letter advised that to the best of their knowledge this project will have no adverse effect on any historic properties in the project's area of potential effect. However, should construction expose such properties, Mr. Cole advised their office should be contacted immediately at 1-800-522-6170 extension 2137.

The letter from Mr. Cole in response to the Native American Conference is addressed in the Draft EIS.

Alternative Development and Agency Coordination Meeting

Meeting with MDOT Geotechnical Section on May 6, 2004

Subject: MDOT Report on Their Review of Alternatives from Geotechnical Perspective

Mr. Jimmy Shirley met with Mr. Michael Wright in Jackson at the Geotechnical Section's office of the MDOT and went over the report provided by Mr. Wright that was dated May 3, 2004. Analyzing the alternatives strictly from a Geotechnical perspective, Mr. Wright advised that in the Southern Section the Eastern Alternative is favored slightly over the Central Alternative. In the Southern Section, Mr. Wright reported that the Western Alternative is the least favored alternative. The Middle Section is common for all alternatives. In the Northern Section, Mr. Wright advised the Eastern Alternative is favored over the Central and Western alternatives.

The report from the MDOT Geotechnical Section is addressed in the Draft EIS.

Agency Coordination

Transmittal from U.S.D.A.-N.R.C.S. to Neel-Schaffer postmarked May 18, 2004
Subject: Completed Farmland Conversion Impact Rating for Corridor Type Projects Forms

Upon receiving this information on the study alternatives from the Greenwood Office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Neel-Schaffer forwarded the completed forms to Kimley-Horn for inclusion in the Draft EIS.

Agency Coordination

Distribution of Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement on May 25, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Review

Representatives of Neel-Schaffer provided the MDOT and the FHWA with their requested copies of the Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The MDOT and FHWA distributed the Preliminary DEIS internally within the MDOT and to the Cooperating Agencies for review.

Agency Coordination

U.S. Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service Correspondence to FHWA dated June 25, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Response on Pre-Draft EIS

Mr. Curtis James of the Mississippi Field Office provided the response to Mr. Andrew Hughes, the Mississippi Division Administrator of the FHWA.

Mr. James advised the Service had no comments that needed addressing at the present time. The Service concurred in the plans to fine tune archaeological and wetland issues after a preferred alternative is selected and before issuing a Final Environmental Impact Statement.

The Service advised that overall the Pre-Draft EIS is well written, and the Service commended the project team on its thorough job. If there were questions, Mr. James advised Mr. Hughes to contact Mr. David Felder at their Mississippi Field Office.

Agency Coordination

Mississippi Department of Archives and History Correspondence to FHWA dated July 8, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Response on Pre-Draft EIS

Mr. Thomas Waggener provided the response to Mr. Andrew Hughes, the Mississippi Division Administrator of the FHWA.

Mr. Waggener advised their only comment pertains to the numbering in Table 4-22 for Archaeological Sites on Page 4-59. He stated that the state site numbers should be used for all sites referenced in the table. To address his concerns, Mr. Waggener advised the state site numbers are those beginning with "22" followed by the two-letter county designation and the 3-digit site number.

Agency Coordination

U.S. Dept. of the Army, Corps of Engineers Correspondence to FHWA dated July 13, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Response on Pre-Draft EIS

Mr. Kenneth Moseley provided a response to Mr. Andrew Hughes, the Mississippi Division Administrator of the FHWA, advising they had reviewed the Pre-Draft EIS and had no specific comments to offer at the present time.

Mr. Moseley went on to state they would need a copy of the draft intensive cultural resources survey report that is to be conducted once the preferred alignment is selected, and also an indication of how the tribal coordination is progressing. He referenced Ms. Susan Jarvis as their agency's contact if there were any questions.

Agency Coordination

Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Correspondence to FHWA dated July 15, 2004

Subject: Cooperating Agency Response on Pre-Draft EIS

Mr. Andrew Whitehurst provided the response to Mr. Andrew Hughes, the Mississippi Division Administrator of the FHWA.

Since the final pathway is not chosen, Mr. Whitehurst advised they were offering some general comments on the plans as a whole and their desire to work with the project team on refining their comments as the I-69 project continues to take shape.

Mr. Whitehurst commented that there was little discussion in the document of animal road crossings. His comments focus on the Black Bear, but this species makes a good surrogate for other quadrupeds that will be crossing the new highway. He advised the general area of northwest Mississippi through which I-69 is proposed is an area of increased activity by the Black Bear, a species listed as Endangered by the State of Mississippi. Over the past five years, Mr. Whitehurst stated there have been multiple sightings, human-bear interactions, and vehicular collisions, including road kills, have been documented and are obviously on the increase in the I-69 study area counties of Bolivar, Sunflower, Coahoma, Quitman, and Tunica.

Mr. Whitehurst referenced Florida, and other areas in North America, where various types of "critter crossings" have been constructed to benefit many different species of wildlife. He commented that the I-69 project seems to be an ideal project to incorporate such design features.

In his correspondence, Mr. Whitehurst also commented that the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks has already been consulting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in recommending priority areas for Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) lands to provide forested corridors from the Mississippi River batture lands to large forest blocks such as Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge as well as other federal and state refuges and wildlife management areas.

Agency Coordination

Archives and History correspondence to MDOT Environmental Division dated July 15, 2004
Subject: Archives and History Review of Coastal Environments February 2004 Cultural Resources Survey Report

Mr. Thomas H. Waggener, the Review and Compliance Officer for the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, provided this review to MDOT Environmental Division Engineer E. Claiborne Barnwell. Archives and History reviewed the Report pursuant to their responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800. Archives and History concurred with the recommendations contained in Table 8-1 of the Report, and they advised the 43 sites considered eligible should be avoided or proposed mitigation measured addressed in an MOA. Archives and History referenced National Register Bulletin: *Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Archaeological Properties* asserts stating overlooking the significance of small sites may skew the understanding of past lifeways and Archives and concerns expressed in that bulletin about destroying sites without being recorded thoroughly because they are written off as ineligible for listing in the National Register. Archives and History advised that is a high probability that small or overlooked sites are included in the identified sample of 217 sites recorded. Because of the potential loss of unrecognized significant site types, Archives and History recommended that a small sample (ca. 10%) of the archaeological sites determined ineligible be considered for additional archaeological

investigations to ensure that these often ignored sites are adequately considered. Archives and History recommended that the sample include a range of site types and investigative techniques.

Agency Coordination

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Correspondence to FHWA received by Neel-Schaffer on August 23, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Response on Pre-Draft EIS

The EPA response was provided to Mr. Cecil Vick, the Environmental Team Leader for the Mississippi Division of the FHWA.

The EPA advised their primary concerns regard water resource impacts, land use changes/habitat loss, and residential relocations. They identified some environmental issues that needed to be addressed in more detail and commented on alternatives (preferred alternative), aquatic resources (jurisdictional delineation, quality of resource and mitigation), noise, community impacts and others. The EPA also advised there were other identified impacts (i.e., archeological) that should be avoided, minimized and evaluated further to protect the environment.

Overall, the EPA stated the Pre-Draft EIS captures the extensive work that has been done on the project, particularly, in terms of alternatives analysis screening and public and resource agency involvement. The EPA advised the Pre-Draft EIS provides a good overview of the project and attempts to address the issue of economic development. However, the EPA stated they could not completely assess the avoidance and mitigation refinements on some of the resources due to the degree of study that was conducted on those resources in the Pre-Draft EIS.

The EPA advised they were looking forward to working with the project team to address the identified concerns, They provided the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses, for Ms. Ntale Kajumba and Mr. Darryl Williams as EPA personnel the project team could contact for assistance.

An attachment to the EPA's correspondence addressed their comments in more detail.

Agency Coordination

I-69 Project Manager Robert Walker Meeting with Messrs. Pete Johnson and Bill Triplett of the Delta Regional Authority at their office in Clarksdale on September 29, 2004
Subject: Input from the Delta Regional Authority on the Methodology and Approach of the Economic Study Performed for This Section of I-69

After Mr. Walker provided a debriefing on the study status, the group discussed the economic study approach. The discussion focused on an approach that basically builds upon existing centers of activity or settlement and takes full advantage of existing public investments in infrastructure, inhibits further sprawl, inefficient delivery of public services, and reinforces patterns of business and the private investment made in a wide variety of enterprises. This basically means that the closer the interstate facility can be located to existing infrastructure the better chance for continued and sustained growth. The approach also emphasized concentrating on the major population and employment cities within the study area. These cities are Cleveland and Clarksdale. After explaining the approach that the economic experts had used, Pete Johnson commented that he concurred with the approach. He went further to explain that his agency was taking the same approach in that more emphasis should be concentrated where the major employment and population centers exist throughout the delta. He listed the cities of Cleveland, Clarksdale, Greenville, Indianola and Greenwood were the major cities that still had substantial employment and population figures.

Agency Coordination

Transmittal from MDOT Environmental Division Engineer E. Claiborne Barnwell to FHWA Division Administrator Andrew H. Hughes dated October 28, 2004
Subject: Processing of two copies of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for FHWA approval to present at a public hearing

Agency Coordination

MDOT Transmittal of Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to Reviewers and Review Locations dated November 4, 2004

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement Approved for Presentation at a Public Hearing

In his transmittal, Mr. Barnwell advised the DEIS summarizes the environmental evaluation that was conducted for this study, and the comments on social, environmental, and engineering issues made at public informational meetings during the environmental review process. He advised the reviewers that comments on the DEIS should be sent to Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager, by December 31, 2004, and Mr. Barnwell provided the contact information for Mr. Walker.

The contacts at the public libraries were asked to keep the DEIS on display after the public hearings as a reference for addressing questions or comments the public might have after the hearings.

Excluding the distributions made within the MDOT and by the FHWA, the following individuals were provided with a hard copy and/or a compact disc of the DEIS. The DEIS was provided to these individuals for their review and/or for them to display the DEIS in a convenient location where other interested individuals would be able to review the DEIS before and after the public hearing.

• Ms. Susan Jarvis	Vicksburg District, Corps of Engineers
• Ms. Ntale Kajumba	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
• Mr. David Felder	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
• Mr. Benjamin F. Davis, Jr.	U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
• Mr. Homer L. Wilkes	U.S.D.A.-Natural Resources Conservation Service
• Mr. Andrew Whitehurst	Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
• Mr. Tom Waggener	Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History
• Honorable Haley Barbour	Governor, State of Mississippi
• Mr. Ancil Cox	I-69 Great River Bridge Compact
• Ms. Lucy Janoush	I-69 Great River Bridge Compact
• Ms. Cherry Green	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
• Mr. Jerry Gidner	U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
• Mr. Bruce Dawson	U.S. Bureau of Land Management
• Mr. Harry Walls	U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

• Ms. Emily Eberhardt	U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
• Mr. Fred Dennin	U.S. Department of Transportation
• Mr. Michael Plunkett	U.S. Geological Survey, Water Resources
• Mr. Pete Johnson	Delta Regional Authority
• Honorable Bennie Thompson	U.S. Representative, State of Mississippi
• Honorable Thad Cochran	U.S. Senator, State of Mississippi
• Honorable Trent Lott	U.S. Senator, State of Mississippi
• Mr. James Sledge	Mississippi Forestry Commission
• Mr. Robert Seyfarth	Mississippi Dept. of Environmental Quality
• Mr. Leland Speed	Mississippi Development Authority
• Dr. Bill Johnson	Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
• Mr. Don Underwood	MS Soil and Water Conservation Commission
• Ms. Pat Hemphill	Yazoo Mississippi Delta Levee Board
• Mr. James Wannamaker	Board of Mississippi Levee Commissioners
• Mr. Marion Butler	Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department
• Mr. Jerry Mugg	HNTB Corporation
• Honorable Clara H. Burnett	Mississippi State Representative, District 9
• Honorable John Mayo	Mississippi State Representative, District 25
• Honorable Chuck Espy	Mississippi State Representative, District 26
• Honorable Charlie Capps	Mississippi State Representative, District 28
• Honorable Linda Coleman	Mississippi State Representative, District 29
• Honorable John Hines	Mississippi State Representative, District 50
• Honorable Robert Jackson	Mississippi State Senator, District 11
• Honorable Johnnie Walls	Mississippi State Senator, District 12
• Honorable Willie Simmons	Mississippi State Senator, District 13
• Honorable Eugene Clarke	Mississippi State Senator, District 22
• Honorable Robert Fava	Mayor, Town of Alligator
• Honorable Burt Notes	Mayor, Town of Benoit
• Honorable Lucious Tucker	Mayor, Town of Beulah
• Honorable Joe Reed	Mayor, Town of Boyle

• Honorable Henry Espy	Mayor, City of Clarksdale
• Honorable W.J. Jones	Mayor, Town of Coahoma
• Honorable Martin King	Mayor, City of Cleveland
• Honorable James Pettigrew	Mayor, City of Drew
• Honorable Charles Harvey	Mayor, Town of Duncan
• Honorable Herbert Thomas	Mayor, Town of Friars Point
• Honorable H. McTeer-Hudson	Mayor, City of Greenville
• Honorable Harry Smith	Mayor, City of Greenwood
• Honorable Erma Williams	Mayor, Town of Gunnison
• Honorable Arthur Marble	Mayor, City of Indianola
• Honorable Patrick Campbell	Mayor, Town of Jonestown
• Honorable Alice Middleton	Mayor, Town of Lula
• Honorable Don Lassetter	Mayor, Town of Lyon
• Honorable Andrew Westerfield	Mayor, Town of Merigold
• Honorable Kennedy Johnson	Mayor, City of Mound Bayou
• Honorable Rosie Williams	Mayor, Town of Pace
• Honorable Eddie Williams	Mayor, City of Rosedale
• Honorable Shirley Edwards	Mayor, City of Ruleville
• Honorable Roger Carter	Mayor, City of Shaw
• Honorable Willie Blocker	Mayor, City of Shelby
• Honorable Bobby Williams	Mayor, City of Tunica
• Honorable Milton Tutwiler	Mayor, Town of Winstonville
• Honorable Richard Coleman	President, Bolivar County Board of Supervisors
• Honorable Eddie Smith	President, Coahoma County Board of Supervisors
• Honorable Edgar Donahoe	President, Sunflower County Board of Supervisors
• Honorable Al Rankins	President, Washington County Board of Supervisors
• Honorable James Dunn	President, Tunica County Board of Supervisors
• Mr. Ron Hudson	Clarksdale-Coahoma Co. Chamber of Commerce
• Mr. Scott Luth	Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce
• Mr. Steve Shurden	Drew Chamber of Commerce

• Mr. Pete Roncali	Greenville-Washingon Co. Chamber of Commerce
• Ms. Elise Jenkins	Ruleville Chamber of Commerce
• Ms. Lyn Arnold	Tunica County Chamber of Commerce
• Mr. Glenn Brown	North Delta Planning and Development District
• Mr. Billy Haney	South Delta Planning and Development District
• Mr. Sam Jones	Sunflower County Economic Development District
• Dr. Suzanne Hawley	Benoit School District
• Chief Phillip Martin	Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
• Mr. Ken Carleton	Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
• Mr. Kirk Perry	Chickasaw Nation
• Ms. Gingy Nail	Chickasaw Nation
• Mr. Olin Williams	Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
• Mr. Terry Cole	Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
• Mrs. Carrie Wilson	Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
• Chief Christine Norris	Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
• Mr. Chip Fisher	Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
• Mr. Earl Barbry, Jr.	Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana, Inc.
• Mr. Raymond Bryant	Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center Inc.
• Mr. Early C. Ewing	Benoit I-69 Committee
• Mr. David Work	Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission
• Ms. Robbie Fisher	The Nature Conservancy
• Ms. Wanda Ray	Bolivar County Administrator
• Mr. Hugh Jack Stubbs	Coahoma County Administrator
• Mr. Ken Murphree	Tunica County Administrator
• Mr. Delma Furniss	Former Mississippi State Senator
• Ms. Darlean Smith	Benoit Public Library
• Ms. Sara Bess Meek	Thelma R. Rainer Memorial Library, Merigold
• Sister Donald Mary	Mound Bayou Public Library
• Ms. Joyce Applegate	Rosedale Public Library
• Ms. Vivian Malatesta	Dr. Robert Hollingsworth Library, Shelby

• Mr. Ronnie Wise	Robinson-Carpenter Memorial Library, Cleveland
• Ms. Nita Dill	Henry M. Seymour Library, Indianola
• Ms. Diane Shurden	Drew Public Library
• Ms. Margie Raine	Horace S. Stansel Library, Ruleville
• Ms. Missie Craig	Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale
• Ms. Milee Wrenn	Robert C. Irwin Library, Tunica

Consultation with Native American Tribes

Letter from Environmental Director Ms. Lillie Strange dated December 3, 2004
Subject: Comments from Jena Band of Choctaw Indians on Draft EIS

In response to Mr. Robert Walker's correspondence dated November 4, 2004, Ms. Strange provided a response by letter. Her letter advised that after thorough review of the document submitted to her by Mr. Walker, it has been determined that there will be no significant impact in regards to the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians. Therefore, Ms. Strange further stated that the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians does not have any objections to the implementation of this project.

Agency Coordination

Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Letter to Neel-Schaffer Dated December 15, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Comments on Draft EIS

Since the Preferred Alternative was not chosen in the Draft EIS, Mr. Andrew Whitehurst advised he was offering come general comments on the plans as a whole and that he hoped to work with the project team on refining the comments from the MDWF&P as the project continues to take shape.

Mr. Whitehurst commented on the following issues in his correspondence:

- The general area of northwest Mississippi through which I-69 is proposed is an area of increased activity by the Black Bear, a species listed as Endangered by the State of Mississippi.

- Over the past five years multiple sightings, human-bear interactions, and vehicular collisions, including road kills, have been documented and are obviously on the increase in the counties where this I-69 study is located.
- Areas in North America, working with the U.S. Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration, have constructed various types of "critter crossings" (underpasses, culverts, funnel fences) to benefit many different species of wildlife. The I-69 project seems to be an ideal project in which to incorporate such design features not only in the interest of wildlife conservation but automobile passenger safety and property loss as well. A detailed analysis of the database maintained by the MDWF&P on the black bear, as well as consultation with other areas where "critter crossings have been provided for the Black Bear, could help pinpoint locations along the I-69 corridor that would be favorable for installation of wildlife underpasses.
- The MDWF&P has already been consulting with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in recommending priority areas for Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) lands to provide forested corridors from the Mississippi River batture lands to large forest blocks such as Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge as well as other federal and state refuges and wildlife management areas.

Agency Coordination

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service correspondence to Neel-Schaffer dated December 15, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Comments on Draft EIS

Mr. Homer L. Wilkes, the State Conservationist, commented that Section "4.2 Farmland,"along with Appendix E in the Draft EIS, adequately address the Natural Resources Conservation Service's responsibility for insuring compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act. However, Mr. Wilkes noticed the following terminology in the Draft EIS:

- National Resources Conservation Service should read Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Form AD-1006 is actually Form NRCS-CPA-106. See Appendix E.

Mr. Wilkes concluded his correspondence by advising the Natural Resources Conservation Service concurs in the Draft EIS.

Agency Coordination

Department of the Army – Vicksburg District, Corps of Engineers correspondence to Neel-Schaffer dated January 7, 2005
Subject: Cooperating Agency Comments on Draft EIS

Ms. Elizabeth Guynes acknowledged reviewing the Draft EIS and advised the Corps had no specific comments to offer at the present time. She did state the Corps will need a copy of the draft intensive cultural resources survey report that is to be conducted once the preferred alternative is selected, and also an indication of how the tribal coordination is progressing. She requested that any questions be forwarded to Ms. Susan Jarvis, and Ms. Guynes provided the contact information for Ms. Jarvis.

Agency Coordination

Update Provided to MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons on January 13, 2005
Subject: Alternatives for Widening SR 8 at Pace and Elimination of Pace Bypass Alternative

The project team mailed MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons the alternative for widening SR 8 along existing alignment through Pace. This reflected dropping of the Pace Bypass Alternative based on comments received at the public hearings. The alternative would use a four-lane divided section to the west of Pace, transition to a five-lane section through the built-up area, and transition back to a four-lane divided section to the east of Pace.

Agency Coordination

Update Provided to MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons on January 14, 2005
Subject: Modifications of Alternatives West of Cleveland Made After the Public Hearings and Reconsideration of the Eastern Loop Alternative at Cleveland

The project team mailed MDOT Third District Engineer mapping on aerial photography depicting the modified alternatives west of Cleveland and the eastern loop alternative around Cleveland.

Agency Coordination

Project Team-U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Meeting on January 21, 2005
Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement Review by EPA

To assist in the EPA's review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the project team met with the appropriate staff of the EPA in their Regional Office at 9:00 a.m. in Atlanta, Georgia. The following members of the project team traveled to Atlanta on January 20th for the meeting with the EPA the following day: Claiborne Barnwell and Kim Thurman of the MDOT, Cecil Vick of the FHWA, Larry Meisner and Beth Reed of Kimley-Horn and Associates, and Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer. MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons was invited to make this trip and attend the presentation, but he was unable to attend. Mr. Jeff Kolb of the FHWA Jackson Mississippi Division Office was in Atlanta on other business, and Mr. Kolb's schedule allowed him to attend the meeting.

Each person attending this meeting registered their attendance and received a handout the project team had developed to supplement their presentation. Displays placed on easels were also used to assist the project team in their presentation. Mr. Jimmy Palmer and Mr. Heinz Mueller welcomed the project team to the EPA's Office, everyone introduced themselves, and Mr. Barnwell and Mr. Vick made some brief comments. The first portion of the meeting consisted of a presentation by the project team using the following agenda.

- Mr. Cecil Vick of the FHWA delivered a power point presentation which provided a broad scope overview of the project.
- Mr. Robert Walker addressed the study approach and project status, and any questions from EPA.
- Ms. Beth Reed of Kimley-Horn discussed the identification of the alternatives' natural environmental issues, and addressed any questions from EPA.

- Mr. Larry Meisner of Kimley-Horn discussed Environmental Justice and Community Outreach, and addressed any questions from EPA.
- Mr. Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer discussed the development and refinement of alternatives, and addressed any questions from EPA.

At the conclusion of these presentations, Mr. Barnwell and Mr. Palmer provided some brief comments and time was provided for a short break.

After the break, Mr. Robert Walker discussed the public hearings, the actions taken since the public hearings, the Environmentally Preferred Alternative, and what the project team believes will be the alternative recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval. Mr. Walker advised the EPA representatives that the study's Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that the project team intended to recommend to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval might be adjusted slightly but they were the same corridors, except for one possible location. The location Mr. Walker identified as the possible exception was the Western Alternative along US 61 in the vicinity of the Welcome Center where there were archaeological problems. Because this is the closest alternative to the Welcome Center, the MDOT is pursuing using the Western Alternative instead of the shared Central and Eastern alternative alignment, which is on new location slightly farther to the east.

Mr. Walker offered the following description of the Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative the project team intended to recommend to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval.

- Between Benoit and Clarksdale, the Central Alternative with the Lake Vista crossing of SR 1 is the Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that will be recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval
- Between Clarksdale and the Lula area, there is only one study alternative, which uses US 61 as much as possible, and that alternative is the Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that will be recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval.
- Between the Lula area near the Welcome Center and the interchange at Dubbs Road in the southern part of Tunica County, there are two alternatives. The Western

Alternative will be recommended if the archaeological problems can be overcome. If the archaeological problems cannot be overcome, the Central Alternative will be recommended. The Environmentally Preferred Alternative would be considered the Central Alternative.

- Between the Dubbs Road Interchange and the SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville, the Central Alternative is the apparent Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that will be recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval.

At the beginning of Mr. Walker's remarks on the Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that the project team would be recommending to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval, and at the conclusion of Mr. Walker's remarks, Messrs. Barnwell and Vick both emphasized it was possible that there might be problems with the approval process internally within the MDOT on the Recommended Preferred Alternative. Before the Recommended Preferred Alternative is processed to the FHWA for approval, Messrs. Barnwell and Vick stated the recommendation must first be approved by the MDOT Technical Staff and then by the MDOT Transportation Commission. If the alternative described above by Mr. Walker as the Recommended Preferred Alternative is not approved by the MDOT Technical Staff and the MDOT Transportation Commission, and if another alternative other than the one described above by Mr. Walker is chosen as the MDOT's Recommended Preferred Alternative, Messrs. Barnwell and Vick advised the EPA would be notified and another meeting with them would be scheduled.

The remainder of the meeting was spent addressing questions and comments from the EPA. At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Palmer expressed his appreciation on behalf of the EPA for the briefing, and he advised the project team's briefing had assisted them in the letter they would provide in response to their review of the Draft EIS. At approximately 11:00 a.m., the meeting concluded.

Agency Coordination

Neel-Schaffer Meeting with MDOT Third District on February 2, 2005

Subject: Access to Farmland and County Roads Divided by I-69 Alternatives in Bolivar County

This meeting was held at the MDOT Third District Office in Yazoo City at the request of District Engineer Walter Lyons. Those in attendance at the meeting were Messrs. Walter Lyons, Carl Middleton, and Brad Fletcher of the MDOT Third District and Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer.

Mr. Lyons opened the meeting by advising that he wanted to know more about the philosophy of the study on addressing access needs and frontage roads. He commented that most of the land in the study area is farmed by landowners or farmers who rent large tracts of property that is not necessarily adjoining. He advised that some of these landowners and farmers have expressed their concerns to him about how they are going to be able to access land they farm that is divided by the interstate.

In response to the opening comments by Mr. Lyons, the following items were then discussed at this meeting.

- The typical manner in which the study currently incorporates or nearby county roads into a plan for providing access to farmland divided by alternatives.
- The typical manner in which the study currently provides bridges at most county road crossings as a means of addressing local access needs and the need to access farmland divided by an alternative. In most cases the county roads were bridged over the interstate, but in some locations the interstate was bridged over the county road. The reason for preferring to bridge the county road over the interstate is that only one bridge would be required, while bridging the interstate over the county road required two bridges.
- A copy of a letter that Delta Council President Ken Murphree, and Delta Council Highway Improvement and Transportation Committee Chairman Al Rankins had sent to Central District Transportation Commissioner Dick Hall dated January 19, 2005. The letter complimented the MDOT and the project team on the recent public hearings and commented on some other issues. One issue of concern to Delta Council is their sensitivity to the needs of local property owners who will be impacted by this project's construction. A second issue of concern to Delta Council is the plan which MDOT

will propose relative to the construction timeline on the various segments, and they commented: "After waiting since passage of the 1987 four-lane act until 2005 for the completion of U.S. Highway 61 four-laning, it would be more than regrettable if we lost this four-lane access for any extended period of time, or if four-lane access was interrupted for years due to the reconstruction of certain segments of U.S. Highway 61 to interstate specifications. Related to the second issue, the Delta Council letter asked the MDOT to carefully consider the Benoit to Coahoma County Line segment as the initial project activity to avoid any disruption of the recently opened four-lane access afforded to the Delta by U.S. 61, as long as possible. The final issue of concern in the Delta Council letter concerned the transport of agricultural commodities from the field to the processing, storage, and shipment points located throughout the region. On this issue, Delta Council requested that careful considerations be given to the disparities which exist between interstate and non-interstate standards and restrictions on over-height, over-length, and overweight vehicles which are common during the harvest season in the Delta; and, the letter referenced that these matters have received special consideration by the MDOT and the Mississippi Public Service Commission in the past. The letter concluded with Delta Council offering to discuss these issues and stating that they looked forward to a response.

- In response to the Delta Council letter, the MDOT Third District presented Neel-Schaffer with a copy of a concept the Third District had developed on frontage roads and bridges over the interstate. Unless restricted by environmental impacts or a landowner desire not to have a frontage road across a portion or all of his property, the Third District concept would provide a frontage road on both sides of the interstate and grade separation bridges over the interstate on a typical spacing of approximately two miles. The Third District concept gives priority to landowners over local, non-landowner traffic on the county roads, because these grade separation bridges would not typically be placed at county road crossings.
- The MDOT Third District representatives thought their concept of providing frontage roads along both sides of the alternatives, whenever possible, might aid in the proposed construction sequencing for the Central Alternative when that alternative is using the US 61 corridor. A discussion on the additional cost of the MDOT Third District

farmland/local access plan relative to the Neel-Schaffer proposal appeared to conclude that the Neel-Schaffer proposal was adequate.

- Should the Central Alternative be selected as the Preferred Alternative, it was agreed that special considerations from the MDOT and the Mississippi Public Service Commission would be required to address the Delta Council comment on the disparities which exist between interstate and non-interstate standards and restrictions on over-height, over-length, and overweight vehicles which are common during the harvest season in the Delta. The Neel-Schaffer representatives advised the MDOT Third District that the Harvest Permit issue would be forwarded to the MDOT Environmental Division for them to address.

This concludes the Minutes for this meeting.

Note: Subsequent to this meeting, the Neel-Schaffer discussed the Harvest Permit issue with the MDOT Environmental Division, and it was determined this is a problem nationwide that needs addressing by Federal authorities.

Agency Coordination

Project Team-Mississippi Department of Archives and History Meeting on February 3, 2005
Subject: Archaeology in Lula area near the Welcome Center and in Coahoma-Jonestown area

This meeting was held in the MDOT Environmental Division Conference Room to discuss the project's archaeological study issues particularly relating to the Western Alternative in the Northern Section near the Welcome Center and the Central Alternative in the Middle Section at the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange.

The agencies represented at the meeting and their representatives were:

- Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) – Sam McGahey, Pamela Edwards, and David Abbott;
- MDOT Environmental Division – Claiborne Barnwell, Wes Stafford, Kim Thurman, Bruce Gray, John Underwood, and Jim Turner;

- MDOT Second District – Jimmy Dickerson
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – Cecil Vick and Dickie Walters;
- Coastal Environments – David Kelley and Doug Wells;
- Neel-Schaffer – Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley.

The following were some of the items discussed by MDOT Environmental Division Engineer Claiborne Barnwell in his opening comments.

- From an archaeological perspective, the main problem area in the study is along US 61 in Coahoma County in the vicinity of the Welcome Center near Lula.
- Due to the logistics, separate coordination is required with the Native Americans and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History when addressing archaeological issues.
- The McKnight Archaeological Site, located adjacent to US 61 north of the US 49 intersection, is a major concern.
- Remote Sensing is a possible means of conducting further archaeological studies at test sites along US 61 in this area, but the accuracy of the results obtained from using remote sensing might be questioned.

Representatives from the MDOT Environmental Division and from Coastal Environments updated the MDAH representatives on the archaeological study approach used for this project, the status of the archaeological study report for the project, and the archaeological findings.

Representatives from Coastal Environments discussed the known archaeological sites along the Western Alternative in the vicinity of the Welcome Center, and that the shared Central and Eastern alternative between Lula and Dubbs Road had been studied and adjusted to produce an acceptable alignment from an archaeological perspective. It was determined that the known archaeological sites for the Western Alternative along US 61 in the vicinity of the US 49 intersection near the Welcome Center were too important and the probability of burial occurring in these sites too high to continue the possibility of using the Western Alternative in this area. Therefore, a decision was made to use the Central Alternative in the Northern Section as the

alternative that would be recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff as the Preferred Alternative segment.

The representatives from Neel-Schaffer discussed the modifications proposed for the Central Alternative in the Middle Section at the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange. The modified concept was developed to better accommodate the interchange's traffic, to lessen the farmland impacts on the Antici family caused by the original concept which offset the interchange north of the crossroad to avoid all the archaeological sites, and to create an interchange that would align with the crossroad in a manner that would avoid as much of archaeological sites as possible. The MDAH representatives reviewed the modified concept and gave their concurrence to the modified concept.

This concludes the Minutes for this Meeting.

Agency Coordination

Neel-Schaffer Presentation on February 16, 2005

Subject: Preferred Alternative Recommendation to MDOT's and FHWA's Technical Staffs

The presentation to the MDOT Technical Staff on the Recommended Preferred Alternative was given in the Environmental Division Conference Room with the following people in attendance.

- From the MDOT Central District Transportation Commissioner's Office – Commissioner Dick Hall;
- From the FHWA Mississippi Division's Office – Administrator Mr. Andy Hughes and Environmental Coordinator Mr. Cecil Vick;
- From the MDOT Office of Intermodal Planning – Director Mr. Ray Balentine;
- From the MDOT Chief Engineer's Office – Assistant Chief Engineer Preconstruction, Mr. David Foster;
- From the MDOT Second District Office – District Engineer Mr. Jimmy Dickerson and Assistant District Engineer, Construction Mr. Danny Walker;
- From the MDOT Third District Office – District Engineer Mr. Walter Lyons and Assistant District Engineer, Construction Mr. Carl Middleton;

- From the MDOT Environmental Division Office – Environmental Division Engineer Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Assistant MDOT Environmental Division Engineer Mr. Wes Stafford, and Chief Archaeologist Mr. Bruce Gray; and,
- From Neel-Schaffer Office – Project Manager Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley

Due to his attendance being required at an unscheduled meeting with members of the Mississippi Legislature, MDOT Chief Engineer Harry Lee James did not arrive at this meeting on the Recommended Preferred Alternative until it was almost over.

Each person attending the meeting's attendance was registered and every attendee received a handout that Neel-Schaffer had developed to supplement Mr. Walker's presentation. Displays placed on easels were also used to aid Mr. Walker in making his power point presentation. Before turning the program over to Mr. Walker for his presentation, the following were some of the brief opening comments that Mr. Barnwell provided.

- He welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- He gave a summary of the study's progress.
- He stressed the involvement of the public and governmental agencies in the study.
- He advised the purpose of today's meeting is to present the Recommended Preferred Alternative to the MDOT Technical Staff and to receive the MDOT's Technical Staff's support for presenting the Recommended Preferred Alternative to the MDOT Transportation Commission for the Commission's approval. He stressed the Commission's approval is needed to advance the project to the next level of completing the remaining studies on the Preferred Alternative, preparing the Final Environmental Impact Statement, and obtaining a Record of Decision (ROD) to complete the study.

After some brief discussions among the MDOT representatives in attendance at the meeting, it was concluded that the MDOT Technical Staff would probably delay its decision on supporting, or not supporting, the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative until a later date. The program was then turned over to Mr. Walker for his presentation.

The presentation was developed in a manner that first provided minimal background information and then presented the Recommended Preferred Alternative in key segments controlled by major issues. The following images were displayed by Mr. Walker during his presentation and some brief comments that Mr. Walker made on the images.

- A Study Area Map and the General Approach to the Study – Up to three alternative routes would be studied from near Benoit to near Robinsonville. Special emphasis would be made on Economic Enhancement and Environmental Justice. Some of the additional critical study issues are archaeology, natural resources, and farmland impacts.
- A Map of the Refined Alternative Corridors and Comments on Critical Environmental Issues – The Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge in the southwest corner of the study, the natural resource concerns in the north part of the study area, and the archaeological and Native American concerns were identified as being critical issues.
- A Map of the Study Alternatives in the Benoit and Dahomey National Wildlife areas Identifying the Recommended Preferred Alternative as the Eastern (Green) Alignment – This alternative segment uses the Eastern Alternative from the connecting point to the adjacent study on Section of Independent Utility 12, the southern crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista, and joins the Central Alternative south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Road between SR 448 and Litton Road. Some advantages of this Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment are: it is about $4 million cheaper than other alternatives; it has the least number of impacted landowners; it is closer to Greenville; and, it has fewer environmental impacts. A disadvantage of this Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment is it is further from Benoit, Rosedale, and the Port of Rosedale.
- A Map of the Study Alternatives for Widening SR 8 to Four Lanes Between Cleveland and Rosedale and Comments on the Recommended Preferred Alternative for Accomplishing this Widening – The Recommended Preferred Alternative is to have a five-lane section extended west of Cleveland to a point west of the new I-69 Interchange with the Central Alternative. West of that interchange the roadway would transition to a four-lane divided section and remain this way until the eastern edge of Pace where the roadway would transition to a five-lane section through the

built-up area of Pace. The Recommended Preferred Alternative would then transition back to a four-lane divided section to a point slightly east of Rosedale where it would then transition to a five-lane section and remain a five-lane section to the intersection with SR 1.

- A Map of the Study Alternatives in the Cleveland Area and Comments That the Central Alternative Segment is the Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment – The Central Alternative Segment is the Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment for the following reasons: it is about $60 Million cheaper than the other alternatives; it has the least overall environmental impacts; it is a more direct route for the interstate motorist; and, it was preferred by 82% of the public attending the recent public hearings, including all the cities and towns along US 61 in Bolivar County north of Cleveland. Some disadvantages of using the Central Alternative Segment in this area are: it impacts more prime farmland; and converting US 61 to I-69 would be more disruptive to traffic during construction.
- A Map of the Cleveland Area and a Chart Addressing a Comparison of the Modified Eastern Loop Alternative around Cleveland with the Modified Central Alternative to the West of Cleveland – This comparison was needed to respond to requests received from landowners and the Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce after the public hearings. The comparison showed the Modified Eastern Loop Alternative Segment with the Connector to SR 8 West is not a better alternative than the Modified Central Alternative Segment. The modified Eastern Loop with the SR 8 Connector is estimated to impact 46 more property owners, require the relocation of seven more residents and two more businesses, has 19 more current residents that would be living within ¼ mile of the corridor, has 76 more residents that would be living within ½ mile of the corridor, and would cost approximately $80 Million more than the Modified Central Alternative. Some advantages of the Modified Central Alternative relative to the Eastern Loop Alternative with the SR 8 Connector are: it is a shorter and more direct route; it has less construction cost; it impacts fewer property owners; it has fewer relocation impacts; it would have less residents living within close proximity of the corridor. Some advantages of the Eastern Loop Alternative with the SR 8 West Connector relative to the Modified Central Alternative are: it passes closer

to the existing infrastructure, and it has less impact to prime farmland. A disadvantage of the Eastern Loop Alternative with the SR 8 West Connector is it impacts an existing minority area southeast of Cleveland. The comparison of these two alternative segments did not take into account the major impacts the Eastern Loop Alternative would have on a planned residential subdivision and golf course development that would be located on the south side of SR 8 within the proposed right of way limits at this interchange location. Adjusting the interchange to the west to avoid impacting most of this planned subdivision would also require relocating SR 8 to the north on a parallel county road and placing the interchange access all on the north side of the relocated county road. Based on the analysis made of the Modified Central Alternative Segment with the Central Alternative Segment presented at the public hearings, the modified segment appears to be an improvement. The project team is recommending that the Modified Central Alternative segment be advanced to the same level of study as that accomplished on the Central Alternative. If the study verifies the Modified Central Alternative segment is indeed better, the project team recommends it replace that portion of the Central Alternative that was presented to the public at the recent hearings. The Modified Central Alternative is the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment between the Dahomey National Wildlife area and Clarksdale.

QUESTION: Commissioner Hall wanted to know if there were sections of four-lane highways in other states without full control of access that were being considered for conversion to I-69?

ANSWER: Mr. Walker responded that Kentucky and Indiana are incorporating some existing four-lane highways into I-69, and that it is likely that Texas will also. The other states are not far enough along in their studies to provide a definitive answer. Mr. Hughes of the FHWA commented that conversion of existing facilities to interstates had occurred in the past. Mr. Shirley of Neel-Schaffer had addressed how this could be accomplished during previous meetings with Mr. Lyons. For Commissioner Hall's benefit, Mr. Shirley discussed a construction phasing plan that could be used for the Central Alternative when converting the four-lane section of US 61 to I-69 in Bolivar County. The Central Alternative in Bolivar County would use as

much of US 61 as constraints allowed between Merigold and the Coahoma County Line. During these comments, Mr. Shirley advised the existing southbound lanes of US 61 would be changed to a two-lane, two-way West Frontage Road at the conclusion of the conversion of US 61 to I-69 for the Central Alternative, the existing northbound lanes of US 61 would be reconstructed to the requirements necessary to change those lanes to the southbound lanes of I-69, and that the northbound lanes of I-69 and any needed East Frontage Roads would be constructed adjacent to US 61 on the east side. During his comments, Mr. Shirley discussed a plan that would allow four-lane traffic to be maintained during most of the construction, and at the conclusion of the conversion the West Frontage Road would be continuous and provide a means of serving as a interstate detour, should an incident occur on the interstate that required closing the northbound interstate lanes, southbound lanes or both sets of lanes.

COMMENT: MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons advised that another negative impact of the Central Alternative is the loss of existing access to US 61. He also questioned the 82% support figure that the Central Alternative in this area received at the public hearings. Mr. Lyons believes the study did not do a good job of relaying to the public the inconvenience that the public would experience during the conversion of US 61 to I-69 for the portion of the Central Alternative between Merigold and the Bolivar-Coahoma County Line.

- A Map of the Clarksdale/Coahoma County Area and Comments That the Only Alternative Remaining is Using Existing US 61 as Much as Possible – The Bypass at Clarksdale was built with Interstate Type Access Control Standards with access only allowed at interchange locations. Using the Clarksdale Bypass and US 61 north of Clarksdale as much as possible is the recommendation of the majority of the public and elected leaders, and this alternative has the least overall environmental impacts of other alternatives studied in this area. The Central Alternative in the Middle Section is the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative.
- A Map of the Lula area in Coahoma County near the Welcome Center and the Tunica County Line, and Comments that the Preferred Alternative is the Central Alternative – Some advantages of the Central Alternative are: by being on new location slightly to

the east of US 61, it does not impact the highly sensitive cultural resource areas adjacent to US 61 near Lula; and this is the preferred route from the perspective of Tunica County. Some negative aspects of the Central Alternative in this area are: former State Senator Delma Furniss wanted the Western Alternative along US 61 selected because it would be closer to the Welcome Center named in his honor; the corridor costs more because it is on new location, the costs required to provide connectivity for traffic to safely cross US 61 and access the Welcome Center, and the costs required for the relocation of Crenshaw Road at its interchange with that road; and, it will have more natural resource impacts than the Western Alternative. However, based on the meeting with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History on February 3, 2004, the Central Alternative from the Lula area in Coahoma County to the Dubbs Road area in Tunica County became the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment.

COMMENT: It was agreed that former State Senator Delma Furniss should be advised that the archaeology is too significant to use the Western Alternative along US 61 in this area, that the shared Central and Eastern alternative would be used instead of the Western Alternative, and that good access to the Welcome Center would be provided from the shared Central and Eastern alternative alignment. Relative to relaying this information to the former Senator, Second District Engineer Jimmy Dickerson stated that, when requested to do so, he could meet with former State Senator Furniss and inform him of this decision.

- A Map of the Tunica County Area, and Comments that the Recommended Preferred Alternative is the Central Alternative – The Central Alternative Segment, from Dubbs Road in the southern part of Tunica County to the northern limits of the project on the SR 304 Spur where SIU 11 connects to SIU 10, is the Recommended Preferred Alternative for the following reasons: it is preferred by the majority of the elected leaders and the public; it has the least amount of wetland impacts; it serves potential economic development best, including close proximity to the new airport and the casino gaming areas; and, it impacts the least archaeology. A negative of this Central Alternative segment is it is the highest cost option due to the cost of providing access at relocated Kirby Road for the nearby gaming areas.

COMMENT: When discussing this item and the previous item, Commissioner Hall asked why there are not any alternatives along US 61 in the Tunica County portion of the study area?

ANSWER: Mr. Walker responded that alternatives in Tunica County west of US 61 were eliminated based on the human and environmental constraints and public input. He advised the Western Alternative proceeded north along US 61 to the Dundee area in Tunica County where the Western Alternative had to leave US 61 on new location to join the Central Alternative in the vicinity of Dubbs Road. The relocation to the northeast was necessary to avoid natural environmental constraints that existed along US 61 south of Dubbs Road and south of the intersection with SR 4 East. Mr. Walker advised that when after the Western Alternative joins the Central Alternative near Dubbs Road, the two alternatives pass east of Tunica and east of the Tunica Airport, which borders the eastern limits of Tunica. After passing east of the airport it would be out of direction to turn back to the northwest to join US 61 for such a short distance between Tunica and Robinsonville before the corridor would have to turn due east to avoid the development along US 61 associated with the gaming industry in the vicinity of Robinsoville. For these reasons, Mr. Walker advised the study alternatives in Tunica County were mostly on new location to the east of US 61.

Mr. Walker concluded his presentation by summarizing that the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative for SIU 11 is the Modified Central Alternative, which would use the Eastern Alternative crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista.

There was a brief discussion on whether or not the MDOT Technical Staff would address the approval of the Recommended Preferred Alternative at the meeting, and it was decided further time was needed to consider the recommendation.

As previously stated, a conflict prevented Chief Engineer Harry Lee James from attending the presentation and most of the meeting, but he did arrive as the meeting before it concluded. This gave him an opportunity to receive a copy of the handout and to briefly discuss the project with lingering attendees in small groups after the meeting.

JRS:jrs

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

August 13, 2008 – Cooperating Agency EIS Discussions

Sign-In Sheet

August 13, 2008

	Name	Location / Tel. #
1.	Robert Walker (N-S)	601-948-3071
2.	Jimmy Shirley (N-S)	601-948-3071
3.	DURWOOD P Graham	23-01 (662) 746-2513
4.	R. CHAD WALLACE (MDOT ENV)	87-01 (601) 359-7920
5.	[illegible] (MDOT ENV)	87-01 (601) 359-7920
6.	Wes Stafford	MDOT (601) 359-7124
7.	Clarborne Barnwell	MDOT 601 359-7920
8.	JOHN UNDERWOOD	MDOT 601-359-1476
9.	Jesse W. Stewart	MDOT 662-563-4541
10.	DREHER HARRIS	" " " "
11.	Stephanie Wade	FHWA 601-965-4227
12.	Cecil Vick	FHWA 601-965-4227
13.	ROBERT SEYFARTH	MDEQ 601/961-5160
14.	Kim Thurman	MDOT (601) 359-7900
15.	Adam Johnson	MDOT. 359-7875
16.	Dixie Dalton	FHWA 965-4217
17.	SUSAN JARVIS	USACE 601-631-5146
18.	Dennis Riecke	MDWFP 601-432-2207
19.	David Felder	USFWS 601 321 1139
20.	KEITH PURVIS	MDOT 601-359-7258

Sign-In Sheet

August 13, 2008

	Name	Location / Tel. #
1.	Bobby Thompson	MS LEVEE BOARD GREENVILLE 662-334-4813
2.	Val Devellis	MDOT - 662-746-2563
3.	Eric Morgan	" "
4.	Davis Abbott	MDAH-601-576-6940
5.	Ntale Kajumba	EPA 404-562-9620
6.	April Wallace	87-01 601-359-7920
7.	Linda patrick	87-01 601-359-7920
8.	Carolyn Taylor	87-01 601-359-7920
9.	Bruce Gray	87-01 -601-359-7920
10.	Ellie	87-01-601-359-7920
11.	Deenda Duke-Bizeman	USDA-NRCS
12.		
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15.		
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20.		

August 13, 2008 Meeting and Follow-up Actions

The MDOT and the Mississippi Division Office of the FHWA conducted Cooperating and Participating Agency Coordination Meetings on multiple projects on August 13-14, 2008. The separate meetings were held in the 8th Floor Conference Room at the MDOT Administrative Building, 401 North West Street, Jackson, MS. The goals of the meetings were to address the status of each of the studies and to discuss any special issues or concerns of the agencies. The studies were in various stages of development from the Final EIS distribution to having the Notice of Intent published in the Federal Register. The meeting for this study on SIU 11 of I-69 was held during the morning of August 13th.

A copy of the Final EIS for review and an approval form for the Cooperating Agencies to sign were provided to each Cooperating Agency contact prior to the meeting on August 13th. With the exception of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, all Cooperating Agencies in this study sent representation to the meeting. The Cooperating Agencies present were:

- **the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency;**
- **the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;**
- **the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;**
- **the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service;**
- **the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks; and,**
- **the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.**

Other agencies and organizations represented at the meeting:

- **the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality;**
- **the Federal Highway Administration;**
- **the MDOT Environmental Division;**
- **the MDOT Roadway Design Division;**
- **the MDOT Second District;**
- **the MDOT Third District; and**
- **Neel-Schaffer, Inc.**

MDOT Environmental Division Engineer Claiborne Barnwell presented a power point presentation on the study's history. His presentation addressed: purpose and need; status of the adjoining SIU 10 and SIU 12; project goals; development of alternatives and constraints; public, agency, and Native American involvement in the development of the alternatives; revisions made in the alignments of the alternatives to avoid natural and human environmental impacts; a follow-up independent economic study comparing benefits of the alternatives; the selected Preferred Alternative; that the selected Preferred Alternative is also the Environmentally Preferred Alternative; a summary of the alternatives' impacts; mitigation of impacts; and, the environmental commitments.

Since the study area was known to contain a large number of recorded archaeological sites and since it was assumed that the study would encounter a number of unknown sites, MDOT Staff Archaeologist John Underwood made a presentation on the study's archaeological findings and the steps taken in the alternative development to reduce the number of impacted sites.

Both Mr. Barnwell's and Mr. Underwood's presentations were informal and the attendees were encouraged to ask questions or make comments at any time during the presentations.

Table S-1 and Table S-2 were referred to by Mr. Barnwell in summarizing the impacts of the study alternatives and the Preferred Alternatives for I-69 and SR 8. For I-69, the Preferred Alternative is a modification of the Central Alternative presented in the Draft EIS at the public hearings. For SR 8, the Preferred Alternative was developed after the public hearings by combining portions of the two alternatives presented in the Draft EIS at the public hearings. Values shown in bold in Table S-1 and Table S-2 were either different than those presented in these tables at the public hearings in the Draft EIS or values that were not presented in the Draft EIS at the public hearings. The impacts referenced by Mr. Barnwell for the Preferred Alternative were shown in the extreme right portion of Table S-1. The totals for the Preferred Alternative were obtained by adding the totals for the following columns shown to the left of the Preferred Alternative:

- **Southern Section, Central**

- **SR 8, Alternative D**
- **Middle Section, Common**
- **Northern Section, Central**

Ms. Ntale Kajumba, the EPA representative, and Ms. Susan Jarvis, the Corps of Engineers representative, suggested improving Table S-1 and Table S-2 in the FEIS to better explain the Preferred Alternative impact changes that had occurred since the Central Alternative was selected as the Preferred Alternative after the public hearings. It was also suggested that more current estimated costs should be shown in these two tables and/or addressed in their footnotes.

For Table S-1 in the FEIS, Ms. Kajumba and Ms. Jarvis also suggested adding a column to the right of the Total for Preferred Alternative. The requested additional column would provide the change in values for the Preferred Alternative from the values shown in the Draft EIS for each impact category. These comparative values could be obtained by combining the I-69 Central Alternative impacts with the Pace Bypass Alternative impacts for the widening of SR 8.

In response to the requests by Ms. Kajumba, Ms. Jarvis, and others, Mr. Barnwell advised Table S-1 and Table S-2 in the Final EIS would be updated to better address their concerns.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Barnwell requested the Cooperating Agency contacts provide their signed approval sheets along with any comments to the MDOT as soon as possible. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife representative brought that agency's signed approval sheet to the meeting and gave it to the project team at the meeting. A copy of that signed approval sheet is contained in Appendix B.

In the weeks after the meeting, signed approval sheets without cover letters and one with a cover letter that did not require a response were received from the following Cooperating Agencies: the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks; and, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. A copy of each of these three approval

sheets and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers cover letter is contained in Appendix B.

After the meeting, the MDOT contacted the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) regarding signing their Cooperating Agency Approval Sheet. The USDA-NRCS referenced a previous letter mailed to the Mississippi Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration dated July 11, 2008. The letter stated in part: "After reviewing the document, NRCS has determined that no WRP easements will be impacted by the preferred alternative. Since the agency will not be impacted, we have no reservations with the project and request to be removed as a cooperating agency." A copy of the July 11, 2008, letter and the unsigned approval sheet is contained in Appendix B.

As stated previously, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) did not send representation to the meeting. After the meeting, Mr. Barnwell contacted HUD and was informed that their representative in the study retired and was not replaced. They stated that HUD had no interest in continuing as a cooperating agency in the study. A copy of their unsigned approval sheet is contained in Appendix B.

Of the original cooperating agencies, the one remaining cooperating agency whose approval of the FEIS needs addressing is the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA signed their approval sheet and provided suggested comments for inclusion in the FEIS or Record of Decision (ROD). A copy of the signed approval sheet is contained in Appendix B.

Based on the actions taken in response to this Cooperating Agency Meeting, the approval sheet at the front of this document was revised to two sheets. The first sheet lists the following as Cooperating Agencies: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks; and, Mississippi Department of Archives and History. The second sheet contains the scanned approval signatures.

The comments received from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for consideration in the FEIS were mainly listed under the categories of Aquatic Resources, Noise, Alternatives, or Summary of Impacts.

Under Aquatic Resources, the first EPA comment advised the tables and narration in the FEIS support the selection of the preferred alignment as potentially impacting the fewest federally jurisdiction waters of the United States.

The second EPA comment under Aquatic Resources concerned minimization of impacts. It stated the preliminary FEIS provided only generic language addressing nationally accepted typical unlimited access roadways that meet the Federal Highways Administrations safety requirements when crossing environmentally sensitive locations that would include not only the federal and state wildlife preserves, management areas, parks and reserves, but would include waters of the United States. The comment referenced specific waters of the United States identified in the preliminary FEIS were open water channels and lakes; submerged and emergent aquatic vegetation; and wetlands adjacent to these waters. The comment identified five specific minimization steps in order of preference for consideration when crossing waters of the United States. The following are the five suggested minimization steps and the actions that will be taken in response to the suggestions:

1. **bridging with scuppers avoided in all bridge designs;**

   RESPONSE: There are several existing bridges that will not be reconstructed in the initial construction phase; however, should any of these bridges be modified, consideration will be given for eliminating use of scuppers. Scuppers will not be included in the bridge designs for the proposed interstate except where determined to be the only practical way to safely handle the drainage.

2. **reduction of required right-of-way by combining outside guard rails combined with vertical wall or 3:1 slopes with approximately 24' wide inside medians with Jersey barriers separating the two directions of traffic;**

   RESPONSE: The location of I-69 SIU 11 is almost entirely through the rural Mississippi Delta where design standards are used to meet drivers' anticipations of long tangents, excellent visibility, wide shoulders, flat roadway slopes and low embankments. This type facility instills a distinct feeling of safety in the drivers. Implementing design features such as narrower medians, guard rails, steeper slopes, vertical walls and median barriers to lessen the footprint of the roadway and reduce right-of-way impacts would deviate from the desired design standards and could be detrimental to driver safety.

   This facility will utilize portions of existing roadways constructed to the proposed typical section and will connect to the similarly constructed SIU 10. Creating an hourglass configuration at the bridge locations would conflict with driver expectations and could compromise safety. Median barriers are seldom used in a rural setting unless to minimize extraordinary environmental or social impacts, none of which have been identified by any of the participating agencies or stakeholders. Narrowing the median through use of Jersey Barriers at bridged locations would only minimally reduce the filled areas.

   Except in the transition for the guard rail end section, the embankment design for the new interstate bridges will provide 3:1 slopes behind the guard rails.

3. **all bridge and road stormwater run-off collected over waters of the United States and 100-year flood plain are to be directed to retention/detention ponds constructed in upland areas outside the 100-year flood plain;**

RESPONSE: Again, this segment of I-69 traverses through the Mississippi Delta where agriculture is the predominant industry. Table 4-20 lists the land uses for the study alternatives as almost entirely cropland with the Preferred Alternative impacting 7,892 acres of cropland. Upland Scrub/Shrub constitutes 29 acres of the Preferred Alternative. Very few ponds that are not naturally formed exist in this area. Retention ponds would be counter productive to and conflict with the drainage requirements for crop management.

Transmission of surface water by man-made means into ponds is practically impossible; in the Delta this is especially true due to the 'flat' terrain. Directing stormwater into retention/detention ponds considering the limited amount of upland areas could, in most cases, only be accomplished by mechanical means. This would be economically unfeasible to establish & more so to maintain.

The practice of collecting bridge and road stormwater and directing it to retention/detention ponds outside the 100 year floodplain has not been undertaken by any of the southeastern states (FHWA performed a poll of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, South Carolina, West Virginia) with the exception of Florida that has utilized detention ponds for some but not all projects.

During design, a commitment will be included to consider the construction of detention/retention ponds for stormwater run-off where such a system would make a measurable difference in water quality, function without mechanical components, and require reasonable degree of maintenance.

4. **wildlife crossing associated with all palustrine forested riparian waters of the United States;**

RESPONSE: The concern for wildlife crossings associated with palustrine forested riparian waters was one of the early issues coordinated with EPA & USF&W in the development of this EIS. From the earliest scoping meetings migration routes, mostly associated with the Mississippi River, were identified. As the alternative routes were developed a commitment to not separate Dahomey Wildlife Refuge from the Mississippi River was made. Furthermore, during the development and refinement of the alternatives considered viable to carry forward, all of their locations continually moved further to the east, not only east of SR 1 but even east of US 61 north of Clarksdale, minimizing the infringements on the migration routes identified as being of concern.

When these areas are crossed by a hydraulic bridge structure adequate means for wildlife to cross will be available. Fencing along the right of way will also guide wildlife to all available crossings of the interstate.

5. **aquatic and aquatic dependent fish and wildlife movement and migration through any culverts will include inverted designs, i.e., below grade with appropriate gravel sized substrate placed above the culvert bottom to historical grade elevation.**

   RESPONSE: To accommodate aquatic and aquatic dependent fish and wildlife movement and migration installation of culverts will include inverted designs. Flat grades and low velocities of channel flow in conjunction with the soil types in the Delta will create a natural substrate by siltation in a very short time. Therefore, the gravel substrate would not provide any useful benefit.

The third EPA comment under Aquatic Resources suggested the commitments to bridge over specific waters of the United States and 100-year floodplains be identified and included in the FEIS and/or ROD.

RESPONSE: During the preliminary design, sufficient hydraulic engineering studies will be performed and shared with the regulatory agencies to determine which waters of the United States and 100-year floodplains will be bridged. When developing the cost estimates for this study's alternatives, the existing roadway drainage structures provided upstream and downstream of proposed crossings were reviewed. If a three or more span hydraulic bridge was provided either upstream or downstream, it was assumed that a bridge would be required at the alternative's proposed crossing. In response to this EPA Comment, Table 8-1 was developed to indicate known bridge crossings for the Preferred Alternative. The future hydraulic engineering studies may determine other locations where bridges are needed.

The fourth EPA comment under Aquatic Resources suggested that the FEIS disclose how mitigation for unavoidable stream impacts will likely be addressed for a more complete evaluation during the NEPA process. As part of this comment, the EPA advised a main consideration regarding the compensatory mitigation will be the State 303(d) listed water bodies (i.e., Harris Bayou, Hushpuckena River, and Coldwater) that may be impacted by the proposed project and a very strong desire to compensate in the watershed to replace the loss of water quality benefits provided to these waterbodies by the unavoidable impact to waters of the United States by this activity.

RESPONSE: Impacted streams will be mitigated as part of the 404/401 permit process. In accordance with the EPA's suggestions, it is anticipated that mitigation would consist of restoration of streams within the same watershed using a ratio to be determined through negotiation between MDOT and permitting agencies.

The EPA comment under Noise noted that five receptor locations will be impacted by noise at levels that exceed the noise abatement criteria or the substantial increase criteria. EPA noted that according to the preliminary FEIS these structures will not be relocated, but an earthen berm is being considered in one location. EPA commented that it supports the need for noise mitigation and suggests that given the limited number of locations where EPA believes noise

mitigation is needed relative to the magnitude of the overall project, additional noise mitigation should be included. For example, possible noise minimization efforts used by the EPA in their comment included insulating individual receptor locations-windows, doors, etc. for installing air conditioning units at impacted sites.

RESPONSE: If a noise barrier analysis determines that a barrier is not justified, The Code of Federal Regulations allow Federal Funding to be used for noise mitigation measures only for public buildings. None of the five impacted receptor locations are public buildings. MDOT's Noise Policy does not provide for noise abatement measures for the five units identified as exceeding noise abatement criteria. This project traverses some 120 miles with a minimum of impacted properties and noise abatement measures are not considered warranted.

The EPA comment under Alternatives suggested that Page S-8 in the Summary which discusses proposed improvements to SR 8 should fully summarize these changes; it should indicate that SR 8 is being widened from a 2-lane section to five and four-lane sections; and, the length of this improvement should also be included in the Summary.

RESPONSE: The EPA's requested changes have been addressed.

The first EPA comment under Summary of Impacts is that the Summary of Impacts indicates a comparison of the impacts of each section of the proposed alternatives. The comment addressed the modifications made to the preferred alternative following the DEIS. The EPA requested that changes in impacts from draft to final should be made clear in the footnote. For example, the EPA pointed out that the DEIS indicates that 68 acres of wetlands will be impacted by this alternative, while the FEIS shows 106 acres of wetlands impacts.

RESPONSE: The footnote(s) to the Summary of Impacts tables have been revised to better explain the changes in impacts from draft to final.

The second EPA comment under Summary of Impacts requested that updated cost estimates be included in the summary of impacts table.

RESPONSE: The summary of impacts tables have been revised to provide updated cost estimates.

Melinda L. McGrath
Deputy Executive Director/
Chief Engineer

Brenda Znachko
Deputy Executive Director/
Administration

MDOT
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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March 25, 2009

Ms. Ntale Kajumba
Atlanta Federal Ctr, NEPA Prgm 13th Flr
61 Forsyth Street
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Re: Interstate 69, SIU 11, Environmental Impact Statement
Coahoma, Bolivar, and Tunica Counties, Mississippi

Dear Ms. Kajumba:

In response to your concerns expressed following the August 2008 Scoping Meeting we are providing the attached information. The format we chose includes a complete synopsis of the meeting and then addresses directly the points you presented. This report then will become a part of the final documentation of the FEIS.

This chapter is the last remaining task before requesting approval for distribution of the FEIS from Federal Highway.

Please call if any additional information is needed or if you wish to discuss any aspect of the responses.

Sincerely,

E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer

Cc: Dickie Walters, Federal Highway Administration

enclosures

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

July 11, 2001 scoping meeting – minutes
August 29, 2001 EPA meeting – minutes
April 2, 2002 agency meeting – minutes
May 8, 2002 agency meeting – minutes
August 16, 2002 National conference – minutes
September 4-5, 2002 Native American meeting – minutes
September 4-5, 2002 Mayors meeting – minutes
February 11-13, 2004 Native American conference – minutes
November 2003 – March 2005 Native American consultations and agency coordination
August 13, 2008 – Cooperating and Participating Agency Discussions

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

July 11, 2001 scoping meeting – minutes

MINUTES
JULY 11, 2001 – SCOPING MEETING
INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY #11

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted a Scoping Meeting at 1:30 PM on Wednesday, July 11, 2001, in Clarksdale at Clarksdale High School. This meeting's purpose was to solicit views from Federal, State, and local agencies – as well as private organizations or groups – which by law, interest, or expertise can assist the project planners with the timely identification of economic, social, and environmental opportunities and constraints within the study area. Utilizing environmental streamlining and a shared decisionmaking process, the project planners will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project. In order for environmental streamlining and a shared decisionmaking process to be effective, early lines of communication must be established and those lines of communication must be maintained throughout the process. This meeting formally initiated the environmental streamlining and shared decisionmaking process for this project.

In their invitation packet to the Scoping Meeting, the invitees were provided a map of the project's corridor study area and the agenda for the meeting. The invitees were requested to provide pertinent information they may have in their areas of expertise to the project planners. Since the length of the study corridor is approximately 100 miles, optional field visits were conducted on Thursday, July 12. These optional field visits offered a tour and viewing of a portion of the project area. The field visits also offered the invitees an opportunity to locate their specific concerns for the project planners. A list of the attendees at this meeting is attached.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the Mississippi Department of Transportation welcomed everyone to the Scoping Meeting for this project on Interstate 69 from State Highway 304 near Robinsonville in Tunica County to State Highway 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County. He encouraged innovation and consensus building from the large and diverse audience representing various human resources, natural resources, and political entities. Mr. Barnwell requested their input and the sharing of information to locate the best alternates that satisfy the needs of the people and the environmental interests.

Mr. Barnwell stated that as the MDOT Environmental Engineer on this project, he would ensure the document complies with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requirements for approval. NEPA requires this Scoping Meeting and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project. An EIS is the most comprehensive environmental document required for an environmental impact under NEPA. Sometimes, you cannot avoid all significant impacts. In such cases, one must conduct an EIS to satisfy the NEPA requirements and proceed with the project. This EIS process will follow the selection of different alternatives and the formulation of a matrix to determine the best alternative for the people and the environment. Early involvement, especially with the resource agencies, in analyzing impacts and working toward consensual agreement is important. This will save time by reducing some of the duplication of effort required to arrive at a consensus.

This Scoping Meeting was unusual due to the large number of people involved. The MDOT sent invitations to known agencies, governments, and individuals that have a direct and influential impact on the project. Public meetings will be held as part of the EIS process to address the desires of the general public.

MDOT hosts a website (goMDOT.com) where a link will be available to this I-69 project's website (msdoti69.com). The msdoti69.com website will provide continuous updates on the status of this I-69 project. Individuals interested in logging on to the msdoti69.com website will have the option of logging on directly or through the goMDOT.com website.

To closely monitor the work on the EIS for this project, a steering committee was established. This committee meets several times each month.

This initial Scoping Meeting has many purposes, which include:

- Obtain input from agencies/entities on what to avoid or take into account;
- Provide means for early and frequent communication of inputs from those favoring or opposing acceptable alternatives;
- Establish methods to facilitate and negotiate routes and alternatives;
- Evaluate need to change the project's scope of work based on inputs and comment sheets;
- Initiate the scoping process by laying the groundwork for future meetings with specific agencies or groups

Transcontinental I-69 Corridor History

Mr. Cecil Vick, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Environmental Coordinator for the Mississippi Division Office, gave a presentation on the history and significance of Corridor 18/I-69. To address the large volume of freight being moved from Canada to Mexico, a modal analysis study was performed from the South (Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas) to the North (Port Huron, Michigan) considering alternate modes of transportation. Those modes included rail, air and highways. The consensus of the report was that freight carried over highways by truck is the preferred mode for the transportation of goods across the country.

Since 1991, Congress has supported this initiative through legislation. That legislation includes the Intermodal Surface Transportation Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the National Highway System Designation Act (NHWSDA), and the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21), which provided the necessary funding for this EIS.

The I-69 Statement of Overall Purpose determined that the I-69 is needed for the following reasons:

- To improve international and interstate trade in accordance with national and state goals;
- To facilitate economic development in accordance with state, regional and local policies and plans;
- To improve surface transportation consistent with national, state, regional and local needs and with the congressional designation of the corridor.

The I-69 Steering Committee performed an Independent Study of the 1,600 mile length. Wilbur Smith and HNTB completed that study in 1999. Parts of the highway are already constructed and the remaining area was separated into Sections of Independent Utilities (SIUs), which if constructed alone, would work independently of the other 32 sections identified in the study. This EIS is being prepared for SIU # 11. This study has a strong freight component in response to the North American Free Trade Agreement of 1992 (NAFTA). The 2020 truck flow estimated in the study revealed the need for a major long haul truck route for Latin American Trade from Mexico to the industrial north/northeast sections of the United States and Canada.

This EIS is being prepared to satisfy NEPA requirements, which includes route location and its major design components (interchanges, frontage roads, etc.). NEPA's purpose is to collect data on the people and natural resources to best decide where the highway should be located. Unlike some EIS NEPA processes in the past, this location process will be conducted to determine concurrently the location and conceptual design of I-69. Other important aspects of this EIS

process will be to discuss the economic development potential for I-69 and to incorporate this highway system into the ongoing Delta Initiative.

The FHWA/NEPA Approval Process includes:

- National Purpose and Need – Previously Approved;
- Modal Choice – Previously Approved;
- Establish Sections of Independent Utility – Previously Approved;
- Establish Location/Conceptual Design – Determined through this EIS with concentration on design.

Challenges to this EIS include accelerated project management, conceptual design, and shared decisionmaking. To overcome these challenges, issues must be addressed early, frequently, and decisions made consensually.

I-69 Section of Independent Utility (SIU) # 11 Project Overview

Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the Neel-Schaffer Team, delivered an overview of this I-69 project on SIU # 11. A map was presented delineating the area comprising SIU # 11. The points of northern and southern termini were discussed as determined by the SIU study. The northern terminus or point of beginning is SR 304 east of Robinsonville. The southern terminus or the end point will be near the town of Benoit and will be coordinated with the on-going Great River Crossing study. These two points will be used to develop a minimum of three alternatives for further study.

Study Approach and Progress Schedule

Next, Mr. Jimmy Shirley of the Neel-Schaffer Team discussed the project approach and schedule. The project approach hinges on performing engineering and environmental studies in order to prepare conceptual plans and environmental documents of alternative locations for a portion of I-69 in Mississippi. The study is required to comply with NEPA, FHWA TA 6640.8A and applicable Executive Orders. As discussed previously, the environmental document will be an Environmental Impact Statement. The project will extend from SR 304, east of Robinsonville in Tunica County, to SR 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County (Approximately 100 Miles).

The basic design parameters will involve the Rural Interstate Standards and 2030 Design Year Traffic. Key elements in the production of this EIS are environmental streamlining and shared decisionmaking. The success of this EIS

will be dependent upon early and efficient coordination with regulatory agencies, governments, and the public.

The project will be accomplished in the following three phases:

1. Development, Evaluation, and Refinement of Preliminary Corridor Alternates
2. Preparing Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
3. Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD)

The Development, Evaluation, and Refinement of Preliminary Corridor Alternates Phase includes:

Development and Evaluation of Preliminary Corridor Alternates

- Kick off Meeting
- Base Mapping
- Identify Opportunities and Constraints
- Establish Initial Project Contacts
- Design Criteria and Conceptual Design
- Environmental Scoping Meeting
- Native American Consultation
- Establish Website (msdoti69.com)
- Define Some Wide-Banded Possible Alternatives
- Public Meetings
- Website Update

Traffic Analysis and Wide-Banded Alternate Refinements

- Alternate Refinement
- Future Traffic Projections
- Alternate Traffic Analysis

Alternate Evaluation Studies

- Determine Feasibility of Alternates
- Right-of-Way Requirements
- Construction and Maintenance Cost Estimates
- Develop Evaluation Matrix
- Public Meetings
- Website Update

The Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Phase includes:

Develop Selected Alternates

- Selected Alternates Traffic Analysis
- Revised Cost Estimates for Selected Alternates
- Website Update

Preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- Assemble and summarize information as required by NEPA and FHWA TA 6640.8A
- Conduct further detailed environmental evaluations
- Address Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Properties
- Conduct Phase 1 cultural resource survey for each alternate
- Develop Evaluation Matrix
- Submit Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Approval
- Public Hearings
- Website Update

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) Phase includes:

- Selection of Preferred Alternate
- Wetlands/Jurisdictional Waters Delineation and Report
- Prepare Final EIS and ROD
- Website Update

Initial Environmental Screening Findings

Natural Resources

Mr. Larry Meisner, who is with the Neel-Schaffer Team, spoke about issues concerning the natural resources and human environment of SIU # 11. These type studies of the natural and human resources typically involve two phases. The first phase is a screening process using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) databases, other desktop resources, and supplements from other agencies. Some natural resources may include oxbow lakes, wetlands, ponds, floodplains, and other environmentally sensitive areas. Some of the human environment concerns may be cities and towns, farmland, hazardous materials,

churches, cemeteries or cultural resources, and, something that is relatively new in the human environment, environmental justice. Several exhibits were on display showing types of information gathered during the initial efforts of this study. Those displays included:

- I-69 Typical Section;
- Aerial Photograph Map;
- Percent Minority Population Map;
- Median Household Income Map; and,
- Environmental Consequences Map.

Cultural Resources

Mr. David Kelley of the Neel-Schaffer Team spoke about the initial efforts concerning cultural resources. Data is currently being gathered on archeological sites and historical structures. This area is somewhat unique in that it is one of the most densely populated archaeological site areas in North America. The initial objective is to identify the known or existing sites and avoid these areas. An archeological survey will then be performed along the proposed right-of-ways to identify any unknown areas. Historical structures will be identified and this information will be used in determining the alternative routes. Finally, areas that may be traditional cultural properties (e.g., sacred ritual areas, a particular stand of trees, or a river used as a baptistery) will be screened and their significance reviewed and documented. Once alternatives are selected for the DEIS, a Phase 1 archeological study will be performed on the selected alternatives. After the preferred alternative is selected, all cultural resources along the preferred alternative will be further evaluated.

Community Involvement Outreach

Mr. Ken Weeden, who is with the Neel-Schaffer Team, spoke about environmental justice and community outreach. Mr. Weeden was born in Tunica County and is very aware of the environmental justice issues in the Delta.

Studies were conducted in the mid-80's which revealed that a disproportionate number of facilities with adverse environmental impacts were being located in areas of low income and high minority populations. Executive Order No. 12898 addressed this justice issue and made environmental justice an integral part of the NEPA EIS process.

There are four major points of this Community Outreach task:

1. Seek to identify disproportionate/adverse impact through an assessment;
2. Seek to avoid and/or mitigate the disproportionate/adverse impact;
3. Seek to ensure full/fair participation by the communities through outreach; and,
4. Seek to ensure fair distribution of impact or benefits of the project.

Part of the proposed outreach program will include identifying the minorities and low income community leaders and meeting with the leaders of the communities in the study area counties. The purpose of these meetings will be input, feedback, and the collection of additional cultural information. Ultimately, several individuals identified through the community outreach will be asked to participate in an I-69 environmental justice task force for this EIS.

Agency Coordination Plans

The FHWA is the lead agency for this EIS. Mr. Cecil Vick advised letters would be sent to the appropriate resource agencies inviting those agencies to be cooperating agencies in the development of this EIS.

Group Discussion of Questions

Finally, Mr. Robert Walker opened the floor for any general questions or comments the guests may have concerning the I-69 project. Mr. Cecil Vick and Mr. Claiborne Barnwell reminded those attending to please submit their comments in writing so that they can be made a part of the EIS record.

Question: How many alternatives are to be considered?
Answer: A minimum of three alternatives will be considered.

Question: Why is Parchman a boundary?
Answer: Parchman is the eastern edge of the study area for this EIS and outside of the study area as determined by the Corridor 18 Study.

Question: Is funding in place through 2004 or will additional funding be necessary?
Answer: Funding is in place through 2004 for the EIS.

Question: Will this section be ready for a construction contract by 2010?
Answer: It could take 10 years or more to complete the necessary actions before a construction contract could be let. Additional funding will be needed to complete those necessary actions and additional funding will be needed to let any construction contracts.

Comment: Several of the attendees commented that the I-69 should be placed near their towns to allow their areas a stronger chance for economic development.

Question: Will MDA (Mississippi Development Authority) be invited to participate in the I-69 process?
Answer: MDA has been notified of the I-69 project and they may be a formal or informal participant.

Question: Would it be helpful to get the communities' input on the location of the I-69?
Answer: Yes. Please submit your comments in writing.

Optional Field Trip (Thursday, July 12, 2001)

Information was announced for the optional field trip scheduled for the day following the Scoping Meeting. A visit to a portion of the study area south of Clarksdale was scheduled for the morning and north of Clarksdale for the afternoon. A headcount was taken to verify adequate transportation would be available for field trip participants.

Closing

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell closed by commenting that the exhibits already have a large amount of information on them and that these maps will only become more complex. The overall intent is to manage the information, weigh the needs of the communities, and make a sound decision while understanding the difficulties and challenges of finding the preferred alternative.

After Mr. Barnwell made his closing statements and dismissed the audience, representatives of the FHWA, MDOT, and the Neel-Schaffer Team were available to discuss the project with those from the audience who remained.

Field Trip (Thursday, July 12, 2001)

The following people attended all or part of the morning field trip to a portion of the study area south of Clarksdale: Ms. Ntale Kajumba and Ms. Stacy Fehlenberg, representing the Environmental Protection Agency; Messrs. Alex Levy and David Sullivan, representing the Federal Highway Administration – Southern Resource Center; Mr. Early Ewing, Jr., representing the Town of Benoit; Mr. Scot Luth, representing the Cleveland – Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Bob Eley, the Bolivar County Engineer; Messrs. Edgar Donahoe and Barry Bryant, Sunflower County supervisors; Ms. Lavelle Fitch and Mr. Ken Weeden, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Ken Weeden & Associates, Inc.); Messrs. David Kelley and Rich Weinstein and Ms. Renee' Badon, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Coastal Environments, Inc.); Mr. Larry Meisner and Ms. Beth Reed, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.); Messrs. Mark Bailey, Robert Walker, David Ruhl, and Jimmy Shirley, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Neel-Schaffer, Inc.).

The morning tour followed US 61 South from Clarksdale in Coahoma County into Bolivar County, around Shelby, Winstonville, Mound Bayou and Merigold, and on to SR 8 at Cleveland; SR 8 East into Sunflower County and on to Dockery; SR 8 West back to Bolivar County and Cleveland and on to Rosedale; SR 1 South to SR 446; SR 446 East to the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge; SR 446 West back to SR 1; SR 1 South to Benoit; Litton Road to the Shaw-Skene Road to Skene and on to SR 8 just west of Cleveland; SR 8 East to US 61 at Cleveland; US 61 North from Cleveland in Bolivar County to Clarksdale in Coahoma County.

This morning tour provided the group the opportunity to see the four-lane section of US 61 that is open to traffic and under construction between Clarksdale and Cleveland. Possible opportunities and constraints for using portions of this route between Clarksdale and the turnoff to the Renova community, located between Merigold and Cleveland, were discussed. The east and west limits of the study area along SR 8 were observed by stopping at Dockery in Sunflower County and by traveling to SR 1 at Rosedale in Bolivar County. The built-up area along SR 8 to the east of Cleveland extends to near the Bolivar/Sunflower County Line. The built-up area along SR 8 to the west of Cleveland extends to near the turnoff to Bayou Academy. The industrial park, port, and state park are obvious constraints at Rosedale. Due to these constraints and the location of the built-up area at Rosedale, it appears the western limits of any alternative for I-69 near Rosedale should be to the east of Rosedale. Any alternative that is developed along SR 1 and impacts the Town of Beulah, should probably bypass the Town. A visit on SR 446 to Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge afforded the group the opportunity to see one of the major project constraints. In the vicinity of Benoit, Mr. Ewing used his knowledge of the area to show the group where the HNTB I-69 Mississippi River Bridge Crossing Study on SIU # 12 will intersect SR 1 for their northern alternative under consideration. The I-69 intersection that is

eventually approved at SR 1 for the HNTB study will become a control for our study on SIU # 11, and impact the southern termini for our EIS. Mr. Ewing also showed the group a crop dusting operation near Benoit that could be a constraint to our study. In Skene, we observed an abandoned school that could be a constraint to our study.

The only person requesting the field trip in the afternoon to a portion of the study area north of Clarksdale was Mr. Ken Murphree, the County Administrator for Tunica County. The Neel-Schaffer Team made arrangements to meet Mr. Murphree at Tunica and tour his areas of concern. The following people made the tour with Mr. Murphree: Mr. Larry Meisner and Ms. Beth Reed, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Kimley-Horn & Associates Inc.); Messrs. Mark Bailey, Robert Walker, David Ruhl, and Jimmy Shirley, representing the Neel-Schaffer Team (Neel-Schaffer, Inc.).

In the Tunica area, Mr. Murphree showed us the following: a minority community located east of US 61 and north of SR 4, the expansion of the Tunica Airport that is under construction, an old abandoned landfill, and the new operating landfill. We viewed the northern limits of our study area. That termini is the intersection of existing SR 304 with a spur that will connect existing SR 304 with a new fully controlled access section of 304. Both the spur and the new section of SR 304 are under construction. The short distance between the intersections of existing SR 304 with the spur, the railroad, and SR 3 are constraints for our study.

Comments Received Through July 27, 2001, in Response to the Scoping Meeting

Comment: One of the comment cards received at the Scoping Meeting only made reference to the air conditioning malfunction during the Scoping Meeting.

Comment: Mr. Gary Fratesi of Indianola signed a comment card received at the Scoping Meeting. He wants to keep the south portion of this section of I-69 as far south and east as possible to better serve the larger populated areas.

Comment: A letter – signed by Mr. W.W. Gresham, Jr., for the City of Indianola, Sunflower County, the Town of Ruleville, the City of Greenwood, and Leflore County – was presented at the Scoping Meeting. The letter also supported an alternative that went south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and east of Cleveland.

Comment: Mr. David Sullivan, the Planning and Environment Team Leader for the Federal Highway Administration Southern Resource Center, attended the Scoping Meeting. He wants the impacted or impaired streams to be identified. Mr. Sullivan believes this EIS contains a lot of potential for stream restoration or mitigation by removing dams from these streams.

Comment: After the Scoping Meeting, the Clarksdale-Coahoma County Chamber sent a letter to Mr. Robert Walker at Neel-Schaffer. Their letter supported using the US 61 Bypass for I-69 around Clarksdale. The letter also supported using the four-lane section of US 61 north and south of Clarksdale as much as possible for I-69.

Comment: After the Scoping Meeting, Mr. Ken Murphree, the Chairman of the Transportation Committee for Delta Council, faxed a letter to Neel-Schaffer. Delta Council supports an alternative that will provide the most economic, social, and environmental benefits for the Delta region, while offering safety for the traveling public and commerce.

Comment: After the Scoping Meeting, Dr. David E. Lee, who is with the Sunflower County Economic Development District, mailed a comment card to Mr. Robert Walker, the I-69 Project Manager at Neel-Schaffer. On behalf of the Economic Development Board and a survey of citizens, Dr. Lee requested I-69 be located on the east side of Cleveland, Mississippi.

Comment: After the Scoping Meeting, Mr. Heinz Mueller, who is with the United States Environmental Protection Agency in their Region 4 Office in Atlanta, mailed a letter to Mr. Robert Walker. As Chief of the Office of Environmental Assessment for the Environmental Accountability Division, Mr. Mueller stated, "EPA's review of a prospective National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document will consist of examination of the proposed projects environmental impact on the water quality, air quality, natural resources, and socio-economic issues. Without more specific project information, it is not possible to provide detailed comments; however, the information provided in the attachment lists the contents of a NEPA document and may assist you in the preparation of a document. These topics should be addressed at a minimum commensurate with the project setting and magnitude of the impacts." His attachment topics contained comments on: project need, alternatives, wetlands, water quality, cultural resources, biodiversity, endangered species, cumulative impacts, noise, environmental justice, and air quality. For further questions or concerns, Mr. Mueller advised Mr. Walker to contact Ms. Ntale Kajumba at (404) 562-9620.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

August 29, 2001 EPA meeting – minutes

I-69 SIU # 11
Meeting with EPA Region 4
August 29, 2001

Meeting Minutes

Prepared By: Larry Meisner, Colleen Dunlevy Date Prepared: September 7, 2001

The following people attended this meeting: Colleen Dunlevy, Stacy Fehlenberg

During the meeting, the EPA provided KHA with additional GIS data for the I-69 project. The data included Primary Ecological Areas (PEAs), the product of GIS analysis of various environmental layers. PEAs are "areas of ecological significance" including hubs and connections, as was discussed at the meeting in Memphis. The EPA is currently working on the connections and will provide those at a later date, but PEA hubs were included in the GIS data given to KHA.

The Southeastern US Ecological Framework was completed a few years ago by the EPA in conjunction with researchers at University of Florida, where the research was begun. The I-69 corridor PEA analysis was based on the methods used in the Southeastern Framework. Base pixel size for the PEA analysis was 90m and environmental layers included land cover, forested areas, animal habitat, and others. Analysis extracted areas that were ecologically sensitive or highly valuable. Identifying these areas early in the planning process may present the planner with opportunities to avoid or minimize impacts to the PEAs. Because of the 90m pixel size, the EPA data is suitable for large area screening analysis rather than detailed impact assessment.

Data provided by EPA included the finished PEAs as well as some supporting layers used during GIS analysis to produce the final PEAs. Connecting corridors or links will be finished later this year. Links connecting the PEAs would provide wildlife with corridors to move from one PEA to another. These links may cross agricultural or other disturbed areas. Disturbed areas within PEAs may serve as potential mitigation sites that could link the PEAs.

Stacy will meet with Jerry Holden of Ducks Unlimited to discuss data that DU has produced. Some of that data may have been produced from data obtained from the Forestry service and may, therefore, be made available to the Forestry Service. If that is the case, Stacy will be able to share the data with others.

The USGS has recently revised their digital elevation mapping (DEM) program and is in the process of analyzing the DEM data for "sinks" or depressional areas. These depressional areas will likely correspond with wetland areas. The EPA began their own analysis of the DEM data but stopped when they discovered that the USGS would be doing the same processing for the entire country. USGS may charge for the DEM data. The EPA will check with USGS to see if the I-69 area has been finished. If so, they will request the data and pass it along. It is unclear when USGS will finish processing the data.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

April 2, 2002 agency meeting – minutes

MINUTES
AGENCY SCOPING MEETING
APRIL 2, 2002

INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY # 11
BETWEEN SR 304 EAST OF ROBINSONVILLE IN TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
AND SR 1 NEAR BENOIT IN BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted this meeting at 9:00 AM in the MDOT Auditorium in Downtown Jackson. This meeting's purpose was to update the Cooperating Agencies, as well as other key governmental agencies, on the status of the project and to obtain the agencies input on the alternative alignments being studied. Input from these agencies is needed to assist the MDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the consultant team in further refining the number of alternatives to move forward for more detailed study.

In a packet that was mailed prior to the meeting, the invitees were provided a map of the alternate alignments, an environmental screening analysis of the alignments, and a copy of the Draft Purpose and Need. In the mailing, the invitees were asked to review that information prior to the meeting. By using this approach, the agencies were provided a good opportunity to prepare for discussing their issues on these alignments at the meeting.

The length of the study corridor is approximately 100 miles and optional field trips were part of the initial Environmental Scoping Meeting conducted in Clarksdale on July 11, 2001. For these reasons, field trips were not planned for this meeting. However, if any agency wanted a field visit to review their concern(s), they were advised in their invitation letter that a visit would be scheduled for a later date.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the MDOT, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some brief opening comments on working together in a spirit of cooperation on this important project. At his request, the 31 people attending this meeting introduced themselves and whom they were representing at the meeting. The Federal governmental agencies represented were: the Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE); the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the FHWA; and the US Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The state governmental agencies represented were; the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWF&P); the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH); the MDOT; and the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD). The consultant team for this project on Section 11 had representatives from Neel-Schaffer, Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., and Coastal Environments Incorporated. The HNTB consultant team for the adjacent project on Section 12 also sent a representative to the meeting.

Mr. Barnwell advised this 100-mile section of I-69 is one of the 32 sections of the I-69 transcontinental project that would connect Canada to Mexico. He stated it has been years since the original interstate system was constructed, and said the I-69 transcontinental project is of the same order of magnitude as the original interstate system. Therefore, a high priority has been assigned to the I-69 environmental work. Mr. Barnwell stated this project on Section 11 is the largest single environmental contract the MDOT has ever awarded. He emphasized the importance of developing the best alternates that satisfy the needs of the people and the environment for study in the draft document. With a commitment of working together in an efficient and timely manner throughout the life of this project, Mr. Barnwell believes the proper and best decision will be made on selecting the preferred alternative in the final document.

Mr. Wendel Ruff, the Assistant Chief Engineer over Preconstruction for the MDOT, provided some comments. He also welcomed the attendees and that he was impressed with the turnout. Mr. Ruff stated his belief that the success for this project was in attendance at this meeting. He advised the MDOT is entering a new era of looking at projects differently. The MDOT is reaching out and seeking input at the beginning of project development, rather than waiting to the end. Mr. Ruff advised that now is the time to address question, problems, and concerns. He encouraged working together as a team to meet this mission.

Mr. Andy Hughes, the Division Administrator for the FHWA, provided his opening comments. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated his support of the opening remarks that Mr. Ruff and Mr. Barnwell had made. Mr. Hughes specifically reinforced the previous remarks concerning working together in a spirit of cooperation.

Mr. Barnwell advised the meeting is informal, and that the purpose of the meeting is to seek input and direction from the agencies. He stated some alternative alignments are not expected to be selected for further study, and that some alternative alignments made need adjusting before they are studied further. Mr. Barnwell believes the consultant team has done a good job to date in developing these initial alternatives. Although the interests of the agencies were considered in the development of these initial alternatives, he believes now is the time to concentrate on the details of modifying, adding, or reducing the initial alternatives. He then turned the program over to Mr. Walker.

Project Background, Schedule, and Status

Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the consultant team, advised the attendees of the progress that had been made on this project since the initial Environmental Scoping Meeting was conducted last year in Clarksdale. The one-mile wide corridors presented at the prior scoping meeting were studied further. Some corridors were added and some corridors were slightly modified. The widths of the revised corridors were then narrowed from one mile to 1,000 feet. Nine general corridors were located, and an environmental screening analysis was conducted on the anticipated right of way that would be required within those nine corridors that had a width of 1,000 feet. The mapping of the nine corridors and the environmental screening analysis spreadsheet were included in the mailing invitation packet for this meeting.

After the comments received in response to this meeting are evaluated, Mr. Walker stated the intent is to shorten the list of alignments from nine to three. He asked that the agencies furnish their comments on the alternatives within the next three weeks. In approximately two months, the three alternative alignments would be presented to the public for their comments at this project's second series of public meetings. Mr. Walker advised an economic study would also assist the consultant team in selecting the three general corridors for presentation at the public meetings. The economic study is expected to be complete in approximately one month.

Alignment Corridors Under Consideration

Mr. Walker used displays and handouts to present the nine alternative corridors being considered. He advised those corridors are designated alphabetically by the letters A through I. In addition to mapping displays, there was a display of the environmental screening analysis spreadsheet that was mailed to the invitees prior to the meeting. Mr. Walker made several comments about that display. When an alternative was on new location, a right of way width of 400 feet was assumed. To estimate the impacts, a factor of 40 percent was applied to the impacts within the 1000 feet wide corridor. When an alternative used the US 61 corridor, a factor of 20 percent was applied to the 1000 feet wide corridor. These factors were applied to more realistically show the impact of acquiring the necessary right of way for this new interstate. Mr. Walker also advised that the estimated farmland impacts shown on the spreadsheet are measured in acres instead of square miles.

Agency Coordination

Mr. Barnwell stated his appreciation for the good representation at the meeting of those agencies that agreed to be Cooperating Agencies in the development of this EIS. He advised that any information the agencies could provide to assist in this study would be appreciated. Mr. Barnwell advised that now is the time for the agencies to identify their real issues and how the issues relate to this interstate project. Because this is such a long and involved study, he advised we need the agencies help and early input. Mr. Barnwell wanted the agencies to be frank and offer their comments on the current status of this study. Due to personnel and budget constraints, Mr. Barnwell realizes the time the agencies will have to spend on this project is limited. Therefore, it is critical for that time to be efficiently utilized.

Mr. Andy Hughes, the Division Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration, again encouraged a spirit of cooperation throughout the development of this document. For examples, he cited the cooperation needed in selecting alternatives and determining mitigation requirements as key issues in the production of a satisfactory document.

Agency Comments on Alignment Corridors

Ms. Kathy Lunceford, with the USFWS, had the following comments.

- If the Preferred Alternative passes west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, she is concerned for two reasons. The first reason is the intention of the USFWS to acquire additional property west of the Refuge for expansion towards the Mississippi River. The second reason is the bisecting of the natural environmental corridor that exists between the Mississippi River and the Refuge.

- The acquiring of conservation easements is another concern of hers. An example she gave of those easements is Wetland Restoration Program sites. Her comment on Wetland Restoration Program sites led to a discussion on the legality of acquiring property for this project through those sites. The discussion ended with this being an issue that might have to be decided through the legal process. For mapping information on conservation easements, she advised Mr. Charles Baxter at their Vicksburg Field Office should be contacted.

- The overall bisecting of the Delta, in areas where restoration is being used or could be used to connect natural environmental areas, concerns her.

- The impact of providing adequate crossroad connectors between the interchanges and traffic generators adjacent to or near the corridor concerns her.

- She advised the pondberry is an endangered species located in the study area. She stated it should be identified and avoided where possible.

- As far as a preference on the nine alignments, she does not like the western alignments and favors the more eastern alignments that lessen the impact on bisecting natural environmental areas in the Delta.

Mr. Tom Mann, with the MDWF&P, had the following comments.

- He supports limiting the western alignments closest to the river to minimize habitat fragmentation at the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and lakes.

- He is concerned about the impact the western alignments closest to the river might have on the federally protected Louisiana Black Bear.

- He advises that costly underpasses would probably be required between the Mississippi River and the Dahomey Refuge. He gave what was done at Alligator Alley in Florida as an example.

- He supports staying to the east and using the US 61 corridor where feasible.

Mr. Chris Alonzo, with the MDWF&P, had the following comments.

- He prefers staying to the east and avoiding the bisecting of natural environmental areas.
- He suggested using US 61 as much as possible.
- He believes preserving the black bear habitat for the alternatives west of Dahomey will require costly underpasses and make those western options very expensive.

Ms. Ntale Kajumba, with the EPA, had the following comments.

- She shares the concerns of Kathy Lunceford about the alternatives west of Dahomey.
- She does not like alternatives near the Mississippi River and west of the Dahomey Wildlife Refuge. Those are Alternatives A, D, H, and I.
- She likes Alternative B, which uses the US 61 corridor.
- She advised their GIS Staff is trying to help set up an ecological framework for the project area.
- She would like more information on the quality of the wetlands. For example, whether they are forested or non-forested.
- She would like more information on the stream impacts. For example, whether they are channelized or non-channelized.
- She wanted to know noise impacts for alternates to the southeast near subdivisions and information on social impacts.

Mr. Philip Hollis, with the COE, had the following comments.

- He advised it appears a good job has been done to date on estimating the environmental impacts.
- He agreed with Kathy Lunceford and Ntale Kajumba about the alternatives near the Mississippi River and west of the Dahomey Wildlife Refuge.
- He advised the Vicksburg Office of the Corps of Engineers use the Charleston Method of assessing wetlands.
- He believes the floodplain impacts should be examined.
- Based on the initial data, he likes Alternative B, which uses the US 61 corridor.

- He was concerned about wiping out small communities and Environmental Justice issues. To address his Environmental Justice concern, he suggested getting non-profit groups involved. In response, Mr. Barnwell advised him that Mr. Ken Weeden is a member of the consultant team, and that Environmental Justice is Mr. Weeden's primary work assignment. Ms. Kajumba asked if the project had studied economic impacts on a local level. Mr. Meisner, with Kimley-Horn, advised her that at this level the consultant team has not investigated in depth the local impacts. He advised that, when the corridors are reduced and the alignments further refined, the consultant team will study impacts such as census data, poverty areas, etc. He also advised the consultant team has tried to avoid as many known negative impacts as possible, including negative impacts to communities.

Mr. Wayne Ellis, with NRCS, had the following comments.

- He is concerned about the impact to prime farmland.
- He likes the easternmost alternative because it appears to have the least impact to prime farmland.
- He is concerned that Alternatives B, E, and F may impact a recent sewer project his agency participated in for the Hambrick community. This community is located north and east of North Tunica. This prompted Mr. Barnwell to comment that connections are possible at some locations between alternative corridors to avoid a major impact and that entirely new corridors could be developed to avoid a major impact.
- He is concerned about the spanning of perennial streams. He wants the spans long enough to not impede flow. In response, Mr. Barnwell advised this would be investigated at the proper time by the appropriate trained personnel to make sure the project will not increase the potential for flooding.

Mr. Tom Waggener, with the MDAH, had the following comments.

- He does not believe any alternative is drastically better than the other alternatives.
- He thinks more Archives and History issues will emerge for the western alternatives near SR 1 than the alternatives farther east.
- He advised that encountering Civil War Sites, Civil Rights Era Sites, and Blues Sites must be considered due to the study area of this project.
- His agency just does not know every historical and archaeological site that is out there. He used the recent archaeological sites encountered at the proposed Welcome Center on US 49 in Coahoma County as an example of the many unknown sites there are in this part of the state.

- For associated development that the I-69 corridor is expected to generate, Mr. Cliff Jenkins, who is also with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, commented that he believes it might be better if the US 61 corridor is used as much as possible for I-69. This prompted Mr. Waggener to ask for an explanation of the concept for converting the US 61 corridor to I-69. In response, Mr. Barnwell referred his request to Mr. Jimmy Shirley with Neel-Schaffer. Mr. Shirley advised the present concept would be in some places to reconstruct both lanes of US 61 to interstate standards and provide frontage roads where required. In other places, due to known impacts that need to be avoided, the present concept would be to convert one set of the lanes of US 61 to a frontage road to avoid the impact(s). Then, the other set of existing lanes of US 61 would be reconstructed for one set of the lanes for I-69, a new set of lanes for I-69 would be constructed, and a frontage road would be constructed where required.

Mr. Walter Lyons, the Third District Engineer for the MDOT, had the following comments.

- He supports using a western option along the Mississippi River and drawing on the economic development potential of the river.
- If the US 61 corridor is used for I-69, he is concerned about the inconvenience the reconstruction will have on the local citizenry and the traveling public.
- He believes the most expensive alternative is using the US 61 corridor for I-69.

Mr. Jimmy Dickerson, the Second District Engineer for the MDOT, had the following comments.

- He supports Alternative G, which is the easternmost alternative.
- If the US 61 corridor is used for I-69, he is also concerned about the inconvenience the reconstruction will have on the local citizenry and traveling public.
- He pointed out that the long-term cost for maintaining both an interstate facility and a partially controlled four-lane facility must be evaluated in this study for locations where the US 61 corridor can be utilized for I-69.
- He is confident the work plan for this project will reveal the best alternative.

Mr. Marion Butler, the Division Head of the Environmental Division for the AHTD, had the following comments.

- He believes a holistic approach should be utilized. There is a need to provide a transportation facility to the public, and a need to protect and enhance the environment. No one will get everything they want. There will have to be give and take in order to serve both the public and the environment.

Follow-up General Project Discussion Comments

Mr. Tom Waggener, with the MDAH, had the following question.

- He wanted to know more about the project concept and schedule. Claiborne Barnwell advised the list of alternatives must be narrowed, and that the study will take another year to year and a half. Mr. Barnwell advised that in two to three months the next series of public meetings will be held, and those meetings will be very important in selecting the three alternatives for study in the Draft Environmental Statement.

Mr. Philip Hollis, with the COE, had the following comment.

- To prevent revisiting issues, he suggested obtaining concurrence from the Cooperating Agencies at key points in the development of the EIS. For an example, he used the Purpose and Need.

Ms. Kathy Lunceford, with the USFWS, had the following comment.

- She stated the document should identify an environmentally preferred alternative, address the secondary impacts associated with the connectors, and the impacts associated with reasonable foreseeable anticipated development.

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, the MDOT Environmental Division Engineer, made the following comment.

- He stated there are three sites being studied for intersecting SR 1 in or near Benoit in Bolivar County. This is because the three sites are the eastern limit of the study that HNTB is conducting for the State of Arkansas on Section 12. The study on Section 12 is closer to completion than this study. He asked for a status report on the Arkansas study on Section 12. Mr. Bill Richardson, the Assistant Division Head for the Environmental Division of the AHTD, made the following response to Mr. Barnwell's request. He advised a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for their project on Section 12 should be distributed next month to the agencies for comments. He estimates it will be late summer before a Preferred Alternative is selected for study in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Coordination is required between these two studies to finalize the crossing at SR 1. The final decision for determining that crossing will be made under the MDOT project on Section 11.

Mr. Eric Holsten, the HNTB representative for their project on Section 12 of I-69, made the following comments.

- He supported Mr. Richardson's response to Mr. Barnwell's status report request on Section 12.

- He believes the NEPA process exists to reach the right decision, and he believes good coordination is essential for the process to work well.

Mr. Bill Richardson, the Assistant Division Head for the Environmental Division of the AHTD, made another comment.

- He believes tourism attractions and access to recreational facilities should be major factors when considering alignment alternatives for Section 11 of I-69.

Mr. Larry Meisner, with Kimley-Horn, made the following comment.

- He wants the consultant team to continue receiving any data from the resource agencies they can provide to benefit this study.

Ms. Beth Reed, with Kimley-Horn, made the following comments.

- She thanked the agencies for the assistance they have provided in this project.
- She advised some Kimley-Horn field crews would be working next week assessing wetlands where the US 61 corridor could be utilized for I-69.

Mr. David Kelley, with Coastal Environments, made the following comments.

- He thanked the MDAH for the assistance they have provided in this study. If they have any other information that would assist in this study, he asked that it be forwarded to him.
- He advised the consultant team would have some field crews performing a Phase I Archaeological Study next week along the US 61 corridor that could be utilized for I-69.

Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with Neel-Schaffer, made the following comment.

- He advised the MDOT's two District Engineers that they might receive some telephone calls next week inquiring about the consultant team's fieldwork.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

May 8, 2002 agency meeting – minutes

MINUTES
FHWA/MDOT MEETING
MAY 8, 2002

INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY # 11
BETWEEN SR 304 EAST OF ROBINSONVILLE IN TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
AND SR 1 NEAR BENOIT IN BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley Date Prepared: June 17, 2002

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted this meeting at 9:30 AM in the 4th floor MDOT conference room in Downtown Jackson. The meeting's purpose was to update the MDOT and FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) on the status of the project and to obtain approval from these two agencies on the alternative alignments being recommended for further study. Input from these agencies and their approval is necessary to further refine the number of alternatives for analysis and presentation at the next public meetings.

The attendees were provided a handout containing a reduced size copy of the displays that were to be discussed at this meeting. This handout included the following:

- Two environmental feature maps of the initial 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors
- A spreadsheet of the environmental screening analysis conducted on the initial corridors
- A map of the economic study analysis corridors
- A map of the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors that are recommended for further study and presentation at the next series of public meetings

The two environmental feature maps of the initial 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors, as well as the spreadsheet for the screening analysis conducted of those initial corridors, were previously presented at a resource agency scoping meeting held on April 2, 2002. The attendees at that previous meeting were asked to review the information and provide any feedback though a letter or by calling the MDOT or Neel-Schaffer (N-S).

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Wendel Ruff, the Assistant Chief Engineer over Preconstruction for the MDOT, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some brief opening comments on the progress of the project and the purpose of the meeting. Mr. Ruff remarked that the maps on display were formed from several predecessors and that the project study was progressing well. He gave a special welcome to Mr. Bob Black, who is an attorney for the FHWA in Washington D.C., and Mr. Ruff advised that Mr. Black has been assigned to the I-69 transcontinental corridor studies as the FHWA reviewer for legal sufficiency. Mr. Ruff remarked that reviewing the development of the EIS and reviewing the EIS for consideration of alternatives are included in Mr. Black's job assignment for this project on Section of Independent Utility Number 11 (SIU 11).

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the MDOT, provided further insight into the nature of the meeting and the progress that has been made on the project. Mr. Barnwell commented that the meeting would disclose where the project is today and where the project is heading. He advised now is the time to make comments or suggestions, and that this information will be used to help determine which of the proposed alternative corridors will be presented at the next series of public meetings. Mr. Barnwell stated that the project has progressed well to date and that the range of alternatives considered appears to have covered all reasonable options. However, he remarked the alternates are still open for review.

Project Background, Schedule, and Status

Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the consultant team, provided a summary of the project background, schedule, and status. He began by advising the attendees of the progress that had been made on this project since the initial Environmental Scoping Meeting was conducted last year in Clarksdale. After reviewing comments received at the initial scoping meeting and analyzing known natural and human environmental data, he remarked several one-mile wide corridor alternatives were developed. Mr. Walker advised this information was then presented to the public and agencies at an initial series of public meetings in September of last year. Based on comments received in response to the initial public meetings and further study, he stated some alternative corridors were modified, some were added, and some corridors were eliminated. Mr. Walker advised nine general corridors were located, and the width of the nine general corridors under consideration was narrowed from one-mile to 1,000 feet. He remarked than an environmental screening analysis was then conducted on the anticipated right of way that would need to be acquired within those nine corridors. Mr. Walker advised the mapping of the nine corridors and the environmental screening analysis spreadsheet for those nine corridors were discussed at a second Agency Scoping Meeting held on April 2, 2002. He stated the comments received on the alternative corridors in response to the second agency meeting were reviewed to finalize the proposed corridors that are recommended for further study and presentation at the next series of public meetings.

To supplement the large displays that Mr. Walker used in his presentation, the handouts were distributed. The handout included two maps of the nine alternative corridors that were presented at the resource agency meeting on April 2, 2002. One of those maps depicted the nine corridors overlain on known natural resources information, and the other map depicted the nine corridors overlain on known information concerning physical features. The handout included an environmental screening analysis spreadsheet for the nine corridors. Also included in the handout was the economic study map. The final item contained in the handout was a map highlighting the proposed alternative corridors to take forward for further study and presentation to the public. Mr. Walker explained the alternative corridors considered cover several counties – Bolivar, Coahoma, Tunica, and small pieces of Quitman and Sunflower – and that the alternative corridors tie into two adjacent sections of I-69. He advised those adjacent sections are the Hwy 304 connection at the northern terminus, which is a terminus for SIU 10, and the Great River Bridge connections to SR 1 at the southern terminus, which is a terminus for SIU 12. Mr. Walker remarked that the new SR 304 section between US 61 and I-55 has been approved for I-69, and that the Great River Bridge Draft EIS should be completed before the end of summer.

Mr. Walker then provided a more detailed report on the project background, schedule, and status. He stated that this study on SIU 11 consists of an area approximately 100 miles long by 30 miles wide and the study has been underway for approximately one year. He advised the initial Environmental Scoping Meeting last July was well attended by the agencies, as well as local and area officials. After reviewing the comments that were made at this initial meeting and the comments that were received after the meeting, Mr. Walker stated the initial one-mile wide alternative corridors were developed. Prior to the development of the initial corridors, he advised the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) submitted comments concerning the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), and the sensitivity of the USFWS to an alternative between the Dahomey NWR and the Mississippi River because such an alternative could disrupt a planned expansion of the Dahomey NWR to the west.

After developing the initial possible alternatives, Mr. Walker stated that an environmental screening analysis of the one-mile wide alternative bands was performed. Since the estimated right-of-way width outside of interchange locations and grade separation sites is not expected to exceed 450 feet, Mr. Walker emphasized the one-mile wide analysis heavily overstated the actual impacts to the environment. He advised these one-mile wide alternative bands were presented to the public and resource agencies for comment in September of 2001 at the initial series of public meetings. After the series of public meetings, Mr. Walker remarked the one-mile wide alternative bands under consideration were further refined and modified into the nine 1000-feet wide corridors depicted on the maps in the handout. He advised the information contained on the environmental screening analysis spreadsheet for the nine corridors was estimated based on acquiring an approximate right-of-way corridor width of 400 feet for new alignments and 200 feet for when using existing alignments. Mr. Walker stated the study team believes such a spreadsheet better represents the estimated impacts, and that the agencies could provide better feedback based on this more accurate data.

Mr. Walker noted that some of the more vocal concerns by several of the resource agencies have been the opposition to a western route that uses the SR 1 corridor between the Mississippi River and the Dahomey NWR. He noted that more recently the USFWS expressed concern about a route south of Dahomey NWR and north of Litton Road. Mr. Walker remarked that a meeting was held on May 6, 2002, with the USFWS to discuss a possible southern expansion of Dahomey NWR to Litton Road. As a result of that meeting, he advised the current alternative corridor south of the Dahomey NWR and north of Litton Road will be reviewed for relocation south of Litton Road. Additionally, Mr. Walker remarked that concerns have been expressed by the two impacted MDOT district offices that location of I-69 along US 61 might be more expensive and is probably less desirable to most of the local citizenry than a location on new alignment. The districts are concerned that US 61 is currently being 4-laned, and their constituents have dealt with this construction for many years. To expose the local citizens, as well as the traveling public, to another reconstruction project along the US 61 corridor concerns the districts.

Other items discussed by Mr. Walker included Environmental Justice (EJ) issues, media issues, and the supplemental I-69 Economic Study. He stated EJ issues are important to this project and that an environmental justice specialist is part of the consulting team. Mr. Walker advised the EJ specialist has already formed county-wide EJ task forces to distribute and communicate the I-69 process to the communities. He also remarked that one intercounty task force will be formed later to further coordinate the local communication effort throughout the development of this EIS.

Media issues discussed included the work that Ms. Donna Lum, Public Affairs Director for the MDOT, and Mr. Barnwell are doing to deliver information on the I-69 process to the public. Mr. Walker showed the attendees a project brochure and folder which were prepared by a media consultant. He advised the brochure contains general information about the project and the EIS process, and that the brochure is appropriate throughout the life of the project. Mr. Walker remarked that the folder can be used to store the brochure and updated project information – such as fact sheets, press releases, maps, analysis spreadsheets, and comment sheets. He advised the updated information is made available through mailings and handouts at key times throughout the life of the project. Mr. Walker stated this updated information is also made available through the project website and that website's link to the MDOT's website.

Mr. Walker discussed an economic study being conducted on the I-69 Corridor. Unlike most major highway projects, he advised the majority of the communities in the study area want the interstate system near them. The economic study was begun approximately three months ago to determine, from an economic perspective, the most favorable route for economic benefit and development. The economists were tasked with studying a west, a central, and an east alignment and making a recommendation on which of these three alignments has the most potential for creating long-term economic benefit. The economists interviewed local, county, state, and federal economic development officials to gather information for their study. Mr. Walker stated that the Delta Council, the State Economist, and the Delta Regional Authority Director were also interviewed. He pointed out that the Economic Study Map depicts three general corridors, estimated interchanges locations, population centers, industrial parks and other factors the study considered. Mr. Walker advised a draft summary of the economic study was recently received for review.

Mr. Cecil Vick, Environmental Coordinator with the FHWA, stated that typically the primary location requirement for an interstate is to solve a transportation problem. However, he reminded everyone that an additional requirement for this section of the I-69 corridor is to provide economic development opportunities.

Mr. Walker then presented the final map of the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors that are recommended for further study. He stated that these alternates consist of three options (a west, central, and east alternate) from the south terminus at SR 1 in Bolivar County to the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County. He then advised the recommendation is for one alternative corridor from the Clarksdale Bypass to just south of the planned US 49 Welcome Center location in Coahoma County. This one alternative corridor would utilize US 61 except for a section that would be on new alignment between the northern portion of the bypass and the Clarksdale airport. From just south of the planned US 49 Welcome Center to the northern terminus of the project at SR 304 in Tunica County, two alternative corridors are recommended. An eastern alternative entirely on relocation is one of the recommended corridors and a central alternative, which would be mostly on relocation between US 61 and the east alternative, is the other recommended corridor.

Mr. Walker stated that due to major impacts on the natural and human environments only one alternative corridor was recommended between the Clarksdale Bypass and the planned US 49 Welcome Center. He also remarked that Clarksdale and Coahoma County have strongly indicated they would like I-69 to use the existing bypass, which has full control of access and meets most of the current design criteria for an interstate facility.

Mr. Walker remarked that Tunica has indicated that it does not prefer an alternate to the west of US 61 because of impacts to prime farmlands, natural resources, and large residential sites. Due to development along existing US 61, he advised that using the US 61 corridor through the City of Tunica would be difficult. Mr. Walker stated that Tunica County is expanding their airport, which is located east of US 61, and they are planning industrial type zoning from the airport to the east towards SR 3 and the main CN/IC railroad. Mr. Walker advised the County is also considering providing a railroad spur from the airport east to the CN/IC railroad. For these reasons, he stated the local officials of Tunica County prefer locating I-69 east of US 61 and the airport.

Comments on Alignment Corridors

Mr. Walter Lyons, the Third District Engineer for the MDOT, had the following question: "Has the SR 1 interchange location at Benoit been decided?"

Mr. Walker responded that comments received from the meetings favor a location either to the south or the north of Benoit. Mr. Barnwell added that most of the comments received from residents of Benoit favor a north interchange location to divert the interstate traffic around town. In addition, Mr. Barnwell stated that the southern interchange location has generated some negative comments from the local citizenry because of its location just south of a school.

Mr. Ruff had the following question: "Has the environmental screening analysis been conducted on the alternative corridors recommended for further study?"

Mr. Walker responded that the analysis for these recommended corridors has not been conducted. He advised the purpose of this meeting is to present the alternates for discussion and concurrence to move forward with the analysis to be presented at the next round of public meetings.

Mr. Ruff then asked the following question: "Would you identify the alternative corridors eliminated on the exhibit that depicts the corridors recommended for further study?"

Mr. Walker referred Mr. Ruff to Corridors A, D, F, G, H, and I on the mapping exhibits of the initial 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors. Mr. Vick added that these alternates were eliminated based on the data compiled. (This response by Mr. Walker and Mr. Vick was clarified later on at the meeting and is documented in these minutes.)

Mr. Jim Kopf, the Chief Engineer for the MDOT, then asked the following question: "Will the school on SR 1 south of Benoit be there for a long time...how old is the facility?"

Mr. Barnwell remarked that the facility is one of the nicer buildings in the Benoit area, and it is part of the local school district that has expressed its concern about locating the interchange near the school.

Mr. Jimmy Dickerson, the Second District Engineer for the MDOT, reminded the attendees that we must look at the long term impacts of this important project, and that major developments – such as casinos – may be locating along the river in the future.

Mr. Walker stated that during the interview process with county officials, questions on future expansion plans were addressed.

Mr. Ruff then asked for a clarification of which alternatives were eliminated.

Mr. Walker responded that in some cases only parts of Corridors A, D, F, G, H, and I were not recommended for further analysis. It was pointed out that the light grey portions on the alternative corridor mapping indicate specifically which corridors, or portions of corridors, are not being recommended for further evaluation.

Mr. John Pickering, Director of the Roadway Design Division for the MDOT, asked about the assigning of weights to the lines and categories.

Mr. Walker responded that a method for assigning weights to each alternate and category will be developed.

Mr. Andy Hughes, Division Administrator for the Mississippi Division of the FHWA, asked the following question: "What will happen now that these alternative corridors have been recommended for further analysis?"

Mr. Walker responded that the next step is to further refine the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors, update the spreadsheet for the environmental screening analysis on those corridors, and present the information for public comment at the next series of meetings. He advised those public meetings are tentatively scheduled for the end of June of this year. After the public meetings comments are addressed and the appropriate coordination is made with the resource agencies, Mr. Walker advised the alternative corridors will be selected for further study through the Draft EIS step. After the Draft EIS is approved for presentation at a public hearing, Mr. Walker stated a public hearing will be scheduled. Mr. Vick then advised an estimated date for completion of the Draft EIS is June or July of 2003, with a public hearing following later in the Fall.

Mr. Wayne Parrish, Port and Waterways Director for the MDOT, asked the following question: "When were the last public meetings conducted?"

Mr. Walker responded the last meetings were held in September of 2001.

Mr. Parrish responded that the Delta Council would probably be interested in this update at their meeting scheduled for June 25, 2002.

Mr. Hughes asked the following question: "Why were alternatives eliminated?"

Mr. Jimmy Shirley, engineer for the consulting team, replied the alternatives were eliminated based on the evaluation of known natural environmental information, field reviews, and public comments.

Mr. Hughes then asked this follow-up question: "Would the consultant team provide a brief summary of why each alternative or portion of alternatives was eliminated?"

Mr. Walker provided the following response by corridor alternate designation:

- Alternate F - The USFWS and others want an alternative that connects Benoit to the US 61 corridor as soon as possible to be located south of the Dahomey NWR.
- Alternate A - Natural resource impacts, environmental concerns, the expressed interest by Coahoma County officials to use the existing Clarksdale Bypass, and the expressed interest by Tunica County officials for location alternatives east of US 61 and their airport.
- Alternate D - Natural resource impacts, environmental concerns, the expressed interest by Coahoma County officials to use the existing Clarksdale Bypass, and the expressed interest by Tunica County officials for location alternatives east of US 61 and their airport.
- Alternate H/I - Natural resource impacts, environmental concerns, and the expressed interest by the Coahoma County officials to use the existing Clarksdale Bypass.
- Alternate G - Natural resource impacts, environmental concerns, and it does not use the Clarksdale Bypass.

Mr. Black asked the following question: "Is the project team comfortable about the wetlands and endangered species impacts?"

Mr. Barnwell stated that responses from the USFWS and Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks (MSWFP) to a recent review were that the alignments appeared in good shape. Cultural resources are more of an unknown condition and unrecorded sites will be discovered during the more detailed studies of the finalized alignments. Mr. Barnwell stated that the general rule of thumb is that the closer an alternate is located to the Mississippi River, the greater the potential for cultural resource impacts.

Mr. Mark Bailey, engineer for the consulting team, asked the following question: "What is the status of the Native American 106 regulations?"

Mr. Vick replied that the regulations were recently revised creating added responsibility to coordinate with Native Americans. Mr. Vick added that the FHWA is attempting to coordinate this effort on a broader basis and that, although the FHWA sent written invitations to the appropriate Native American tribal representatives, no Native Americans attended a Native American Scoping Meeting last year at the headquarters of Delta Council in Stoneville. The appropriate Native American tribal representatives were also invited to the initial series of public meetings and both governmental agency meetings, but none of the invited representatives chose to attend any of those meetings. He stated the FHWA did meet with Native Americans on the Great River Bridge Project for SIU 12 and that Native Americans will continue to be updated and invited to participate in the process throughout the life of this project. Although some of the Native American tribes were moved out of the Delta, as far away as Oklahoma, Mr. Vick added certain areas of the Delta remain very important to the Native American Culture; however, there has not been any Native American participation to date in this project.

Mr. Barnwell added that the Native Americans will continue to be invited to the meetings.

Mr. Vick remarked that if Native American remains are discovered, the Native Americans will become involved. He further pointed out the good relationship developed between the Native Americans, Mr. Barnwell, and the MDOT on the cultural resource area investigations recently conducted for the planned US 49 Welcome Center in Coahoma County near the Tunica County Line.

Mr. Walker added that the consultant team will explore more possible ways to encourage better communication between the study team and the Native Americans.

Mr. Black then asked the following question: "Have the secondary and cumulative impacts of the project been reviewed?"

Mr. Barnwell stated that these impacts would be reviewed after the alternates are selected for the Draft EIS. Although it may be at some cost to wildlife and other natural resources, he further added that the majority of the public perceives this project as a positive impact for the area.

Mr. Vick clarified that much of the area is agricultural; therefore, some or most of the conversion may be insignificant.

Mr. Hughes further pointed out that the Delta is a very impoverished area in need of great economic stimulus, which is part of the goal for I-69. Secondary/Cumulative impacts have not been reviewed for any of the routes to date and, excluding the Dahomey NWR, the USFWS does not appear to be concerned about the recommended alternative corridors. However, the Environmental Protection Agency still needs to address some of the route issues, and mitigation strategies will be one of the means developed to deal with some of those issues.

Mr. Black then asked the following question: "Are there any known impacts regarding the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Critical Habitat/Endangered Species Issues?"

> Mr. Barnwell responded that there is some concern, but these focus around Dahomey NWR and the area along the Mississippi River. The USFWS has remarked about the MS Black Bear and the Pondberry as endangered species that should be studied in this process. Mr. Hughes added that the major impacts to the Black Bear are along the river.

Mr. Ruff asked the following question: "How will maintenance costs be factored in this study?"

> Mr. Shirley stated that the consultant team would compare the costs for the alternatives selected for detail study in the Draft EIS. As part of that cost comparison, the consultant team must consider the cost of maintaining two separate multilane facilities in those locations where I-69 could use the US 61 corridor, but it does not. Mr. Shirley remarked that approximately one-third of the length of this I-69 project would be evaluated as part of an alternative using the US 61 corridor. Due to the project limits, commercial and residential development, pipelines and other utility impacts, and other factors, he advised it does not appear possible to consider anymore than one-third of US 61 for an I-69 corridor alternative.

Mr. Dickerson expressed his opinion that, for long-term planning purposes, more than one alternative corridor should be considered between the Clarksdale Bypass and the re-establishment of more than one alternative corridor south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line.

> Mr. Barnwell replied that if you look at the surrounding natural resources encountered on a new alignment, it is difficult to use any option other than the existing bypass and the US 61 general corridor. He also advised there appears to be a need to locate I-69 near the industrial areas, and that those areas have been strategically located adjacent to the existing bypass at Clarksdale.

Mr. Dickerson stated that he believed the project should look at an alternative corridor east of the bypass and that 5 miles on relocation should not pose a long-term adverse impact to the City of Clarksdale and other population centers.

> Mr. Barnwell replied that an eastern relocation alternate in this area would impact substantially more natural resources than the proposed alternate of using the Clarksdale Bypass and the US 61 general corridor. He gave floodplain areas and wetland reserve program sites as examples of natural resources that would be difficult for such an eastern location on new alignment to avoid.

Mr. Dickerson advised this length of having only one alternative corridor is approximately 15 miles of this 100 plus mile project, and he believes there should be sufficient documentation to support the decision. Mr. Dickerson expressed his concerned about compliance with the NEPA process and whether two options should be presented to the public.

> Mr. Barnwell replied that the decision to have one option at the Clarksdale Bypass at this time doesn't preclude introducing a second option at a later date (i.e., after the next series of public meetings). He clarified that the current recommendation is to have only one option through this area and that it has been studied and discussed in detail.

Mr. Ruff asked the following question: "Why are we looking at a western option in the economic study and what if the western option is favored?"

> Mr. Walker replied that the economic study for this section of I-69 was set up to be a non-biased study in determining the best location for economic development potential. Mr. Barnwell continued by stating the economic study was authorized with three alternative routes over the entire length of the project. The west, central, and east routes were selected for the economic study prior to this presentation of the recommended alternates. He stated that the draft results of the economic study indicate that the urban areas are critical to the location of the new I-69 interstate.

Mr. Walker asked Mr. Black the following question: "Do you foresee any problems with having only one alternative for a portion of this project on I-69?"

> Mr. Black responded that a lawsuit is always possible and that proper documentation is required to support the decision. He stated that as long as there are no critical habitats, or other critical impacts, it would be permissible.

Mr. Barnwell ended the meeting by thanking everyone for attending. He advised that anyone interested in commenting on the recommended alternative corridors should do so within the next few weeks, so as not to affect the final planning for the next series of public meetings. Mr. Barnwell stated that written or verbal comments should be furnished to him at the MDOT or to Mr. Walker. The deadline for furnishing comments is June 14, 2002.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

August 16, 2002 National conference – minutes

I-69 SIU # 11
I-69 Conference
August 16-17, 2001

Meeting Minutes

Prepared By: Larry Meisner Date Prepared: September 12, 2001

The following people from the Mississippi I-69 team attended this meeting: Claiborne Barnwell, Cecil Vick, Robert Walker, Jimmy Shirley, Ken Weeden, Larry Meisner

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the background and environmental process for the I-69 projects, and to coordinate with resource agencies regarding requirements and data. The following notes are not intended to provide a detailed record, but to summarize some of the major points as noted by the preparer. Items that apply particularly to the Mississippi portion of I-69 are italicized. Extensive material was distributed as part of the conference, which documents much of the discussion.

Purpose and Need
Gene Cleckley, FHWA and Joe Guyton, HNTB

The Corridor 18/I-69 purpose and need was based on freight movement, spurred by the NAFTA treaty that is expected to greatly increase freight movements between the US, Canada, and Mexico. The purpose and need should reflect trade, economic development, and consistency with national, state, regional, and local needs and congressional designation.

The Delta Initiative included numerous agencies, such as USDOT, Corps of Engineers, EPA, USFWS, and HUD.

NEPA Overview
Lamar Smith, FHWA

The challenges for I-69 are to
- Acceleration of project management, development, and decision making
- Integration of FHWA NEPA, State DOT and Local decision making
- FHWA/State/Local partnership
- Public outreach and involvement
- Interagency coordination and collaboration

We need to focus on the process, not the document. State and local needs are important as well as the national purpose.

FHWA/NEPA AND I-69
Bob Wheeler, FHWA

FHWA NEPA approval process will include
- Purpose and need
- Modal choice
- SIU/logical termini
- Location
- Conceptual design

We should use the NEPA/404 merger process. The I-69 national summit included FHWA, state DOTs, and resource agencies. FHWA sees this conference as a "mega-scoping meeting."

NEPA is applied at the project level, not at the system planning level (in response to comment from EPA).

There is no formula for determining secondary and cumulative impacts. We need to set both temporal and spatial limits for what is included. There is a difference between disclosure and responsibility, particularly in these areas.

The economic development purpose of I-69 is similar to that of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) highway system.

FHWA regulations are very liberal regarding use of highway funds for enhancements and mitigation.

Some segments may not be supported purely on local needs. We may need to rely primarily on national or regional basis for justification.

Steve Cecil, Indiana DOT presentation
Purpose and need was a key element in the original environmental movement – must justify the need for a project before it is committed. Local justification is needed, such as a statewide 20-year plan, economic growth plan, highway plan, and statewide mobility corridors. Items used to justify Indiana's section of I-69 include

Transportation measures:
- connectivity (time and distance comparison of straight line vs shortest existing path),
- accessibility (distance/time to population centers, employment centers, universities, airports, state capital), safety
- congestion.

Economic measures:
- USDA measure of "rural stress" – 2001 Rural Development Strategic Plan
- Poverty/income levels
- Comparative trends (employment and population growth)
- CUED rural development
- National I-69 projections of commerce and trade

Mississippi I-69 Presentation
- Cecil Vick: The Delta Initiative included 219 counties in states from Illinois to Louisiana. The Delta Regional Authority was based on ARC. One of their main conclusions was that roads and infrastructure are needed for economic development in the region.
- Ben Davis: The Delta area has been bypassed. Key points are job development, location of interchanges, socioeconomic impacts, and tourism. Tourism was discussed with other agency staff; Cecil will arrange meetings with tourism officials to discuss benefits of I-69.
- Ken Weeden: Environmental justice is a major part of the mission of this project. EJ includes avoiding or mitigating adverse impacts, full and fair participation by all, and fair distribution of benefits of the project.
- Ben Davis noted that relocations are a concern, decline in population has occurred in much of the Delta, and noted that Tunica runs buses to employment areas.
- Ken Murphree: The Delta Council includes 18 counties in Mississippi. It also includes areas designated as empowerment zones. Transportation is crucial to economic development in this area. We should focus on the greatest economic need.

Southeast Regional Resource Group (SNRLG)

EPA
Cory Berish
New approach included multiple agencies: TVA, EPA, COE, EPA, USFS, USFWS, NRCS, USGS, others. Looking at southeastern ecological framework and land use. Concern with habitat fragmentation, want to preserve large enough areas to support species, not a "living zoo."
Goals:

- Identify high priority ecological areas
- Identify potential mitigation sites
- Streamline process

Consider important habitat as hubs, with pathways to connect. Have developed priority and secondary ecological areas. EPA prefers to get proposed alignments digitally, so they can superimpose on their mapping.

Don't cut off Dahomey NWR from Mississippi. Consider overpasses for habitat connectivity if road takes this corridor. Highway 61 south of Tunica potentially cuts off link between habitats.

For mitigation and restoration, consider context, EPA prefers larger areas. Look for hydric soils, forest core areas, agricultural areas within National Forests and Wildlife refuges, fill in edges.

Consider impact on 303(d) water, which require additional controls to meet water quality standards, and important ecological areas.

David Parrish
EPA Region 6 (Texas)

Developed GISST (GIS Screening Tool) to evaluate impacts of alternatives. Layers include 303(d) waters, sole source aquifers, air quality attainment areas, national land cover data (1992-93) (from USGS Eris? Website), GAP data (USGS by vegetation type), T&E species habitat (USFS), wetland land cover, agricultural land cover, FEMA Q3 data, environmental justice indicators. Note: be aware of age of data. Used Louisiana project as case study.
Stacy Fehlenberg said EPA views GIS data as baseline to flag issues. FWS representatives agreed that it should be used as preliminary tool, and needs to be supplemented with detailed data further in process.

Ben West
EPA Region 4 (Atlanta)

Discussed partnering strategy (see handout). Three EPA Divisions are involved in review process. Need consistency of review, framework. Use NEPA/404 merger process (need to include SHPO) Developing checklist for guidance and standards, uniform policy. Important items to include are secondary/cumulative impacts, noise standards, GIS. EPA is currently working to resolve interagency differences. EPA training for states is a possibility.

Corps of Engineers
Col. Sean Wachutka, Cincinnati

Corps has close relationships with state agencies. Three Divisions involved in I-69. Will delegate I-69 to one division for overall responsibility (probably Vicksburg). Districts will work with states. Early notification is important. Check with Corps Districts for GIS data. Need to be consistent with definitions. Consensus building, cumulative impacts, websites. Remember 401 water quality certification from state environmental regulatory agency is needed in advance of 404 permit. FWS, EPA, or NMFS can elevate a

permit decision. Corps regulatory branch works with NEPA/404 merger process. Corps has staffing shortages and does not have any special funding to charge their I-69 review work. Cecil Vick asked if Corps would let I-69 project teams know when Corps is planning projects inside the I-69 Corridor so mitigation could be considered to improve Corps project in conjunction with the I-69 project. Corps may consider extending time frame that their permits are valid due to the length of time it will take to build this I-69 project.

USFWS
Cherry Grey, Kathy Lunceford

Main concerns are with secondary impacts (interchange locations is one example), habitat fragmentation, termini at state boundaries. USFWS wants to participate in decisions by being a cooperating agency. Additional funds are needed for reviewing this project. DOTs, FHWA should consider transfer from their budgets to support needed reviewers. DOTs need to consider acquisition boundaries of NWRs as well as existing boundaries, also consider T&E species and habitat. USFWS recommends using NEPA/404 merger process.

Specific Mississippi concerns: connection at Tennessee line. Connection at Arkansas has been resolved.

It will be a challenge to avoid restoration areas
Coordinate with Corps, NRCS, USFWS, MDOT
West of Dahomey NWR – migratory bird recovery area, black bear recovery area, acquisition area.

Secondary impacts: wildlife crossings (need to be practical, usable), habitat fragmentation.

Any alignment will have some issues. Endangered species: pondberry. There will be opportunities to avoid impacts with the correct alignment. The process will be slow. Consider historic and natural features. Ben Davis comment on tourism. Cecil Vick and Claiborne Barnwell propose a tourism summit in Miss to obtain input from individuals or groups representing tourism, consider ecotourism. Region 4 contact: Aaron Valenta in Atlanta. Need to plan for ecosystem.

TVA
Need to involve early when they may be involved, don't wait until the last minute.

Summary of Agency Discussion
Gene Cleckley, FHWA

Key points:
1. Use NEPA/404 merger process
2. List of key contact points for each agency
3. Agencies need dedicated staff
4. Review process needs to be known, consistent
5. Use technology and innovation to avoid natural and human environments
6. Collaboration is needed in establishing contacts and building trusts with tribal governments

Need to have collaborative process, develop consensus in procedures decisions. "We need to work together whether we like it or not." Leverage resources for efficiency. Include local governments, consider human impacts, avoid natural and human resources. We need creative designs, mitigation, utilize enhancement opportunities. K. Lynn Berry said she would be a key contact point for FHWA in Atlanta.

Next Steps
Gene Cleckley, FHWA

1. Federal stewardship consistency needs addressing
2. Collaboration in leveling resources needs addressing
3. NEPA processing, coordination, review and resolution of issues needs addressing
4. Interagency points of contact need addressing

Public Involvement
Judy Myer, HNTB 972-628-3172

Public meetings were held in 1994-1997. Included advocacy groups, environmental groups, elected officials (mayors and MPOs of named cities). Ken Weeden needs to contact Joe Guyton of HNTB for the names of those advocacy group leaders that have interests in SIU 11. Public involvement included in development of SIUs. National communications will be needed as well as local public involvement. HNTB is developing an I-69 video.

Documentation
Lamar Smith, FHWA

Documentation is important (despite what Gene says) because it provides a record of data, collaboration, decisions, issues (see Conference Manual for reference). Need to be innovative with our documentation. Lamar suggests combining affected environment and impact sections. EIS must contain good analysis, clear description of project and impacts. Pennsylvania produces "concise" EIS, can provide examples. CEQ says if an agency uses another format, the format must have cover sheet, summary, table of contents, list of preparers, EIS distribution, and index. Comments and coordination are needed somewhere in document. Appendices will cut down on the size of the document. Section 4(f) should be a separate section (chapter). 404(b)1 can be included in wetland section text or as separate chapter. Manage the process to shorten the time frame, FHWA can review pre-draft document. Prior concurrence is required when

- Project is highly controversial or involves issues of national significance
- Inadequate coordination or discussion
- Great impacts
- Unresolved issues
- Agency opposition

Legal Sufficiency
Bob Black, FHWA

Address all required items. Documentation (not necessarily in EIS document, can be in tech memos, files) is very important; "if it's not written, it doesn't exist." It is OK and desirable to include dissenting opinions in records, actually help build credibility. He looks for hot spots, "red flags." As a rule, draft material is not available to the public.

Record of Decision (ROD)
Bob Wheeler, FHWA

ROD is a decision document. It needs to explain the balancing of values, identify environmentally preferred alternative, describe environmental commitments and monitoring, and address any comments on the FEIS. EPA must review and assign rating to all EISs, as specified in Section 309 of Clean Air Act.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

September 4-5, 2002 Native American meeting – minutes

MINUTES

AGENCY-NATIVE AMERICAN SCOPING MEETING
SEPTEMBER 4, 2002

FIELD TRIP
SEPTEMBER 5, 2002

INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY # 11
BETWEEN SR 304 EAST OF ROBINSONVILLE IN TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
AND SR 1 NEAR BENOIT IN BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley Date Prepared: December 30, 2002

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted this coordination meeting from 1:30 PM to approximately 3:30 PM in Clarksdale at the Headquarters of the Delta Regional Authority. This meeting's purpose was to update the Cooperating Agencies, other key governmental agencies, and the Native Americans on the status of the project and to obtain their input on a limited number of merited alternative corridors the project team believes should be taken forward for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Using contact information obtained from previous Scoping, Cooperating Agency, and Native American meetings on this project, 46 invitation packets were mailed in mid-August. The packets contained the following:

- An invitation letter.
- A map providing directions to the meeting location.
- An agenda for the meeting.
- A map of the alternative corridors presented to the public for comment at a series of identical public meetings conducted on July 16-18, 2002.
- A spreadsheet screening analysis of the alternatives presented to the public at the series of identical meetings conducted on July 16-18, 2002.
- A post card that provided the invitees an opportunity to request a field trip to view any of the alternatives on the day after the meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the MDOT, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some brief opening comments. He expressed his appreciation to the attendees for the efforts they made enabling them to attend the meeting. The attendees represented the consultant team, the MDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and other governmental agencies. There were not any Native American representatives in attendance at the meeting. The consultant team representatives were from Neel-Schaffer, Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Coastal Environments, Inc., and Ken Weeden and Associates, Inc. At Mr. Barnwell's request, everyone present introduced themselves and whom they were representing at the meeting. Excluding the representatives from the MDOT, FHWA, and consultant team, nine people attended the meeting. Those nine people and the agencies they represented were:

- Mr. Mike Lilly with the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS)
- Ms. Eleanor Schnabel and Mr. John Sullivan with the Greenville Field Office of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH)
- Mr. John Connaway with the Clarksdale Field Office of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH)
- Ms. Ntale Kajumba and Mr. Darryl Williams with Region 4 of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Messrs. Philip Hollis, Harold Lee, and Joseph Greenleaf with the U.S. Corps of Engineers

Mr. Barnwell advised the meeting is informal, and that the purpose of the meeting is to seek input and direction from the agencies on the alternatives selected for further study in the DEIS. He stated further refinement of the selected alignments will be made to reduce the normal width of the corridors from 1,000 feet to approximately 450 feet. Mr. Barnwell advised he believes the consultant team has done a good job to date in developing the alternatives. Although the interests of the local officials and governmental agencies were considered in the development of the alternatives, Mr. Barnwell stated now is the time to concentrate on the details of refining, adding, or reducing the alternatives. He then turned the program over to Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the consultant team.

Project Status Update

Utilizing displays mounted on easels, Mr. Walker advised the attendees of the following progress that had been made on the project.

- An initial Scoping Meeting was conducted in Clarksdale at Clarksdale High School on July 11, 2001. The meeting was well attended by representatives from the appropriate governmental agencies, local and area elected officials, and concerned citizens.

- A Scoping Meeting with the appropriate representatives of the Native American tribes was scheduled at the Headquarters of the Delta Council for August 23, 2001. Although some of the tribal representatives furnished a general written response to their invitation, none of the tribal representatives attended the meeting.

- Based on known information on the natural and human environment, initial one-mile wide corridor alternatives were developed and presented to the public for comment at the first series of identical public meetings. Those meetings were conducted on four successive evenings at Benoit, Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica on September 24-27, 2001.

- The comments received in response to the initial meetings were evaluated. Some alternatives were eliminated and others were added. The widths of the revised corridors were then narrowed from one mile to 1,000 feet. Nine general corridors were located, and an environmental screening analysis was conducted on the anticipated approximately 450 feet of right of way width that would be required for those nine corridors.

- The refined 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors and the screening analysis on those corridors were presented to the resource agencies for comment at a Scoping Meeting conducted at the MDOT on April 2, 2002.

- The Economic Study – comparing the potential economic development opportunities for a West Corridor, Central Corridor, and East Corridor – was completed, and it determined all three corridors have the potential to generate economic development. As to a ranking, the study determined the Central Corridor provided the highest opportunity for economic development followed by the East Corridor and then the West Corridor. A major reason the Central Corridor was chosen as having the highest potential was its location relative to established population centers. The following is a description of the three corridors evaluated in the study.

    - A West Corridor which proceeds north from Benoit following the SR 1 and/or the Mississippi River corridor as much as possible to between Tunica and Robinsonville. The corridor then turns east to cross US 61 and SR 3 before turning north to cross SR 304 and become concurrent with the existing SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville.

- ❖ A Central Corridor which proceeds east from Benoit and stays south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge before turning north to cross SR 8 east of Pace and west of Cleveland. Slightly north of the SR 8 crossing, the corridor turns northeast to become concurrent with US 61 near Merigold. The corridor uses US 61 as much as possible from Merigold to the Tunica area before turning northeast to intersect and become concurrent with the SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville.

- ❖ An Eastern Corridor which proceeds east from Benoit, and stays south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. After passing south of the Refuge, the corridor continues east to cross US 61 slightly north of Shaw and then the corridor turns to the north. The corridor continues in a northerly path on new location to the east of Boyle and crosses SR 8 between Cleveland and Ruleville. From Cleveland to southeast of Clarksdale, the corridor continues to the north on new location passing slightly west of the State Penal Farm. After crossing US 49 southeast of Clarksdale, the corridor continues to the north of relocation between US 61 and SR 3 to an area south of SR 304 between Tunica and Robinsonville. The corridor then makes a turn to the northeast to cross SR 3 and then SR 304 before becoming concurrent with the SR 304 Spur.

- o There were key members of the MDOT and FHWA staff that needed to know the work accomplished on the project. This staff also needed to be involved in approving the 1,000 feet wide refined alternative corridors for presentation at the second series of public meetings. For those reasons, an interagency meeting of the MDOT and FHWA with the consultant team was conducted at the MDOT on May 8, 2002. At that meeting, the consultant team presented the compiled information on the 1,000 feet wide corridors, and which corridors were recommended for presentation to the public at a second series of public meetings.

- o After a decision was made on the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors that would be presented at the second series of identical public meetings, the necessary preparations were made to schedule the meetings. The meetings were conducted on three successive evenings at Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica respectively on July 16-18, 2002. The alternatives presented at the public meetings were obtained by combining the following segment alternatives.

  - ❖ Three alternatives from Benoit in Bolivar County proceeding northeast to the US 61 Bypass south of Clarksdale in Coahoma County. The three alternatives are as follows:

    - A western alternative on relocation that passes west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, crosses SR 8 between Rosedale and Pace, crosses SR 32 between SR 1 and Shelby, crosses SR 444 between SR 1 and Duncan, and crosses US 61 to connect to the Bypass.

    - A central alternative that passes south of the Refuge, crosses SR 8 between Pace and Cleveland, uses as much of US 61 as possible from Merigold in Bolivar County to near the Bobo community in Coahoma County, leaves US 61 to the northwest near Bobo, and then after paralleling US 61 for several miles turns to the east to cross US 61 and connect to the Bypass.

- An eastern alternative on relocation that passes south of the Refuge, crosses US 61 slightly north of Shaw, crosses SR 8 between Cleveland and Ruleville, passes slightly west of the State Penal Farm, and connects to the Bypass.

❖ One alternative from the US 61 Bypass south of Clarksdale proceeding northeast, using US 61 as much as possible, to approximately three miles south of the Coahoma-Tunica County Line.

❖ The following two alternatives from approximately three miles south of the Coahoma-Tunica County Line proceeding northeast to approximately a mile south of Dubbs Road in Tunica County.

- A far-east alternative that leaves US 61 and proceeds northeast on relocation.
- A near-east alternative that continues to use US 61 for approximately five miles to near Crenshaw Road before proceeding northeast on relocation.

❖ The following three alternatives on new location from approximately a mile south of Dubbs Road proceeding northeast to the end of the project at existing SR 304 east of Robinsonville in Tunica County.

- A far-east alternative that crosses SR 4 at Little Texas, and then crosses SR 3 slightly north of Prichard Road on its northeasterly path to the SR 304 Spur. This alternative is farther away from Tunica than the other two alternatives.
- A near-east alternative that crosses SR 4 between US 61 and Little Texas. The alternative passes just east of the Tunica Airport and continues across Prichard Road and other county roads until near Arkabutla Dam Road. The alternative then turns east to cross Kirby Road, SR 3, and the railroad before turning north to cross SR 304 and become concurrent with the SR 304 Spur.
- An alternative that is a combination of the near-east and far-east alternatives. The combination alternative crosses SR 4 between US 61 and Little Texas. After passing just east of the airport and Prichard Road, the alternative turns east. The alternative turns north after crossing SR 3 and then joins the far-east alternative on a northeasterly path to the SR 304 Spur.

o The west alternative in Bolivar County, which is located between the Mississippi River and the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, is in the planned westward expansion of the Refuge, and this alternative has a high probability of containing undiscovered archaeological sites. For these reasons, the far west alternative will probably be eliminated. If the alternative is eliminated, there would not be a Western Alternative on relocation in Bolivar County. The intent in Bolivar County for the DEIS is to study a West Alternative on relocation, an Eastern Alternative on relocation and a Central Alternative that uses US 61 as much as possible. To ensure a western alternative is studied, an alternative segment, which avoids impacting the western expansion of the Refuge and the portion of the west alternative along the Mississippi River, will be added as described below.

❖ A segment from where the Central Alternative crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland to where the west alternative crosses SR 444.

Progress Schedule

Utilizing a project schedule display, Robert Walker advised the following.

- The work is proceeding on schedule to select the alternatives for study in the DEIS, refine those alternatives, and conduct the archaeological and other needed environmental studies on the refined alternatives this winter while the farmers are not working in the fields.
- The DEIS should be completed and approved for presentation at a Public Hearing by the summer or fall of 2003.
- An identical series of Pubic Hearings should be conducted on successive days during the fall of 2003.
- The current schedule for selecting a Preferred Alternative in early Calendar Year 2004 appears attainable.
- The current schedule for having a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) approved and obtaining a Record of Decision (ROD) in late Calendar Year 2004 or early Calendar Year 2005 appears attainable.
- He was turning the program over to Mr. Ken Weeden for an Environmental Justice Report.

Environmental Justice Report

Mr. Ken Weeden advised of the following in his report.

- The goals of Environmental Justice for this project are fair and full participation by all involved parties, particularly minority and low-income population; avoidance or mitigation of impacts on these affected populations; and the proportionate spread of benefits generated by the project.
- His role is to focus on the Environmental Justice Outreach efforts for the project.
- His outreach efforts will include meetings, interviews with community representatives of all races and incomes, "open-house" forums in conjunction with other scheduled public information meetings, and the establishment of the Four County I-69 Community Issues Committee.
- The Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee was formed in March of 2002. This committee is composed of representatives and citizens of Bolivar, Sunflower, Coahoma, and Tunica counties.

- Although the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee will consist of one large, four-county committee, the initial meetings were held with subgroups in each county, except for the combining of Bolivar and Sunflower counties. The initial meetings were held in March of 2002. The purpose of the initial meetings was to explain the proposed intent of the committees and how the citizens could help provide insight into environmental justice and community impact issues for this important project.

- At the initial subgroup meetings of the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee, all of the groups decided they would like to meet again after the second identical series of public meetings. Also, members of the county sub-groups expressed a desire to eventually meet members from the other county sub-groups members for a joint Community Issues/Environmental Justice Meeting.

- The second series of identical public meetings were conducted on July 16-18, 2002. The comments received in response to those meetings are currently being addressed to refine the alternatives recommended for detailed study in the DEIS. One part of the alternate refinement process is narrowing the width of the alternatives from 1,000 feet to a more realistic anticipated right of way width of 450 feet. After the alternative refinement process is completed, the next subgroup meetings of the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee will be scheduled.

Agency Coordination

The following comments on agency coordination were made by Mr. Barnwell and/or Mr. Cecil Vick, the Environmental Coordinator of the Federal Highway Administration for the Jackson Division Office.

- The agencies that agreed to become Cooperating Agencies in this EIS are:
  - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
  - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
  - The U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
  - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
  - The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
  - The Mississippi Department of Archives and History

- The alternatives presented at the last series of public meetings and this meeting are the alternatives selected for refinement and detail study in the DEIS.
- Any objections to refining these alternatives and studying them in the DEIS should be made as soon as possible. This will prevent delaying archaeological and other studies needed this winter to complete the DEIS in Calendar Year 2003.
- It is possible that an additional alternative segment, or segments, will be recommended for study in the DEIS. If this occurs, the Cooperating Agencies will be notified and the appropriate public meeting(s) will be conducted.
- The Cooperating Agencies will receive a Draft of the DEIS. Any issues the Cooperating Agency have will be resolved prior to processing the DEIS for approval and scheduling a Public Hearing.

Break-Out Sessions

Since there were only nine representatives from the resource agencies in attendance at the meeting, the Break-Out Sessions were eliminated.

Resource Agency Comments

The agency representatives asked questions and/or made comments during the informal presentations by Messrs. Barnwell, Walker, and Vick. Some of those questions and comments were of a general nature and do not require documentation. Others were more specific. The more specific questions or comments and any responses that were made by the MDOT, FHWA, or consultant team are as follows:

- COMMENT: Ms. Ntale Kajumba advised Mr. Darryl Williams had recently assumed Mr. Palmer Hough's supervisory position in Region IV of the EPA.
- COMMENT: Since Mr. Williams had not attended any of the previous meetings on this project and since he was not that familiar with the project, he asked several background or general type questions.
- COMMENT: Mr. Williams and Ms. Kajumba were the only agency representatives in attendance at this meeting to request a field trip for the following day.
- RESPONSE: Upon learning that Mr. Williams and Ms. Kajumba had an afternoon flight from Memphis the following day, it was decided a morning trip that would conclude around noon should be adequate to better acquaint them with the project.

- COMMENT: Mr. Williams and Ms. Kajumba asked for an explanation of how the Central Corridor portion that uses US 61 could be changed into I-69.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with the consultant team, advised the US 61 Bypass at Clarksdale is built to the access control standards for an interstate facility. For locations where widening would be required to use US 61 for I-69, he explained the concept by referring to a display depicting the northbound and southbound lanes of I-69, an East Frontage Road, and a West Frontage Road. He advised traffic would remain on the existing lanes of US 61, while widening is accomplished on one side of the existing lanes. If widening is accomplished to the east, the northbound lanes of I-69 would be constructed as well as any needed East Frontage Road. After the northbound lanes of I-69 are completed, the northbound lanes of US 61 would be closed and traffic would be shifted to the northbound lanes of I-69. The southbound traffic would remain on the southbound lanes of US 61. After the southbound lanes of I-69 are completed, the southbound lanes of US 61 would be closed and this southbound traffic would be shifted to the southbound lanes of I-69. During this time, temporary median openings would be provided to maintain access at intersecting driveways and roads. Then, the closed southbound lanes would be remarked for two-lane, two-way traffic, access control would be changed to only allow access at interchange locations, and frontage roads would be opened to two-lane, two-way traffic. He advised a similar concept would be used when accomplishing the widening to the west. Mr. Shirley advised that whichever side is chosen as the widening side, it would be important to not switch the widening sides anymore than necessary because of the disruptions it would cause to maintain four-lane traffic throughout the construction.

- COMMENT: Mr. Mike Lilly commented on the conservation easement areas. He wanted to know what type conservation area or areas were designated by the gold color on the mapping displays of the alternatives. For the Wetland Reserve Program easements, Mr. Lilly offered his assistance in placing the project team in contact with State Program Coordinator for the sites.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Robert Walker advised there were four different types of conservation easements, and they were all depicted by the gold color on the mapping. He noted the conservation easements could have been acquired from a landowner by a governmental agency, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service, or by a private organization, such as Ducks Unlimited. He noted that a high priority was given to avoiding or minimizing the impacts to these areas. However, it was impossible to avoid all of them. As soon as the alternatives selected for detail study in the Draft EIS are refined, the procedure to acquire the needed conservation areas or portions of those areas will be determined.

- COMMENT: Messrs. Philip Hollis and the other U.S. Corps of Engineers representatives advised it appeared the project team had done a good job in developing and selecting the alternatives for detail study in the Draft EIS.

Closing:

Mr. Barnwell asked if there were any other questions or comments, and there were not any that required documentation. He again expressed his appreciation to everyone for taking time from their schedule to attend the meeting. He concluded the meeting by asking the attendees to contact him or Mr. Walker if they later thought of any questions or comments.

Field Trip on September 5, 2002

The agency representatives attending the field trip were Ms. Ntale Kajumba and Mr. Darryl Williams, with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Mr. Benjamin Davis, with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mr. Davis did not attend the afternoon meeting with the agencies the prior day on September 4. However, he did attend the meeting that morning with the local elected officials. The field trip began at Clarksdale, proceeded south to Benoit, and then back north to Clarksdale. The trip started at approximately 8:00 AM and concluded around noon. Portions of the alternatives recommended for detail study were viewed and discussed. The agency representatives were also made aware of probable interchange locations. When proceeding to Benoit, the agency representatives traveled through the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge on SR 446. Questions from the agency representatives appeared to be answered to their satisfaction, and the agency representatives did not make any objections to the alternatives presented at the meeting the previous day for detail study in the Draft EIS.

This concludes the minutes for this meeting and field trip.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

September 4-5, 2002 Mayors meeting – minutes

MINUTES

MAYORS-COUNTY SUPERVISORS COORDINATION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 4, 2002

FIELD TRIP
SEPTEMBER 5, 2002

INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY # 11
BETWEEN SR 304 EAST OF ROBINSONVILLE IN TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
AND SR 1 NEAR BENOIT IN BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted this coordination meeting from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM in Clarksdale at the Headquarters of the Delta Regional Authority. This meeting's purpose was to update the mayors and county supervisors on the status of the project and to obtain their input on a limited number of merited alternative corridors the project team believes should be taken forward for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Using contact information obtained from available records and previous meetings, 45 invitation packets were mailed in mid-August. The packets contained the following:

- An invitation letter.
- A map providing directions to the meeting location.
- An agenda for the meeting.
- A map of the alternative corridors presented to the public for comment at a series of identical public meetings conducted on July 16-18, 2002.
- A spreadsheet screening analysis of the alternatives presented to the public at the series of identical meetings conducted on July 16-18, 2002.
- A post card that provided the invitees an opportunity to request a field trip to view any of the alternatives on the day after the meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the MDOT, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some brief opening comments. He expressed his appreciation to the attendees for the efforts they made enabling them to attend the meeting. The attendees represented the consultant team, the MDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), mayors, county supervisors, and representatives of the invited mayors and supervisors. The consultant team representatives were from Neel-Schaffer, Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Coastal Environments, Inc., and Ken Weeden and Associates, Inc. At Mr. Barnwell's request, everyone present introduced themselves and whom they were representing at the meeting. Excluding the representatives from the MDOT, FHWA, and consultant team, nine people attended the meeting. Those nine people and whom they represented were:

- Mr. Wayne Cole – City of Cleveland
- Coahoma County Beat 5 Supervisor Ms. Katherine Furr – Coahoma County
- Mr. Pete Roncali – City of Shaw and Greenville Mayor Paul Artman
- Mound Bayou Mayor Kennedy Johnson – City of Mound Bayou
- Clarksdale Mayor Henry Espy – City of Clarksdale
- Tunica County District 4 Supervisor Jim Tucker – Tunica County
- Tunica County District 5 Supervisor Billy Pegram – Tunica County
- Mr. Charlie Williams – Tunica County
- Mr. Benjamin Davis – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Delta Initiatives

Mr. Davis is a governmental official who was unable to attend the agency meeting, scheduled for later in the day during the afternoon, so he attended this morning meeting instead.

Mr. Barnwell advised the meeting is informal, and that the purpose of the meeting is to seek input and direction from the local officials on the alternatives selected for further study in the DEIS. He stated further refinement of the selected alignments will be made to reduce the normal width of the corridors from 1,000 feet to approximately 450 feet. Mr. Barnwell advised he believes the consultant team has done a good job to date in developing the alternatives. Although the interests of the local officials and the governmental agencies were considered in the development of the alternatives, Mr. Barnwell stated now is the time to concentrate on the details of refining, adding, or reducing the alternatives. He then turned the program over to Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the consultant team.

Project Status Update

Utilizing displays mounted on easels, Mr. Walker advised the attendees of the following progress that had been made on the project.

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- The refined 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors and the screening analysis on those corridors were presented to the resource agencies for comment at a Scoping Meeting conducted at the MDOT on April 2, 2002.

- The Economic Study – comparing the potential economic development opportunities for a West Corridor, Central Corridor, and East Corridor – was completed, and it determined all three corridors have the potential to generate economic development. As to a ranking, the study determined the Central Corridor provided the highest opportunity for economic development followed by the East Corridor and then the West Corridor. A major reason the Central Corridor was chosen as having the highest potential was its location relative to established population centers. The following is a description of the three corridors evaluated in the study.

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- ❖ A Central Corridor which proceeds east from Benoit and stays south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge before turning north to cross SR 8 east of Pace and west of Cleveland. Slightly north of the SR 8 crossing, the corridor turns northeast to become concurrent with US 61 near Merigold. The corridor uses US 61 as much as possible from Merigold to the Tunica area before turning east to cross SR 3 and then north to cross SR 304 and become concurrent with the SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville.

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- There were key members of the MDOT and FHWA staff that needed to know the work accomplished on the project. This staff also needed to be involved in approving the 1,000 feet wide refined alternative corridors for presentation at the second series of public meetings. For those reasons, an interagency meeting of the MDOT and FHWA with the consultant team was conducted at the MDOT on May 8, 2002. At that meeting, the consultant team presented the compiled information on the 1,000 feet wide corridors, and which corridors were recommended for presentation to the public at a second series of public meetings.

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- The Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee was formed in March of 2002. This committee is composed of representatives and citizens of Bolivar, Sunflower, Coahoma, and Tunica counties.

- Although the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee will consist of one large, four-county committee, the initial meetings were held with subgroups in each county, except for the combining of Bolivar and Sunflower counties. The initial meetings were held in March of 2002. The purpose of the initial meetings was to explain the proposed intent of the committees and how the citizens could help provide insight into environmental justice and community impact issues for this important project.

- At the initial subgroup meetings of the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee, all of the groups decided they would like to meet again after the second identical series of public meetings. Also, members of the county sub-groups expressed a desire to eventually meet members from the other county sub-groups members for a joint Community Issues/Environmental Justice Meeting.

- The second series of identical public meetings were conducted on July 16-18, 2002. The comments received in response to those meetings are currently being addressed to refine the alternatives recommended for detailed study in the DEIS. One part of the alternate refinement process is narrowing the width of the alternatives from 1,000 feet to a more realistic anticipated right of way width of 450 feet. After the alternative refinement process is completed, the next subgroup meetings of the Four-County I-69 Community Issues Committee will be scheduled.

Break-Out Sessions

Since there were only eight local official representatives in attendance at the meeting, the Break-Out Sessions were eliminated.

Local Official Representatives Comments

The representatives asked questions and/or made comments during the informal presentations by Messrs. Barnwell, Walker, and Vick. Some of those questions and comments were of a general nature and do not require documentation. Others were more specific. The more specific questions or comments and any responses that were made by the MDOT, FHWA, or consultant team are as follows:

- COMMENT: On behalf on Tunica County, Mr. Charlie Williams requested an interchange in the south part of the county at Dubbs Road.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with the consultant team, advised the possibility of providing an interchange at Dubbs Road would be evaluated.

- COMMENT: Coahoma County Supervisor Katherine Furr owns property in the southeast part of Coahoma County. She advised the eastern alternative divides her farmland. She stated her concern about the access problems and decrease in property value that alternative could cause. She commented the eastern alternative within her property crosses Young Road, and that road is used by school buses.

- RESPONSE: The consultant team advised Ms. Young that dividing farmland and impacting access are problems of concern throughout the project for all the alternatives, and that the project team intends to address those problems in a fair and uniform manner.

- COMMENT: Mr. Cole asked for an explanation on of how the Central Corridor portion that uses US 61 could be changed into I-69.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with the consultant team, advised the US 61 Bypass at Clarksdale is built to the access control standards for an interstate facility. For locations where widening would be required to use US 61 for I-69, Mr. Shirley explained the concept by referring to a display depicting the northbound and southbound lanes of I-69, an East Frontage Road, and a West Frontage Road. He advised traffic would remain on the existing lanes of US 61, while widening is accomplished on one side of the existing lanes. If widening is accomplished to the east, the northbound lanes of I-69 would be constructed as well as any needed East Frontage Road. After the northbound lanes of I-69 are completed, the northbound lanes of US 61 would be closed and that traffic would be shifted to the northbound lanes of I-69. The southbound traffic would remain on the southbound lanes of US 61, and during this time temporary median openings would be required to maintain driveway and county road access. After the southbound lanes of I-69 are completed, the southbound lanes of US 61 would be closed and this southbound traffic would be shifted to the southbound lanes of I-69. The closed southbound lanes would be remarked for two-lane, two-way traffic, access control would be changed to only allow access at interchange locations, and frontage roads would be opened to two-lane, two-way traffic. He advised a similar concept would be used when accomplishing the widening to the west. Mr. Shirley stated that whichever side is chosen as the widening side, it would be important to not reverse the widening sides anymore than necessary because of the disruptions it would cause to maintain four-lane traffic throughout the construction.

- COMMENT: Mr. Charlie Williams, on behalf of Tunica County Administrator Ken Murphree, requested the project team to make a field trip the following day with Mr. Murphree. He advised the purpose of Mr. Murphree's request was to review with Mr. Murphree a portion of the alternatives in Tunica County.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Walker advised he would make the necessary arrangements to accommodate Mr. Murphree's request.

- COMMENT: Mr. Davis, with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, requested a field visit for the following day.

- RESPONSE: Mr. Walker advised Mr. Davis that the project team welcomed his participation on the field visit.

Closing:

Mr. Barnwell asked if there were any other questions or comments, and there were not any that required documentation. He again expressed his appreciation to everyone for taking time from their schedule to attend the meeting. He concluded the meeting by asking the attendees to contact him or Mr. Walker if they later thought of any questions or comments.

Meeting Follow-up on September 4, 2002

After lunch and prior to the agency meeting, Ms. Katherine Furr hand-delivered a copy of her property map to consultant team representatives Messrs. Jimmy Shirley and David Ruhl.

Field Trip on September 5, 2002

The project team concluded their morning field trip with the governmental agency representatives around noon. During that trip, the agency representatives were shown a portion of the selected alternatives between Clarksdale and Benoit. After lunch, the project team then traveled to Tunica and met with Mr. Murphree.

Mr. Murphree accompanied the project team on a driving tour of portions of the selected alternatives in Tunica County between SR 4 and SR 304. During this tour, the following occurred.

- The project team viewed the Tunica Airport, which is currently undergoing expansion, and Mr. Murphree made the team aware of the County's long-range plans for industrial development adjacent and east of the airport.

- The project team viewed the area to the east of the airport where Mr. Murphree advised providing a railroad spur is part of the long-range industrial plan.

- The project team viewed the area east of Robinsonville along the five-lane section of SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3. Widening SR 304 to five lanes in this area was accomplished to accommodate expected future development along this section of highway.

- The project team was aware of the casinos and development that has occurred in the Robinsonville area west and north of the US 61/SR 304 intersection. The casinos are major overnight tourist destinations, and this area also generates a large number of local trips from Memphis and the surrounding areas of south Tennessee, northeast Arkansas, and north Mississippi.

- Considering the gaming related traffic generated at Robinsonville and the county's long-range industrial planning for the area immediately east of the airport, Mr. Murphree stated his belief that the alternative passing just east of the airport and closest to Robinsonville is the best alternative for the north part of the County.

The field trip with Mr. Murphree ended around 3:00 PM.

This concludes the minutes for this meeting and field trip.

Note: Several weeks after this meeting and field trip, Mr. Hugh Jack Stubbs telephoned Robert Walker. As County Administrator for Coahoma County, Mr. Stubbs asked Mr. Walker to consider an interchange location in Coahoma County for the east alternative at the county road east of Bobo.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

February 11-13, 2004 Native American conference – minutes

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
TELEPHONE: 601.948.3071 • FAX: 601.948.3178 • EMAIL: i69@neel-schaffer.com • WEBSITE: www.msdoti69.com

January 9, 2004

Ms. Ntale Kajumba
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
Environmental Accountability Division - NEPA
Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

SUBJECT: INVITATION TO CONSULT ON INTERSTATE 69
SIU #11 AND SIU # 9
BETWEEN BENOIT, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN

Dear Ms. Kajumba:

In accordance with the formal consultation process under 36 CFR 800, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), in concurrence with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has scheduled a conference with the Native American tribal representatives concerning these two SIUs of the proposed new Interstate 69. The conference will be held at the Grand Casino Tunica Hotel in Robinsonville on February 11-13, 2004, and as a Cooperating Agency contact for one or both of these SIUs you are also invited to attend this important conference.

The sections of the proposed new Interstate 69 that will be discussed are *Segment of Independent Utility (SIU) 11 and SIU 9*. SIU 11 is located from near Benoit, Mississippi to near Robinsonville, Mississippi, while SIU 9 is located from near Hernando, Mississippi to near Millington, Tennessee. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Grand Casino Hotel for the conference.

Depending on the travel arrangements for the representatives of the Native American Tribes, the conference will begin with a mid-afternoon meeting on Wednesday, February 11. Unless you are advised otherwise, 3:00 PM will be the starting time for the afternoon meeting. During this initial meeting, the alternatives being considered for both studies will be presented, and you will be advised of the influences that environmental constraints had in the development of the alternatives. Detailed mapping displays and other displays will be available for viewing to supplement the presentations. Possible presenters/participants will also include the archaeologists for both studies along with Mississippi State University's look at the overall history of the areas. The agenda and discussions will be adjusted as requested and directed by the Tribes. A reception and dinner will be held to conclude the day's activities.

On Thursday, February 12, a field visit is scheduled to tour the SIU 11 alternative locations in the Mississippi Delta between Robinsonville and Benoit. The field trip will begin and end at the Grand Casino Hotel. The tour will concentrate on areas of interest to the Native Americans, and it is anticipated the field visit will take the entire day. At the conclusion of the tour, an opportunity will be given for a round table discussion. A dinner will then conclude the activities for the day.

Friday, February 13, will be devoted to a site visit for SIU 9 between Hernando, Mississippi and Millington, Tennessee. The conclusion time for this visit will be determined as the attendees deem

appropriate and agreeable. We suggest scheduling departure flight times, in the mid-afternoon or later on Friday.

The following attached information on these two SIUs should benefit you in preparing for the conference.

- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 9;
- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 11; and,
- A copy of the map of alternatives handout presented to attendees at the last series of Public Meetings on SIU 11.

We are particularly interested in finding ways to identify historic properties of importance to Native Americans as well as properties to which one or more tribes may attach religious or cultural significance. It is likely the Native Americans will ask questions and make comments or requests about the locations of alternatives relative to their concerns. The project team's response might be of interest to you, and the expertise that you could provide might be of assistance to the project team in responding to issues raised by the Native Americans.

In order for us to make the necessary final arrangements in planning for the conference, please call me at (601) 948-3071 by January 30, and advise who you will have attending the conference.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Walker, P.E.
I-69 SIU 11 Project Manager
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

Attachments

pc: Mr. Andrew H. Hughes, MS Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. James Q. Dickerson, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Walter G. Lyons, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Bobby W. Blackmon, TN Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. Doug Delaney, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Tom Love, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Gerald Kline, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Ray Brisson, SIU 9 Project Manager, PBS&J

The following individuals were mailed the same correspondence as mailed to Ms. Ntale Kajumba:

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Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

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Mr. Tom Waggener
Review and Compliance Officer
Miss. Department of Archives and History
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Mr. Benjamin F. Davis, Jr.
Special Programs Officer, Delta Initiatives
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MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY

I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
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January 8, 2004

Mr. Kirk Perry
Administrator of Heritage Preservation
Chickasaw Nation
P. O. Box 1548
Ada, OK 74821

SUBJECT: INVITATION TO CONSULT ON INTERSTATE 69
SIU #11 AND SIU # 9
BETWEEN BENOIT, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN

Dear Mr. Perry:

In accordance with the formal consultation process under 36 CFR 800, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), in concurrence with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), invites you and/or your representative(s) to attend a conference on these two sections of the proposed new Interstate 69. The conference will be held at the Grand Casino Tunica Hotel in Robinsonville on February 11-13, 2004.

The proposed Interstate 69 will eventually stretch from Canada to Mexico. Due to its length, the overall route has been divided into segments for individual environmental and cultural resource studies. The segments we would like to meet with you about are *Segment of Independent Utility (SIU) 11 and SIU 9*. SIU 11 is located from near Benoit, Mississippi to near Robinsonville, Mississippi, while SIU 9 is located from near Hernando, Mississippi to near Millington, Tennessee.

To better enable your participation, the MDOT and FHWA are offering to pay the travel expenses for you to send a maximum of two representatives to the conference. The reimbursable travel expenses include air fare, meals, and lodging. Additionally, travel from the Memphis Airport to Robinsonville, travel for the field visits, and travel from Robinsonville back to the Memphis Airport will be provided by the MDOT. After your travel expense receipts are submitted to the MDOT, the MDOT plans to provide the reimbursement. If you desire to drive to the conference, instead of fly, the MDOT will reimburse you at the government rate for your mileage not to exceed the equivalent cost of the lowest airfare rate. A block of rooms is reserved at the Grand Casino Hotel for the conference.

Depending on the travel arrangements for the representatives of the Native American Tribes, the conference will begin with a mid-afternoon meeting on Wednesday, February 11. Unless you are advised otherwise, 3:00 PM will be the starting time for conference. During the afternoon meeting, the alternatives being considered for both studies will be presented, and the attendees will be advised of the influences that environmental constraints had in the development of the alternatives. Detailed mapping displays and other displays will be available for viewing and discussions to supplement the presentations. Possible presenters/participants also will include the archaeologists for both studies along with Mississippi State University's look at the overall history of the areas. The agenda and discussions will be adjusted as requested and directed by the Native Americans. A reception and dinner will be held to conclude the day's activities.

On Thursday, February 12, a field visit is scheduled to tour the SIU 11 alternative locations in the Mississippi Delta between Robinsonville and Benoit. The field trip will begin and end at the Grand Casino Hotel. The tour will concentrate on areas of interest to the Native Americans, and it is anticipated the field visit will take the entire day. When the tour ends, an opportunity will be given for a round table discussion. A dinner will then conclude the activities for the day.

Friday, February 13, will be devoted to a site visit for SIU 9 between Hernando, Mississippi and Millington, Tennessee. The conclusion time for this visit will be determined as is deemed appropriate and agreeable. We suggest scheduling departure flight times in the mid-afternoon or later on Friday.

The following attached information on these two SIUs should benefit you in preparing for this conference:

- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 9;
- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 11; and,
- A copy of the map of alternatives handout presented to attendees at the last series of Public Meetings on SIU 11.

We are particularly interested in finding ways to identify historic properties of importance to Native Americans as well as properties to which one or more tribes may attach religious or cultural significance. After reviewing the attached material on these two SIUs, you may decide that more detailed information is needed before you can make a determination whether or not an alternative would impact one of these historic, religious, or culturally significant sites. If this is the case, please contact me so you can be provided the information at the conference.

In order for us to make the necessary final arrangements in planning the conference, please call me at (601) 948-3071 by January 30, and advise who you will have attending the conference.

Sincerely,

Robert Walker, P.E.
I-69 SIU 11 Project Manager
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

Attachments

pc: Mr. Andrew H. Hughes, MS Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. James Q. Dickerson, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Walter G. Lyons, Mississippi Department of Transportation
Mr. Bobby W. Blackmon, TN Division Administrator, FHWA
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Mr. Tom Love, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Gerald Kline, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Mr. Ray Brisson, SIU 9 Project Manager, PBS&J

The following individuals were mailed the same correspondence as mailed to Mr. Kirk Perry:

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INTERSTATE 69, SECTION 9
FROM HERNANDO, MS TO MILLINGTON, TN

The Tennessee Department of Transportation, the Mississippi Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are continuing to develop the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Segment of Independent Utility 9 (SIU 9) of Interstate 69 (I-69) extending from Hernando, Mississippi to Millington, Tennessee. This section is a part of the larger I-69 endeavor that extends from Port Huron in Michigan to the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas.

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was formed to evaluate information from the project studies and make decisions about the project. The TAC is made up of representatives from the Mississippi and Tennessee Departments of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration representatives, and a representative of the Memphis Metropolitan Planning Organization.

In the initial evaluation of alternatives for this segment, three major build alternatives were identified. One alternative passed through Memphis, another bypassed Memphis to the east, and another was a system approach alternative that followed the existing interstate system through Memphis and provided relief to the overburdened existing system by providing a bypass around Memphis to the east. As the study has sought the best solution to the problem of bringing I-69 though Memphis, the facts have clearly shown that the only solution that will meet the overall purpose and need for the project is a highway system approach. Therefore, the DEIS is being developed with only one build alternative (the system approach) and the no-build alternative.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Memphis is one of the "named cities" in the federal legislation, and the law requires that it be connected to the new I-69 corridor. Memphis is a multi-billion dollar hub of multi-modal transportation and one of the top ten distribution centers in the United States. In order to maintain and grow a stable economic environment for its citizens, Memphis needs to expand its services, infrastructure and economic opportunities.

The defined purpose and need of the overall corridor of I-69 from Canada to Mexico is:

- *To improve international and interstate trade in accordance with national and state goals;*
- *To facilitate economic development in accordance with state, regional, and local policies and plans; and*
- *To improve surface transportation consistent with national, state, regional, and local needs with the Congressional designation of this corridor.*

The purpose and need is best accomplished by providing the most direct route between the project termini. Bringing the I-69 traffic through Memphis on existing interstates would provide the most direct route and offer the best connections to the Mississippi River Bridges (I-40 West and I-55 North), the Port of Memphis, the Memphis International Airport, and other intermodal connections in Memphis. Studies of the projected I-69 traffic and freight movement show that a large proportion of I-69 commercial traffic will have an origin or destination in Memphis. The existing interstates through Memphis currently experience high volumes of traffic and operate at congested levels during certain periods of the day. During these congested periods, through-traffic on I-69 would experience delays and a low "Level-of-Service". Through traffic on I-69 and traffic destined for the major highways leaving Memphis to the

east would not be adequately served without an eastern bypass.

The defined purpose and need of I-69, SIU 9 from Hernando, Mississippi to Millington, Tennessee is:

- *To increase accessibility of the region and stimulate economic development;*
- *To respond to local traffic growth and travel demands of the public by providing a high speed type access control facility that accommodates the traffic usage, reduces travel time, improves safety, and enhances access between communities within the study area; and*
- *To enhance the ability to connect to other key US Highways such as US 78, US 72, US 64, and US 51 to accommodate regional freight movements.*

The Memphis Long Range Transportation Plan identifies the need for an eastern outer loop to provide additional regional transportation access to the smaller cities and municipalities around Memphis and to connect to other key US Highways such as US 78, US 72, US 64, and US 51. While much of the highway corridors proposed for I-69 will use existing highways, environmental studies including social, economic, ecology, cultural resources, air quality and traffic noise have been completed for the sections of the corridors on new location. From an analysis of these and other factors, the project development committee has concluded that, to meet both the national and local needs of I-69, a system approach will be required. The committee proposes directing I-69 traffic both through Memphis on the existing interstate system and around Memphis to the east on the eastern bypass anticipated in the Memphis Long Range Transportation Plan. All other alternatives that have been considered will not meet the project's purpose and need and have, therefore, been dismissed from further consideration.

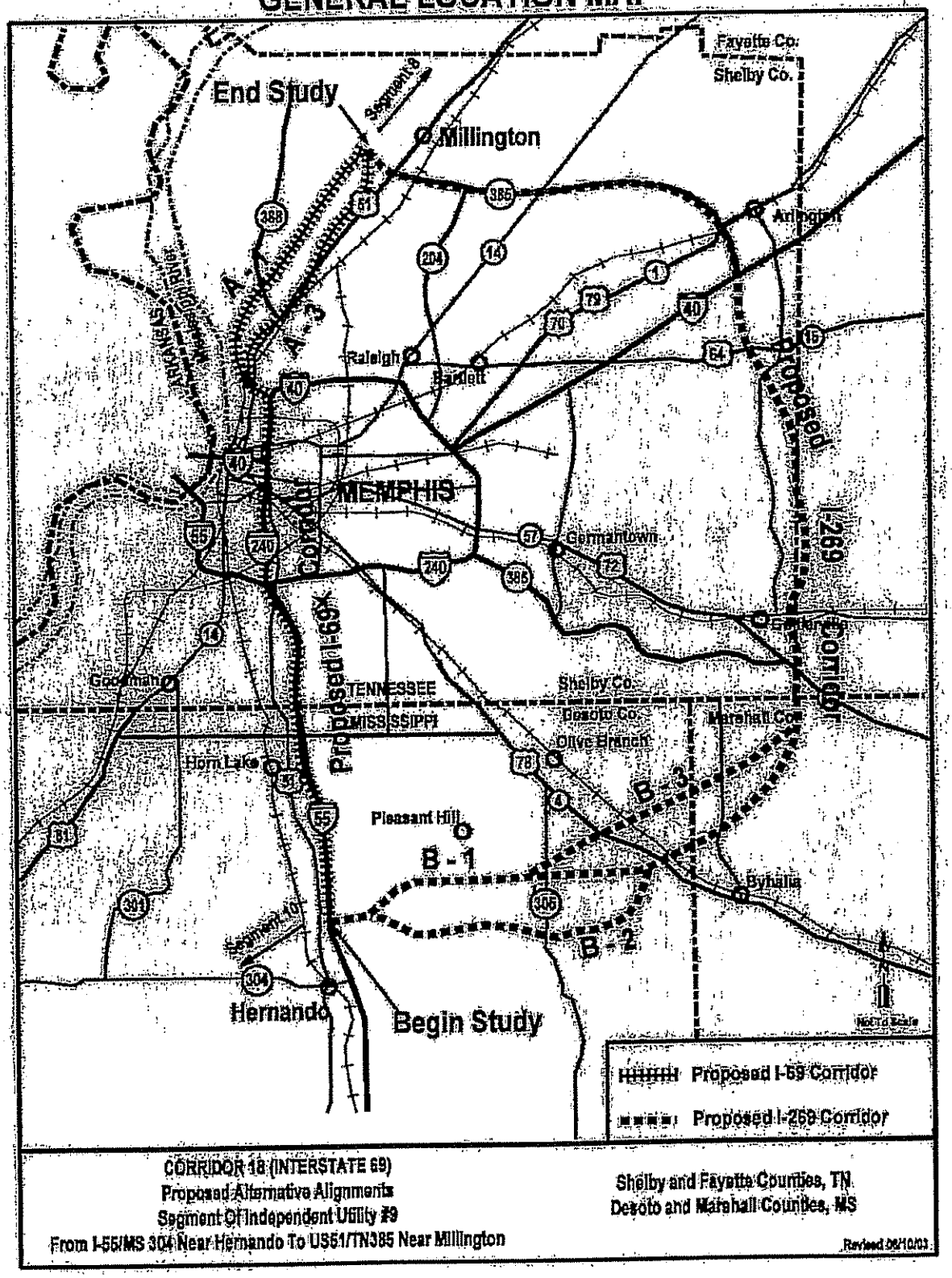
SYSTEM APPROACH

The system alternative will be the only Build Alternative presented in the DEIS with the No-Build Alternative.

The primary route for proposed **I-69** will begin at the I-55/MS 304 Interchange, currently under construction, in Hernando, Mississippi and follow existing Interstates 55, 240 and 40 through central Memphis. The alignment will then follow TN State Route 300 to its junction with US 51. At this point, it will follow one of two proposed new location construction sections west of US 51 into Millington. The I-69 system will also include an outer loop, proposed to be designated as **I-269**, which will proceed east and then north from the I-55/MS 304 Interchange in Hernando and follow one of three proposed new location construction sections into Tennessee to a connection with TN State Route 385 at Collierville. The portion on new location will follow the corridor identified as MS 304 in the Memphis Long Range Transportation Plan. The eastern part of the system will then follow the approved route for TN State Route 385 from Collierville to I-40 at Arlington (under development) and the completed section of TN 385 from I-40 into Millington. See attached map identified as "System Approach Alternative".

Within the system approach alternative, there are two new location sections that would be constructed as part of this project. There are multiple alignment options under consideration for these two new location sections along each corridor. The decision to be made from the Environmental Impact Statement/Public Involvement process is the selection of the preferred alignment within each new construction section. These alignment options are identified as A-1 and A-3 for the section in Tennessee and B-1, B-2, and B-3 for the section in Mississippi. See attached map identified as "System Approach Alternative".

GENERAL LOCATION MAP



SYSTEM APPROACH ALTERNATIVE MAP

The traffic study performed for the preliminary DEIS shows that by using both routes as the Build Alternative, the result would be some improvement in traffic operations along the existing route through Memphis. There would be a corresponding increase in the amount of travel forecast for the already planned eastern bypass, but the slight increase would not change its operational characteristics.

Activities Completed To Date

Environmental studies including ecology, cultural resources, air quality and traffic noise, have been completed for the portions of the alignment on new location. A Traffic Study, an Environmental Justice Report and an Economic Development Study have been completed for the project.

A technical analysis of the previously identified new construction alignments has been completed, environmentally sensitive areas have been avoided to the extent practical, and the unavoidable impacts have been calculated. The number of business and family displacements, stream crossings, wetlands, air and noise impacts, historical impacts, and potential archaeological impacts has been documented. Functional drawings have been developed, and a 300-foot wide right-of-way footprint for each alignment has been identified and will be presented at the Corridor Public Hearings.

Schedule

The DEIS is tentatively scheduled to be submitted to the FHWA in late 2003. Once the DEIS is approved by the Federal Highway Administration, it will be made available at area libraries prior to the Corridor Public Hearings. The DEIS will also be available at Tennessee Department of Transportation offices, Mississippi Department of Transportation offices, Federal Highway Administration division offices and the local Memphis Metropolitan Planning Organization office. It is anticipated the Corridor Public Hearings will be held early next year.

For more information, please visit the Tennessee Department of Transportation website at www.tdot.state.tn.us and click on "Hot Projects".

TDOT MDOT

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

PBS&J
Two International Plaza Drive, Suite 810
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INTERSTATE 69

SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY #9 AND #11 BETWEEN BENOIT, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

NATIVE AMERICAN CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 11-13, 2004

GRAND CASINO & RESORT, TUNICA – VERANDA HOTEL ROBINSONVILLE, MISSISSIPPI

DRAFT AGENDA

Wednesday – February 11

▪ **FIRST SESSION**	**4:00 – 5:30 PM**
• **Welcome**	**Butch Brown MDOT**
• **SIU 11 Opening Comments**	**Claiborne Barnwell MDOT**
• **SIU 11 History and Status**	**Robert Walker Neel-Schaffer**
• **SIU 11 Archaeological and Cultural Resource Findings**	**David Kelley Coastal Environments**
• **Open Discussion**	**Claiborne Barnwell MDOT**
▪ **BREAK**	**5:30 – 5:45 PM**
▪ **SECOND SESSION**	**5:45 – 6:30 PM**
• **SIU 9 Discussion**	**Ray Brisson PBS&J**
▪ **DINNER**	**7:00 PM**

Thursday – February 12

▪ CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST	7:00 – 7:30 AM
▪ MORNING FIELD REVIEW OF SIU 11 ALTERNATIVES FROM ROBINSONVILLE TO CLEVELAND/BENOIT AREA	8:00 – 12:00 NOON
▪ LUNCH AT CLEVELAND	NOON – 1:00 PM
▪ AFTERNOON REVIEW OF SIU 11 ALTERNATIVES FROM CLEVELAND/BENOIT AREA TO ROBINSONVILLE	1:00 PM – 5:30 PM
▪ DISCUSSION ON SIU 11 FIELD REVIEW AT DINNER	7:00 PM

Friday – February 13

▪ CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST	7:00 – 7:30 AM
▪ FIELD REVIEW & DISCUSSIONS OF SIU 9 ALTERNATIVES BETWEEN HERNANDO, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN	8:00 – 12:00 NOON
▪ CONFERENCE CONCLUDES	12:00 NOON

MINUTES

I-69 NATIVE AMERICAN CONFERENCE
SECTIONS OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY 9 AND 11
BETWEEN BENOIT, MS AND MILLINGTON, TN
FEBRUARY 11-13, 2004

GRAND CASINO & RESORT
TUNICA-VERANDA HOTEL
ROBINSONVILLE, MS

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley Date Prepared: May 13, 2004

In accordance with the formal consultation process described in 36 CFR 800, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) hosted this Native American Conference for Sections of Independent Utility (SIU) # 9 and #11 of the proposed Interstate 69 (I-69). Alternatives have been selected for detail engineering and environmental studies for both these SIUs and Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statements have been prepared. The conference was directed towards the Native American tribal representatives who could possibly identify properties of importance to Native Americans, as well as properties to which one or more tribes may attach religious or cultural significance, relative to the alternatives undergoing further study. The Mississippi Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), and Tennessee Division Office of the FHWA concurred in the MDOT scheduling and hosting this conference. To provide a good cross section of representation for issues involving the natural and human environments, some representatives from Federal and State Cooperating Agencies were also invited to the conference.

By updating and using available contact information, 28 invitation packets containing the following information were mailed on January 8, 2004.

- An invitation letter;
- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 9;
- A copy of the most recent newsletter for SIU 11; and,

- A copy of the map of alternatives handout presented to attendees at the last series of public meetings on SIU 11.

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Engineer with the MDOT, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided some brief opening comments. He then introduced Mr. Robert Walker, the I-69 Project Manager for the SIU 11 Study, and Mr. Walker provided a welcome on behalf of the SIU 11 Consultant Study Team. When Mr. Walker concluded his welcoming comments, Mr. Barnwell asked everyone to introduce themselves and state their affiliation with the project.

The attendees represented the MDOT, TDOT, Mississippi and Tennessee Division Offices of the FHWA, the consultant teams for SIU 9 and SIU 11, three Native American tribes, Mississippi State University, and some of the SIU 11 Cooperating Agencies. Excluding the 22 representatives from the MDOT, TDOT, FHWA, and consultant teams, 13 people attended the First Session. Those 13 people and the agencies they represented were:

- Mr. Benjamin Davis with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- Mr. David Felder with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Ms. Susan Jarvis, Ms. Beth Guynes, Mr. Harold Lee, and Mr. Joe Greenleaf with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District;
- Ms. Ntale Kajumba with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency;
- Messrs. John Connaway and Cliff Jenkins with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History;
- Dr. Evan Peacock with Mississippi State University;
- Mr. Ken Carleton with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians;
- Mr. Terry Cole with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma;
- Ms. 'Rena Duncan with the Chickasaw Nation

Mr. Barnwell asked Mr. Butch Brown, the MDOT Executive Director, if he would like to make some opening comments on behalf of the MDOT. Mr. Brown expressed his appreciation for the good attendance at the Conference, and the importance of the I-69 Project to the State of Mississippi. He commented there are numerous individuals or groups representing various human and environmental interests that are involved in the review process for this project, and Mr. Brown emphasized the need for everyone involved to maintain a spirit of cooperation throughout the project review process. If the cooperative spirit is maintained, Mr. Brown stated his belief that the project could be advanced through the review process in a timely and efficient manner that balanced the needs for the project with the project's impacts on the human and natural environments. Mr. Brown commented that cooperation between state highway agencies and Native Americans was very important if the interests of these two groups are to be addressed in a timely and efficient manner that satisfactorily meets these two groups' expectations. Mr. Brown advised the MDOT conducted a recent conference with the Native Americans in Philadelphia, Mississippi, and the MDOT has emphasized involving the MDOT's Native American contacts in more project reviews. He advised these are two of the actions the MDOT has taken recently to establish and maintain a good working relationship with the Native Americans. Mr. Brown stated he hoped this conference would help to further improve the MDOT's working relationship with the Native Americans.

Mr. Ken Carleton, the tribal representative for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, commented on the Federal Law as it pertains to consultation with Native American tribes on highway projects, and the importance of early involvement with the Native Americans.

SIU 11 Presentation on Archaeological Study and Findings

Mr. David Kelley, with Coastal Environments, Inc., presented a report that included the following information.

- Project began in Spring 2001 with collection of existing data on archaeological sites and historic structures in the study area corridor from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Corridor examined was about 100 miles

long and varied from 10 to 20 miles wide. At that time there were over 800 sites and 400 historic structures recorded in the corridor. Despite the large number of known resources, only small portions of the corridor had been systematically surveyed.

- The data on recorded archaeological sites and historic structures were entered in the project GIS, and this information, along with a variety of other environmental data, was used by project planners to help select potential alignments for the highway. Sites that were listed or eligible for the National Register and those that had not been evaluated were avoided if possible.
- Several alternative alignments were presented at a series of public meetings in the Fall of 2001. Those alignments were then modified based on comments received at the public meetings and at a meeting with regulatory agencies, and a second round of public meetings was held in the Spring of 2002. Following those meetings a final series of alternative alignments were selected for more detailed study in the EIS.
- In order to obtain comparable data from all of the alignments, sample surveys were conducted on approximately 33% of each of the final alignments. The samples were not randomly selected, but focused on high probability areas. In the case of the archaeological survey this consisted of the natural levees of abandoned river channels, which are the most common setting of sites in this area. The intent was to locate as many sites as possible early in the planning process so that these data could be used in the selection of the preferred alignment. The archaeological survey examined a right-of-way that was generally 450 ft or about 150 m wide. Most of the area is in cultivation and crew members walked transects spaced 30 m apart and excavated shovel or auger tests in areas where the ground surface was obscured by vegetation or where there was a potential for site burial below the depth of plowing.
- The sample surveys located 217 archaeological sites, 90 percent of them newly recorded. Sixty percent of the sites have Native American occupations. They range in age from a Late Paleo-Indian occupation (ca. 8000-9000 B.C.) at one site to a number of Late Mississippi period occupations that date between A.D.

1400 and 1700. On the basis of the artifacts recovered, the majority of the occupations date to some portion of the Woodland stage (ca. 800 B.C.-A.D. 1200), and most are assignable to the Baytown period (ca. A.D. 400-800). Occupations dating to the Mississippi period (ca. A.D. 1200-1700) are also common, but not as numerous as those of the Baytown period. Small numbers of Archaic stage occupations (ca. 8000-800 B.C.) are also present, but in most cases these are represented by only a few dart points. The numbers of these occupations are limited in part by the fact that the landforms in over 35 percent of the study area are too recent to have sites of this age on them.

- The Native American sites range in size from numerous small sites that cover less than an acre to a few sites that are over 20 acres in area and have one or two mounds. The smallest sites may represent short-term occupations by one or two households. The largest sites are small villages that were occupied for hundreds of years.
- Eighty-two percent of the archaeological sites have historic period occupations. These sites date predominantly to the late 19th or early 20th centuries, but a few early to mid-19th century occupations have also been identified. Most of the sites probably represent the former locations of the houses of plantation workers.
- A sample survey was conducted for historic structures. This survey focused on areas that on the basis of early maps and aerial photographs had the potential for containing substantial numbers of structures greater than 50 years old. In this case the survey examined a mile-wide corridor in order to include potential visual and noise effects and was conducted by car.
- The standing structure survey located 287 historic structures. Two-thirds of these are houses. The remainder includes 39 commercial buildings, 20 churches, 13 cemeteries, 12 barns, and 5 schools. Most of these structures date to the early twentieth century, a few date to the late 19th century, and one, Hollywood Plantation, dates to the middle 19th century.
- Initial evaluations have been made of the archaeological sites located in the sample surveys and 43 sites that appear to have research potential are being

recommended for avoidance or further testing. Where possible project planners are attempting to avoid these sites; however, in some cases this may not be possible due to other constraints. In those cases test excavations will be necessary, and if the site is determined eligible, data recovery will be required. The historic structures are also being evaluated and those that are considered eligible for the National Register are being recommended for avoidance or some type of mitigation.

- Once the preferred alignment for the highway has been chosen, the remaining portion of that alignment will be surveyed. As additional sites or structures are found in this alignment, these will also be evaluated and, if necessary, further adjustments to the alignment may be made to avoid these as well.

Mississippi State University Presentation by Dr. Evan Peacock

Dr. Peacock provided a brief presentation on a project Mississippi State University has received from the MDOT for conducting detailed archaeological studies on the Preferred Alternatives for sections of I-69 within Mississippi. Their project is very important because it provides the opportunity of locating additional unknown sites prior to construction activities.

SIU 9 Status Report by Mr. Ray Brisson of PBS&J

Mr. Brisson discussed the status of their contract on SIU 9 of I-69 between I-55 near Hernando, Mississippi, and US 51 near Millington, Tennessee. He discussed the two general alternatives being studied. Mr. Brisson advised one of the general alternatives utilizes the existing interstate corridor system through Memphis and the other general alternative provides a new interstate loop to the east of Memphis. Based on traffic demand, Mr. Brisson stated the recommendation was to provide both alternatives. He commented the alternative using the existing system would probably be designated as I-69 while the loop could possibly be designated as I-169. Based on input received from the Native American tribal representatives, it was decided the SIU 9 field visit would be made as scheduled on Friday, February 13th.

SIU 11 Field Visit on February 12, 2004

Coastal Environments coordinated the field visit to archaeological sites they believed would be of interest to the Native American tribal representatives. Some of the sites were previously recorded and some had been discovered by Coastal Environments. The arrival of the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma's representative, Ms Carrie Wilson, was delayed the previous day due to bad weather, but she was able to attend the SIU 11 and SIU 9 field visits. Mr. Terry Cole, the representative for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, had a family emergency and left the conference on February 12th prior to this field visit.

The site visit began in Tunica County, continued south into Coahoma County and concluded near the Town of Merigold in Bolivar County. Along with viewing selected sites, the field visit also provided the group an opportunity to view portions of the alternatives recommended for further study. The Native American representatives made the following key points during the field visit.

- Sites sensitive to the Native Americans exist to the west of US 61 north and south of the intersection with US 49 near Lula. They asked that these sites be avoided.
- When sites border an alternative and if that alternative becomes the Preferred Alternative, consideration should be given to expanding the right of way at the site to encompass the entire archaeological site. This would provide a means of protecting the site.

After the field visit concluded, the conference attendees traveled back to the Grand and held a brief meeting. For the Native American representatives' review and comments, it was agreed the Native American would be provided copies of all alternatives as soon as Coastal completed the archaeological studies and all adjustments in the alternatives have been made. In the meantime, the Native American representatives were encouraged to provide the project team any comments they deem noteworthy.

This concluded the SIU 11 portion of the conference.

SIU 11 Native American Comments Received on the Conference

Dr. Richard Allen, Research and Policy Analyst for the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, advised prior to the conference the Cherokee Nation does not have any concerns with SIU 11 of I-69.

Mr. Terry Cole, of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, provided a letter dated April 5, 2004. The Comments portion of his letter stated, "After further review of the above mentioned project(s), to the best of our knowledge it will have no adverse effect on any historic properties in the project's area of potential effect. However, should construction expose buried archaeological or building materials such as chipped stone, tools, pottery, bone, historic crockery, glass or metal items, this office should be contacted immediately @ 1-800-522-6170 extension 2137.

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

November 2003 – March 2005 Native American consultations and agency coordination

CONSULTATIONS WITH NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES, AND AGENCY COORDINATION ACTIONS FROM NOVEMBER OF 2003 TO MARCH OF 2005

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

INCLUDES

MINUTES FOR PROJECT TEAM/EPA MEETING ON JANUARY 21, 2005

MINUTES FOR PROJECT TEAM/MDAH MEETING ON FEBRUARY 3, 2005

MINUTES FOR NEEL-SCHAFFER/MDOT/FHWA MEETING ON FEBRUARY 16, 2005

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley

Month/Year Prepared: March/2005

3-21-05 Action Update.doc

Agency Coordination Action

Mailout within MDOT and FHWA on November 26, 2003

Subject: Internal Review of Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The MDOT Environmental Division mailed a copy of the Preliminary DEIS to the Jackson Office of the FHWA and the appropriate MDOT Offices and Divisions. The people receiving this information were asked to furnish their comments and/or concurrence by January 9, 2004.

Consultation with Native American Tribes

Conference on SIU 9 and SIU 11 at Tunica, MS on February 11-13, 2004

Subject: Minutes for Conference and Field Visits

The minutes for the Conference are contained in the Draft EIS.

Agency Coordination Action

Received Letter from Mr. Terry D. Cole of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma dated April 5, 2004

Subject: Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Cultural Resources Survey of Study Alternatives

Based on further review of this project, Mr. Cole's letter advised that to the best of their knowledge this project will have no adverse effect on any historic properties in the project's area of potential effect. However, should construction expose such properties, Mr. Cole advised their office should be contacted immediately at 1-800-522-6170 extension 2137.

The letter from Mr. Cole in response to the Native American Conference is addressed in the Draft EIS.

Alternative Development and Agency Coordination Meeting

Meeting with MDOT Geotechnical Section on May 6, 2004

Subject: MDOT Report on Their Review of Alternatives from Geotechnical Perspective

Mr. Jimmy Shirley met with Mr. Michael Wright in Jackson at the Geotechnical Section's office of the MDOT and went over the report provided by Mr. Wright that was dated May 3, 2004. Analyzing the alternatives strictly from a Geotechnical perspective, Mr. Wright advised that in the Southern Section the Eastern Alternative is favored slightly over the Central Alternative. In the Southern Section, Mr. Wright reported that the Western Alternative is the least favored alternative. The Middle Section is common for all alternatives. In the Northern Section, Mr. Wright advised the Eastern Alternative is favored over the Central and Western alternatives.

The report from the MDOT Geotechnical Section is addressed in the Draft EIS.

Agency Coordination

Transmittal from U.S.D.A.-N.R.C.S. to Neel-Schaffer postmarked May 18, 2004
Subject: Completed Farmland Conversion Impact Rating for Corridor Type Projects Forms

Upon receiving this information on the study alternatives from the Greenwood Office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Neel-Schaffer forwarded the completed forms to Kimley-Horn for inclusion in the Draft EIS.

Agency Coordination

Distribution of Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement on May 25, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Review

Representatives of Neel-Schaffer provided the MDOT and the FHWA with their requested copies of the Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The MDOT and FHWA distributed the Preliminary DEIS internally within the MDOT and to the Cooperating Agencies for review.

Agency Coordination

U.S. Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service Correspondence to FHWA dated June 25, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Response on Pre-Draft EIS

Mr. Curtis James of the Mississippi Field Office provided the response to Mr. Andrew Hughes, the Mississippi Division Administrator of the FHWA.

Mr. James advised the Service had no comments that needed addressing at the present time. The Service concurred in the plans to fine tune archaeological and wetland issues after a preferred alternative is selected and before issuing a Final Environmental Impact Statement.

The Service advised that overall the Pre-Draft EIS is well written, and the Service commended the project team on its thorough job. If there were questions, Mr. James advised Mr. Hughes to contact Mr. David Felder at their Mississippi Field Office.

Agency Coordination

Mississippi Department of Archives and History Correspondence to FHWA dated July 8, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Response on Pre-Draft EIS

Mr. Thomas Waggener provided the response to Mr. Andrew Hughes, the Mississippi Division Administrator of the FHWA.

Mr. Waggener advised their only comment pertains to the numbering in Table 4-22 for Archaeological Sites on Page 4-59. He stated that the state site numbers should be used for all sites referenced in the table. To address his concerns, Mr. Waggener advised the state site numbers are those beginning with "22" followed by the two-letter county designation and the 3-digit site number.

Agency Coordination

U.S. Dept. of the Army, Corps of Engineers Correspondence to FHWA dated July 13, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Response on Pre-Draft EIS

Mr. Kenneth Moseley provided a response to Mr. Andrew Hughes, the Mississippi Division Administrator of the FHWA, advising they had reviewed the Pre-Draft EIS and had no specific comments to offer at the present time.

Mr. Moseley went on to state they would need a copy of the draft intensive cultural resources survey report that is to be conducted once the preferred alignment is selected, and also an indication of how the tribal coordination is progressing. He referenced Ms. Susan Jarvis as their agency's contact if there were any questions.

Agency Coordination

Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Correspondence to FHWA dated July 15, 2004

Subject: Cooperating Agency Response on Pre-Draft EIS

Mr. Andrew Whitehurst provided the response to Mr. Andrew Hughes, the Mississippi Division Administrator of the FHWA.

Since the final pathway is not chosen, Mr. Whitehurst advised they were offering some general comments on the plans as a whole and their desire to work with the project team on refining their comments as the I-69 project continues to take shape.

Mr. Whitehurst commented that there was little discussion in the document of animal road crossings. His comments focus on the Black Bear, but this species makes a good surrogate for other quadrupeds that will be crossing the new highway. He advised the general area of northwest Mississippi through which I-69 is proposed is an area of increased activity by the Black Bear, a species listed as Endangered by the State of Mississippi. Over the past five years, Mr. Whitehurst stated there have been multiple sightings, human-bear interactions, and vehicular collisions, including road kills, have been documented and are obviously on the increase in the I-69 study area counties of Bolivar, Sunflower, Coahoma, Quitman, and Tunica.

Mr. Whitehurst referenced Florida, and other areas in North America, where various types of "critter crossings" have been constructed to benefit many different species of wildlife. He commented that the I-69 project seems to be an ideal project to incorporate such design features.

In his correspondence, Mr. Whitehurst also commented that the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks has already been consulting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in recommending priority areas for Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) lands to provide forested corridors from the Mississippi River batture lands to large forest blocks such as Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge as well as other federal and state refuges and wildlife management areas.

Agency Coordination

Archives and History correspondence to MDOT Environmental Division dated July 15, 2004
Subject: Archives and History Review of Coastal Environments February 2004 Cultural Resources Survey Report

Mr. Thomas H. Waggener, the Review and Compliance Officer for the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, provided this review to MDOT Environmental Division Engineer E. Claiborne Barnwell. Archives and History reviewed the Report pursuant to their responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800. Archives and History concurred with the recommendations contained in Table 8-1 of the Report, and they advised the 43 sites considered eligible should be avoided or proposed mitigation measured addressed in an MOA. Archives and History referenced National Register Bulletin: *Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Archaeological Properties* asserts stating overlooking the significance of small sites may skew the understanding of past lifeways and Archives and concerns expressed in that bulletin about destroying sites without being recorded thoroughly because they are written off as ineligible for listing in the National Register. Archives and History advised that is a high probability that small or overlooked sites are included in the identified sample of 217 sites recorded. Because of the potential loss of unrecognized significant site types, Archives and History recommended that a small sample (ca. 10%) of the archaeological sites determined ineligible be considered for additional archaeological

investigations to ensure that these often ignored sites are adequately considered. Archives and History recommended that the sample include a range of site types and investigative techniques.

Agency Coordination

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Correspondence to FHWA received by Neel-Schaffer on August 23, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Response on Pre-Draft EIS

The EPA response was provided to Mr. Cecil Vick, the Environmental Team Leader for the Mississippi Division of the FHWA.

The EPA advised their primary concerns regard water resource impacts, land use changes/habitat loss, and residential relocations. They identified some environmental issues that needed to be addressed in more detail and commented on alternatives (preferred alternative), aquatic resources (jurisdictional delineation, quality of resource and mitigation), noise, community impacts and others. The EPA also advised there were other identified impacts (i.e., archeological) that should be avoided, minimized and evaluated further to protect the environment.

Overall, the EPA stated the Pre-Draft EIS captures the extensive work that has been done on the project, particularly, in terms of alternatives analysis screening and public and resource agency involvement. The EPA advised the Pre-Draft EIS provides a good overview of the project and attempts to address the issue of economic development. However, the EPA stated they could not completely assess the avoidance and mitigation refinements on some of the resources due to the degree of study that was conducted on those resources in the Pre-Draft EIS.

The EPA advised they were looking forward to working with the project team to address the identified concerns, They provided the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses, for Ms. Ntale Kajumba and Mr. Darryl Williams as EPA personnel the project team could contact for assistance.

An attachment to the EPA's correspondence addressed their comments in more detail.

Agency Coordination

I-69 Project Manager Robert Walker Meeting with Messrs. Pete Johnson and Bill Triplett of the Delta Regional Authority at their office in Clarksdale on September 29, 2004
Subject: Input from the Delta Regional Authority on the Methodology and Approach of the Economic Study Performed for This Section of I-69

After Mr. Walker provided a debriefing on the study status, the group discussed the economic study approach. The discussion focused on an approach that basically builds upon existing centers of activity or settlement and takes full advantage of existing public investments in infrastructure, inhibits further sprawl, inefficient delivery of public services, and reinforces patterns of business and the private investment made in a wide variety of enterprises. This basically means that the closer the interstate facility can be located to existing infrastructure the better chance for continued and sustained growth. The approach also emphasized concentrating on the major population and employment cities within the study area. These cities are Cleveland and Clarksdale. After explaining the approach that the economic experts had used, Pete Johnson commented that he concurred with the approach. He went further to explain that his agency was taking the same approach in that more emphasis should be concentrated where the major employment and population centers exist throughout the delta. He listed the cities of Cleveland, Clarksdale, Greenville, Indianola and Greenwood were the major cities that still had substantial employment and population figures.

Agency Coordination

Transmittal from MDOT Environmental Division Engineer E. Claiborne Barnwell to FHWA Division Administrator Andrew H. Hughes dated October 28, 2004
Subject: Processing of two copies of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for FHWA approval to present at a public hearing

Agency Coordination

MDOT Transmittal of Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to Reviewers and Review Locations dated November 4, 2004

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement Approved for Presentation at a Public Hearing

In his transmittal, Mr. Barnwell advised the DEIS summarizes the environmental evaluation that was conducted for this study, and the comments on social, environmental, and engineering issues made at public informational meetings during the environmental review process. He advised the reviewers that comments on the DEIS should be sent to Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager, by December 31, 2004, and Mr. Barnwell provided the contact information for Mr. Walker.

The contacts at the public libraries were asked to keep the DEIS on display after the public hearings as a reference for addressing questions or comments the public might have after the hearings.

Excluding the distributions made within the MDOT and by the FHWA, the following individuals were provided with a hard copy and/or a compact disc of the DEIS. The DEIS was provided to these individuals for their review and/or for them to display the DEIS in a convenient location where other interested individuals would be able to review the DEIS before and after the public hearing.

• Ms. Susan Jarvis	Vicksburg District, Corps of Engineers
• Ms. Ntale Kajumba	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
• Mr. David Felder	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
• Mr. Benjamin F. Davis, Jr.	U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
• Mr. Homer L. Wilkes	U.S.D.A.-Natural Resources Conservation Service
• Mr. Andrew Whitehurst	Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
• Mr. Tom Waggener	Mississippi Dept. of Archives and History
• Honorable Haley Barbour	Governor, State of Mississippi
• Mr. Ancil Cox	I-69 Great River Bridge Compact
• Ms. Lucy Janoush	I-69 Great River Bridge Compact
• Ms. Cherry Green	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
• Mr. Jerry Gidner	U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
• Mr. Bruce Dawson	U.S. Bureau of Land Management
• Mr. Harry Walls	U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

• Ms. Emily Eberhardt	U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
• Mr. Fred Dennin	U.S. Department of Transportation
• Mr. Michael Plunkett	U.S. Geological Survey, Water Resources
• Mr. Pete Johnson	Delta Regional Authority
• Honorable Bennie Thompson	U.S. Representative, State of Mississippi
• Honorable Thad Cochran	U.S. Senator, State of Mississippi
• Honorable Trent Lott	U.S. Senator, State of Mississippi
• Mr. James Sledge	Mississippi Forestry Commission
• Mr. Robert Seyfarth	Mississippi Dept. of Environmental Quality
• Mr. Leland Speed	Mississippi Development Authority
• Dr. Bill Johnson	Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
• Mr. Don Underwood	MS Soil and Water Conservation Commission
• Ms. Pat Hemphill	Yazoo Mississippi Delta Levee Board
• Mr. James Wannamaker	Board of Mississippi Levee Commissioners
• Mr. Marion Butler	Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department
• Mr. Jerry Mugg	HNTB Corporation
• Honorable Clara H. Burnett	Mississippi State Representative, District 9
• Honorable John Mayo	Mississippi State Representative, District 25
• Honorable Chuck Espy	Mississippi State Representative, District 26
• Honorable Charlie Capps	Mississippi State Representative, District 28
• Honorable Linda Coleman	Mississippi State Representative, District 29
• Honorable John Hines	Mississippi State Representative, District 50
• Honorable Robert Jackson	Mississippi State Senator, District 11
• Honorable Johnnie Walls	Mississippi State Senator, District 12
• Honorable Willie Simmons	Mississippi State Senator, District 13
• Honorable Eugene Clarke	Mississippi State Senator, District 22
• Honorable Robert Fava	Mayor, Town of Alligator
• Honorable Burt Notes	Mayor, Town of Benoit
• Honorable Lucious Tucker	Mayor, Town of Beulah
• Honorable Joe Reed	Mayor, Town of Boyle

• Honorable Henry Espy	Mayor, City of Clarksdale
• Honorable W.J. Jones	Mayor, Town of Coahoma
• Honorable Martin King	Mayor, City of Cleveland
• Honorable James Pettigrew	Mayor, City of Drew
• Honorable Charles Harvey	Mayor, Town of Duncan
• Honorable Herbert Thomas	Mayor, Town of Friars Point
• Honorable H. McTeer-Hudson	Mayor, City of Greenville
• Honorable Harry Smith	Mayor, City of Greenwood
• Honorable Erma Williams	Mayor, Town of Gunnison
• Honorable Arthur Marble	Mayor, City of Indianola
• Honorable Patrick Campbell	Mayor, Town of Jonestown
• Honorable Alice Middleton	Mayor, Town of Lula
• Honorable Don Lassetter	Mayor, Town of Lyon
• Honorable Andrew Westerfield	Mayor, Town of Merigold
• Honorable Kennedy Johnson	Mayor, City of Mound Bayou
• Honorable Rosie Williams	Mayor, Town of Pace
• Honorable Eddie Williams	Mayor, City of Rosedale
• Honorable Shirley Edwards	Mayor, City of Ruleville
• Honorable Roger Carter	Mayor, City of Shaw
• Honorable Willie Blocker	Mayor, City of Shelby
• Honorable Bobby Williams	Mayor, City of Tunica
• Honorable Milton Tutwiler	Mayor, Town of Winstonville
• Honorable Richard Coleman	President, Bolivar County Board of Supervisors
• Honorable Eddie Smith	President, Coahoma County Board of Supervisors
• Honorable Edgar Donahoe	President, Sunflower County Board of Supervisors
• Honorable Al Rankins	President, Washington County Board of Supervisors
• Honorable James Dunn	President, Tunica County Board of Supervisors
• Mr. Ron Hudson	Clarksdale-Coahoma Co. Chamber of Commerce
• Mr. Scott Luth	Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce
• Mr. Steve Shurden	Drew Chamber of Commerce

• Mr. Pete Roncali	Greenville-Washingon Co. Chamber of Commerce
• Ms. Elise Jenkins	Ruleville Chamber of Commerce
• Ms. Lyn Arnold	Tunica County Chamber of Commerce
• Mr. Glenn Brown	North Delta Planning and Development District
• Mr. Billy Haney	South Delta Planning and Development District
• Mr. Sam Jones	Sunflower County Economic Development District
• Dr. Suzanne Hawley	Benoit School District
• Chief Phillip Martin	Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
• Mr. Ken Carleton	Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
• Mr. Kirk Perry	Chickasaw Nation
• Ms. Gingy Nail	Chickasaw Nation
• Mr. Olin Williams	Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
• Mr. Terry Cole	Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
• Mrs. Carrie Wilson	Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
• Chief Christine Norris	Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
• Mr. Chip Fisher	Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
• Mr. Earl Barbry, Jr.	Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana, Inc.
• Mr. Raymond Bryant	Lower Mississippi Delta Development Center Inc.
• Mr. Early C. Ewing	Benoit I-69 Committee
• Mr. David Work	Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission
• Ms. Robbie Fisher	The Nature Conservancy
• Ms. Wanda Ray	Bolivar County Administrator
• Mr. Hugh Jack Stubbs	Coahoma County Administrator
• Mr. Ken Murphree	Tunica County Administrator
• Mr. Delma Furniss	Former Mississippi State Senator
• Ms. Darlean Smith	Benoit Public Library
• Ms. Sara Bess Meek	Thelma R. Rainer Memorial Library, Merigold
• Sister Donald Mary	Mound Bayou Public Library
• Ms. Joyce Applegate	Rosedale Public Library
• Ms. Vivian Malatesta	Dr. Robert Hollingsworth Library, Shelby

• Mr. Ronnie Wise	Robinson-Carpenter Memorial Library, Cleveland
• Ms. Nita Dill	Henry M. Seymour Library, Indianola
• Ms. Diane Shurden	Drew Public Library
• Ms. Margie Raine	Horace S. Stansel Library, Ruleville
• Ms. Missie Craig	Carnegie Public Library, Clarksdale
• Ms. Milee Wrenn	Robert C. Irwin Library, Tunica

Consultation with Native American Tribes

Letter from Environmental Director Ms. Lillie Strange dated December 3, 2004
Subject: Comments from Jena Band of Choctaw Indians on Draft EIS

In response to Mr. Robert Walker's correspondence dated November 4, 2004, Ms. Strange provided a response by letter. Her letter advised that after thorough review of the document submitted to her by Mr. Walker, it has been determined that there will be no significant impact in regards to the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians. Therefore, Ms. Strange further stated that the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians does not have any objections to the implementation of this project.

Agency Coordination

Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks Letter to Neel-Schaffer Dated December 15, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Comments on Draft EIS

Since the Preferred Alternative was not chosen in the Draft EIS, Mr. Andrew Whitehurst advised he was offering come general comments on the plans as a whole and that he hoped to work with the project team on refining the comments from the MDWF&P as the project continues to take shape.

Mr. Whitehurst commented on the following issues in his correspondence:

- The general area of northwest Mississippi through which I-69 is proposed is an area of increased activity by the Black Bear, a species listed as Endangered by the State of Mississippi.

- Over the past five years multiple sightings, human-bear interactions, and vehicular collisions, including road kills, have been documented and are obviously on the increase in the counties where this I-69 study is located.
- Areas in North America, working with the U.S. Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration, have constructed various types of "critter crossings" (underpasses, culverts, funnel fences) to benefit many different species of wildlife. The I-69 project seems to be an ideal project in which to incorporate such design features not only in the interest of wildlife conservation but automobile passenger safety and property loss as well. A detailed analysis of the database maintained by the MDWF&P on the black bear, as well as consultation with other areas where "critter crossings have been provided for the Black Bear, could help pinpoint locations along the I-69 corridor that would be favorable for installation of wildlife underpasses.
- The MDWF&P has already been consulting with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in recommending priority areas for Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) lands to provide forested corridors from the Mississippi River batture lands to large forest blocks such as Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge as well as other federal and state refuges and wildlife management areas.

Agency Coordination

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service correspondence to Neel-Schaffer dated December 15, 2004
Subject: Cooperating Agency Comments on Draft EIS

Mr. Homer L. Wilkes, the State Conservationist, commented that Section "4.2 Farmland,"along with Appendix E in the Draft EIS, adequately address the Natural Resources Conservation Service's responsibility for insuring compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act. However, Mr. Wilkes noticed the following terminology in the Draft EIS:

- National Resources Conservation Service should read Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Form AD-1006 is actually Form NRCS-CPA-106. See Appendix E.

Mr. Wilkes concluded his correspondence by advising the Natural Resources Conservation Service concurs in the Draft EIS.

Agency Coordination

Department of the Army – Vicksburg District, Corps of Engineers correspondence to Neel-Schaffer dated January 7, 2005
Subject: Cooperating Agency Comments on Draft EIS

Ms. Elizabeth Guynes acknowledged reviewing the Draft EIS and advised the Corps had no specific comments to offer at the present time. She did state the Corps will need a copy of the draft intensive cultural resources survey report that is to be conducted once the preferred alternative is selected, and also an indication of how the tribal coordination is progressing. She requested that any questions be forwarded to Ms. Susan Jarvis, and Ms. Guynes provided the contact information for Ms. Jarvis.

Agency Coordination

Update Provided to MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons on January 13, 2005
Subject: Alternatives for Widening SR 8 at Pace and Elimination of Pace Bypass Alternative

The project team mailed MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons the alternative for widening SR 8 along existing alignment through Pace. This reflected dropping of the Pace Bypass Alternative based on comments received at the public hearings. The alternative would use a four-lane divided section to the west of Pace, transition to a five-lane section through the built-up area, and transition back to a four-lane divided section to the east of Pace.

Agency Coordination

Update Provided to MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons on January 14, 2005
Subject: Modifications of Alternatives West of Cleveland Made After the Public Hearings and Reconsideration of the Eastern Loop Alternative at Cleveland

The project team mailed MDOT Third District Engineer mapping on aerial photography depicting the modified alternatives west of Cleveland and the eastern loop alternative around Cleveland.

Agency Coordination

Project Team-U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Meeting on January 21, 2005
Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement Review by EPA

To assist in the EPA's review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the project team met with the appropriate staff of the EPA in their Regional Office at 9:00 a.m. in Atlanta, Georgia. The following members of the project team traveled to Atlanta on January 20th for the meeting with the EPA the following day: Claiborne Barnwell and Kim Thurman of the MDOT, Cecil Vick of the FHWA, Larry Meisner and Beth Reed of Kimley-Horn and Associates, and Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer. MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons was invited to make this trip and attend the presentation, but he was unable to attend. Mr. Jeff Kolb of the FHWA Jackson Mississippi Division Office was in Atlanta on other business, and Mr. Kolb's schedule allowed him to attend the meeting.

Each person attending this meeting registered their attendance and received a handout the project team had developed to supplement their presentation. Displays placed on easels were also used to assist the project team in their presentation. Mr. Jimmy Palmer and Mr. Heinz Mueller welcomed the project team to the EPA's Office, everyone introduced themselves, and Mr. Barnwell and Mr. Vick made some brief comments. The first portion of the meeting consisted of a presentation by the project team using the following agenda.

- Mr. Cecil Vick of the FHWA delivered a power point presentation which provided a broad scope overview of the project.
- Mr. Robert Walker addressed the study approach and project status, and any questions from EPA.
- Ms. Beth Reed of Kimley-Horn discussed the identification of the alternatives' natural environmental issues, and addressed any questions from EPA.

- Mr. Larry Meisner of Kimley-Horn discussed Environmental Justice and Community Outreach, and addressed any questions from EPA.
- Mr. Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer discussed the development and refinement of alternatives, and addressed any questions from EPA.

At the conclusion of these presentations, Mr. Barnwell and Mr. Palmer provided some brief comments and time was provided for a short break.

After the break, Mr. Robert Walker discussed the public hearings, the actions taken since the public hearings, the Environmentally Preferred Alternative, and what the project team believes will be the alternative recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval. Mr. Walker advised the EPA representatives that the study's Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that the project team intended to recommend to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval might be adjusted slightly but they were the same corridors, except for one possible location. The location Mr. Walker identified as the possible exception was the Western Alternative along US 61 in the vicinity of the Welcome Center where there were archaeological problems. Because this is the closest alternative to the Welcome Center, the MDOT is pursuing using the Western Alternative instead of the shared Central and Eastern alternative alignment, which is on new location slightly farther to the east.

Mr. Walker offered the following description of the Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative the project team intended to recommend to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval.

- Between Benoit and Clarksdale, the Central Alternative with the Lake Vista crossing of SR 1 is the Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that will be recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval
- Between Clarksdale and the Lula area, there is only one study alternative, which uses US 61 as much as possible, and that alternative is the Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that will be recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval.
- Between the Lula area near the Welcome Center and the interchange at Dubbs Road in the southern part of Tunica County, there are two alternatives. The Western

Alternative will be recommended if the archaeological problems can be overcome. If the archaeological problems cannot be overcome, the Central Alternative will be recommended. The Environmentally Preferred Alternative would be considered the Central Alternative.

- Between the Dubbs Road Interchange and the SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville, the Central Alternative is the apparent Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that will be recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval.

At the beginning of Mr. Walker's remarks on the Environmentally Preferred Alternative and the alternative that the project team would be recommending to the MDOT Technical Staff for approval, and at the conclusion of Mr. Walker's remarks, Messrs. Barnwell and Vick both emphasized it was possible that there might be problems with the approval process internally within the MDOT on the Recommended Preferred Alternative. Before the Recommended Preferred Alternative is processed to the FHWA for approval, Messrs. Barnwell and Vick stated the recommendation must first be approved by the MDOT Technical Staff and then by the MDOT Transportation Commission. If the alternative described above by Mr. Walker as the Recommended Preferred Alternative is not approved by the MDOT Technical Staff and the MDOT Transportation Commission, and if another alternative other than the one described above by Mr. Walker is chosen as the MDOT's Recommended Preferred Alternative, Messrs. Barnwell and Vick advised the EPA would be notified and another meeting with them would be scheduled.

The remainder of the meeting was spent addressing questions and comments from the EPA. At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Palmer expressed his appreciation on behalf of the EPA for the briefing, and he advised the project team's briefing had assisted them in the letter they would provide in response to their review of the Draft EIS. At approximately 11:00 a.m., the meeting concluded.

Agency Coordination

Neel-Schaffer Meeting with MDOT Third District on February 2, 2005

Subject: Access to Farmland and County Roads Divided by I-69 Alternatives in Bolivar County

This meeting was held at the MDOT Third District Office in Yazoo City at the request of District Engineer Walter Lyons. Those in attendance at the meeting were Messrs. Walter Lyons, Carl Middleton, and Brad Fletcher of the MDOT Third District and Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer.

Mr. Lyons opened the meeting by advising that he wanted to know more about the philosophy of the study on addressing access needs and frontage roads. He commented that most of the land in the study area is farmed by landowners or farmers who rent large tracts of property that is not necessarily adjoining. He advised that some of these landowners and farmers have expressed their concerns to him about how they are going to be able to access land they farm that is divided by the interstate.

In response to the opening comments by Mr. Lyons, the following items were then discussed at this meeting.

- The typical manner in which the study currently incorporates or nearby county roads into a plan for providing access to farmland divided by alternatives.
- The typical manner in which the study currently provides bridges at most county road crossings as a means of addressing local access needs and the need to access farmland divided by an alternative. In most cases the county roads were bridged over the interstate, but in some locations the interstate was bridged over the county road. The reason for preferring to bridge the county road over the interstate is that only one bridge would be required, while bridging the interstate over the county road required two bridges.
- A copy of a letter that Delta Council President Ken Murphree, and Delta Council Highway Improvement and Transportation Committee Chairman Al Rankins had sent to Central District Transportation Commissioner Dick Hall dated January 19, 2005. The letter complimented the MDOT and the project team on the recent public hearings and commented on some other issues. One issue of concern to Delta Council is their sensitivity to the needs of local property owners who will be impacted by this project's construction. A second issue of concern to Delta Council is the plan which MDOT

will propose relative to the construction timeline on the various segments, and they commented: "After waiting since passage of the 1987 four-lane act until 2005 for the completion of U.S. Highway 61 four-laning, it would be more than regrettable if we lost this four-lane access for any extended period of time, or if four-lane access was interrupted for years due to the reconstruction of certain segments of U.S. Highway 61 to interstate specifications. Related to the second issue, the Delta Council letter asked the MDOT to carefully consider the Benoit to Coahoma County Line segment as the initial project activity to avoid any disruption of the recently opened four-lane access afforded to the Delta by U.S. 61, as long as possible. The final issue of concern in the Delta Council letter concerned the transport of agricultural commodities from the field to the processing, storage, and shipment points located throughout the region. On this issue, Delta Council requested that careful considerations be given to the disparities which exist between interstate and non-interstate standards and restrictions on over-height, over-length, and overweight vehicles which are common during the harvest season in the Delta; and, the letter referenced that these matters have received special consideration by the MDOT and the Mississippi Public Service Commission in the past. The letter concluded with Delta Council offering to discuss these issues and stating that they looked forward to a response.

- In response to the Delta Council letter, the MDOT Third District presented Neel-Schaffer with a copy of a concept the Third District had developed on frontage roads and bridges over the interstate. Unless restricted by environmental impacts or a landowner desire not to have a frontage road across a portion or all of his property, the Third District concept would provide a frontage road on both sides of the interstate and grade separation bridges over the interstate on a typical spacing of approximately two miles. The Third District concept gives priority to landowners over local, non-landowner traffic on the county roads, because these grade separation bridges would not typically be placed at county road crossings.
- The MDOT Third District representatives thought their concept of providing frontage roads along both sides of the alternatives, whenever possible, might aid in the proposed construction sequencing for the Central Alternative when that alternative is using the US 61 corridor. A discussion on the additional cost of the MDOT Third District

farmland/local access plan relative to the Neel-Schaffer proposal appeared to conclude that the Neel-Schaffer proposal was adequate.

- Should the Central Alternative be selected as the Preferred Alternative, it was agreed that special considerations from the MDOT and the Mississippi Public Service Commission would be required to address the Delta Council comment on the disparities which exist between interstate and non-interstate standards and restrictions on over-height, over-length, and overweight vehicles which are common during the harvest season in the Delta. The Neel-Schaffer representatives advised the MDOT Third District that the Harvest Permit issue would be forwarded to the MDOT Environmental Division for them to address.

This concludes the Minutes for this meeting.

Note: Subsequent to this meeting, the Neel-Schaffer discussed the Harvest Permit issue with the MDOT Environmental Division, and it was determined this is a problem nationwide that needs addressing by Federal authorities.

Agency Coordination

Project Team-Mississippi Department of Archives and History Meeting on February 3, 2005
Subject: Archaeology in Lula area near the Welcome Center and in Coahoma-Jonestown area

This meeting was held in the MDOT Environmental Division Conference Room to discuss the project's archaeological study issues particularly relating to the Western Alternative in the Northern Section near the Welcome Center and the Central Alternative in the Middle Section at the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange.

The agencies represented at the meeting and their representatives were:

- Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) – Sam McGahey, Pamela Edwards, and David Abbott;
- MDOT Environmental Division – Claiborne Barnwell, Wes Stafford, Kim Thurman, Bruce Gray, John Underwood, and Jim Turner;

- MDOT Second District – Jimmy Dickerson
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – Cecil Vick and Dickie Walters;
- Coastal Environments – David Kelley and Doug Wells;
- Neel-Schaffer – Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley.

The following were some of the items discussed by MDOT Environmental Division Engineer Claiborne Barnwell in his opening comments.

- From an archaeological perspective, the main problem area in the study is along US 61 in Coahoma County in the vicinity of the Welcome Center near Lula.
- Due to the logistics, separate coordination is required with the Native Americans and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History when addressing archaeological issues.
- The McKnight Archaeological Site, located adjacent to US 61 north of the US 49 intersection, is a major concern.
- Remote Sensing is a possible means of conducting further archaeological studies at test sites along US 61 in this area, but the accuracy of the results obtained from using remote sensing might be questioned.

Representatives from the MDOT Environmental Division and from Coastal Environments updated the MDAH representatives on the archaeological study approach used for this project, the status of the archaeological study report for the project, and the archaeological findings.

Representatives from Coastal Environments discussed the known archaeological sites along the Western Alternative in the vicinity of the Welcome Center, and that the shared Central and Eastern alternative between Lula and Dubbs Road had been studied and adjusted to produce an acceptable alignment from an archaeological perspective. It was determined that the known archaeological sites for the Western Alternative along US 61 in the vicinity of the US 49 intersection near the Welcome Center were too important and the probability of burial occurring in these sites too high to continue the possibility of using the Western Alternative in this area. Therefore, a decision was made to use the Central Alternative in the Northern Section as the

alternative that would be recommended to the MDOT Technical Staff as the Preferred Alternative segment.

The representatives from Neel-Schaffer discussed the modifications proposed for the Central Alternative in the Middle Section at the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange. The modified concept was developed to better accommodate the interchange's traffic, to lessen the farmland impacts on the Antici family caused by the original concept which offset the interchange north of the crossroad to avoid all the archaeological sites, and to create an interchange that would align with the crossroad in a manner that would avoid as much of archaeological sites as possible. The MDAH representatives reviewed the modified concept and gave their concurrence to the modified concept.

This concludes the Minutes for this Meeting.

Agency Coordination

Neel-Schaffer Presentation on February 16, 2005

Subject: Preferred Alternative Recommendation to MDOT's and FHWA's Technical Staffs

The presentation to the MDOT Technical Staff on the Recommended Preferred Alternative was given in the Environmental Division Conference Room with the following people in attendance.

- From the MDOT Central District Transportation Commissioner's Office – Commissioner Dick Hall;
- From the FHWA Mississippi Division's Office – Administrator Mr. Andy Hughes and Environmental Coordinator Mr. Cecil Vick;
- From the MDOT Office of Intermodal Planning – Director Mr. Ray Balentine;
- From the MDOT Chief Engineer's Office – Assistant Chief Engineer Preconstruction, Mr. David Foster;
- From the MDOT Second District Office – District Engineer Mr. Jimmy Dickerson and Assistant District Engineer, Construction Mr. Danny Walker;
- From the MDOT Third District Office – District Engineer Mr. Walter Lyons and Assistant District Engineer, Construction Mr. Carl Middleton;

- From the MDOT Environmental Division Office – Environmental Division Engineer Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Assistant MDOT Environmental Division Engineer Mr. Wes Stafford, and Chief Archaeologist Mr. Bruce Gray; and,
- From Neel-Schaffer Office – Project Manager Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley

Due to his attendance being required at an unscheduled meeting with members of the Mississippi Legislature, MDOT Chief Engineer Harry Lee James did not arrive at this meeting on the Recommended Preferred Alternative until it was almost over.

Each person attending the meeting's attendance was registered and every attendee received a handout that Neel-Schaffer had developed to supplement Mr. Walker's presentation. Displays placed on easels were also used to aid Mr. Walker in making his power point presentation. Before turning the program over to Mr. Walker for his presentation, the following were some of the brief opening comments that Mr. Barnwell provided.

- He welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- He gave a summary of the study's progress.
- He stressed the involvement of the public and governmental agencies in the study.
- He advised the purpose of today's meeting is to present the Recommended Preferred Alternative to the MDOT Technical Staff and to receive the MDOT's Technical Staff's support for presenting the Recommended Preferred Alternative to the MDOT Transportation Commission for the Commission's approval. He stressed the Commission's approval is needed to advance the project to the next level of completing the remaining studies on the Preferred Alternative, preparing the Final Environmental Impact Statement, and obtaining a Record of Decision (ROD) to complete the study.

After some brief discussions among the MDOT representatives in attendance at the meeting, it was concluded that the MDOT Technical Staff would probably delay its decision on supporting, or not supporting, the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative until a later date. The program was then turned over to Mr. Walker for his presentation.

The presentation was developed in a manner that first provided minimal background information and then presented the Recommended Preferred Alternative in key segments controlled by major issues. The following images were displayed by Mr. Walker during his presentation and some brief comments that Mr. Walker made on the images.

- A Study Area Map and the General Approach to the Study – Up to three alternative routes would be studied from near Benoit to near Robinsonville. Special emphasis would be made on Economic Enhancement and Environmental Justice. Some of the additional critical study issues are archaeology, natural resources, and farmland impacts.
- A Map of the Refined Alternative Corridors and Comments on Critical Environmental Issues – The Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge in the southwest corner of the study, the natural resource concerns in the north part of the study area, and the archaeological and Native American concerns were identified as being critical issues.
- A Map of the Study Alternatives in the Benoit and Dahomey National Wildlife areas Identifying the Recommended Preferred Alternative as the Eastern (Green) Alignment – This alternative segment uses the Eastern Alternative from the connecting point to the adjacent study on Section of Independent Utility 12, the southern crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista, and joins the Central Alternative south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Road between SR 448 and Litton Road. Some advantages of this Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment are: it is about $4 million cheaper than other alternatives; it has the least number of impacted landowners; it is closer to Greenville; and, it has fewer environmental impacts. A disadvantage of this Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment is it is further from Benoit, Rosedale, and the Port of Rosedale.
- A Map of the Study Alternatives for Widening SR 8 to Four Lanes Between Cleveland and Rosedale and Comments on the Recommended Preferred Alternative for Accomplishing this Widening – The Recommended Preferred Alternative is to have a five-lane section extended west of Cleveland to a point west of the new I-69 Interchange with the Central Alternative. West of that interchange the roadway would transition to a four-lane divided section and remain this way until the eastern edge of Pace where the roadway would transition to a five-lane section through the

built-up area of Pace. The Recommended Preferred Alternative would then transition back to a four-lane divided section to a point slightly east of Rosedale where it would then transition to a five-lane section and remain a five-lane section to the intersection with SR 1.

- A Map of the Study Alternatives in the Cleveland Area and Comments That the Central Alternative Segment is the Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment – The Central Alternative Segment is the Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment for the following reasons: it is about $60 Million cheaper than the other alternatives; it has the least overall environmental impacts; it is a more direct route for the interstate motorist; and, it was preferred by 82% of the public attending the recent public hearings, including all the cities and towns along US 61 in Bolivar County north of Cleveland. Some disadvantages of using the Central Alternative Segment in this area are: it impacts more prime farmland; and converting US 61 to I-69 would be more disruptive to traffic during construction.
- A Map of the Cleveland Area and a Chart Addressing a Comparison of the Modified Eastern Loop Alternative around Cleveland with the Modified Central Alternative to the West of Cleveland – This comparison was needed to respond to requests received from landowners and the Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce after the public hearings. The comparison showed the Modified Eastern Loop Alternative Segment with the Connector to SR 8 West is not a better alternative than the Modified Central Alternative Segment. The modified Eastern Loop with the SR 8 Connector is estimated to impact 46 more property owners, require the relocation of seven more residents and two more businesses, has 19 more current residents that would be living within ¼ mile of the corridor, has 76 more residents that would be living within ½ mile of the corridor, and would cost approximately $80 Million more than the Modified Central Alternative. Some advantages of the Modified Central Alternative relative to the Eastern Loop Alternative with the SR 8 Connector are: it is a shorter and more direct route; it has less construction cost; it impacts fewer property owners; it has fewer relocation impacts; it would have less residents living within close proximity of the corridor. Some advantages of the Eastern Loop Alternative with the SR 8 West Connector relative to the Modified Central Alternative are: it passes closer

to the existing infrastructure, and it has less impact to prime farmland. A disadvantage of the Eastern Loop Alternative with the SR 8 West Connector is it impacts an existing minority area southeast of Cleveland. The comparison of these two alternative segments did not take into account the major impacts the Eastern Loop Alternative would have on a planned residential subdivision and golf course development that would be located on the south side of SR 8 within the proposed right of way limits at this interchange location. Adjusting the interchange to the west to avoid impacting most of this planned subdivision would also require relocating SR 8 to the north on a parallel county road and placing the interchange access all on the north side of the relocated county road. Based on the analysis made of the Modified Central Alternative Segment with the Central Alternative Segment presented at the public hearings, the modified segment appears to be an improvement. The project team is recommending that the Modified Central Alternative segment be advanced to the same level of study as that accomplished on the Central Alternative. If the study verifies the Modified Central Alternative segment is indeed better, the project team recommends it replace that portion of the Central Alternative that was presented to the public at the recent hearings. The Modified Central Alternative is the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment between the Dahomey National Wildlife area and Clarksdale.

QUESTION: Commissioner Hall wanted to know if there were sections of four-lane highways in other states without full control of access that were being considered for conversion to I-69?

ANSWER: Mr. Walker responded that Kentucky and Indiana are incorporating some existing four-lane highways into I-69, and that it is likely that Texas will also. The other states are not far enough along in their studies to provide a definitive answer. Mr. Hughes of the FHWA commented that conversion of existing facilities to interstates had occurred in the past. Mr. Shirley of Neel-Schaffer had addressed how this could be accomplished during previous meetings with Mr. Lyons. For Commissioner Hall's benefit, Mr. Shirley discussed a construction phasing plan that could be used for the Central Alternative when converting the four-lane section of US 61 to I-69 in Bolivar County. The Central Alternative in Bolivar County would use as

much of US 61 as constraints allowed between Merigold and the Coahoma County Line. During these comments, Mr. Shirley advised the existing southbound lanes of US 61 would be changed to a two-lane, two-way West Frontage Road at the conclusion of the conversion of US 61 to I-69 for the Central Alternative, the existing northbound lanes of US 61 would be reconstructed to the requirements necessary to change those lanes to the southbound lanes of I-69, and that the northbound lanes of I-69 and any needed East Frontage Roads would be constructed adjacent to US 61 on the east side. During his comments, Mr. Shirley discussed a plan that would allow four-lane traffic to be maintained during most of the construction, and at the conclusion of the conversion the West Frontage Road would be continuous and provide a means of serving as a interstate detour, should an incident occur on the interstate that required closing the northbound interstate lanes, southbound lanes or both sets of lanes.

COMMENT: MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons advised that another negative impact of the Central Alternative is the loss of existing access to US 61. He also questioned the 82% support figure that the Central Alternative in this area received at the public hearings. Mr. Lyons believes the study did not do a good job of relaying to the public the inconvenience that the public would experience during the conversion of US 61 to I-69 for the portion of the Central Alternative between Merigold and the Bolivar-Coahoma County Line.

- A Map of the Clarksdale/Coahoma County Area and Comments That the Only Alternative Remaining is Using Existing US 61 as Much as Possible – The Bypass at Clarksdale was built with Interstate Type Access Control Standards with access only allowed at interchange locations. Using the Clarksdale Bypass and US 61 north of Clarksdale as much as possible is the recommendation of the majority of the public and elected leaders, and this alternative has the least overall environmental impacts of other alternatives studied in this area. The Central Alternative in the Middle Section is the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative.
- A Map of the Lula area in Coahoma County near the Welcome Center and the Tunica County Line, and Comments that the Preferred Alternative is the Central Alternative – Some advantages of the Central Alternative are: by being on new location slightly to

the east of US 61, it does not impact the highly sensitive cultural resource areas adjacent to US 61 near Lula; and this is the preferred route from the perspective of Tunica County. Some negative aspects of the Central Alternative in this area are: former State Senator Delma Furniss wanted the Western Alternative along US 61 selected because it would be closer to the Welcome Center named in his honor; the corridor costs more because it is on new location, the costs required to provide connectivity for traffic to safely cross US 61 and access the Welcome Center, and the costs required for the relocation of Crenshaw Road at its interchange with that road; and, it will have more natural resource impacts than the Western Alternative. However, based on the meeting with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History on February 3, 2004, the Central Alternative from the Lula area in Coahoma County to the Dubbs Road area in Tunica County became the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative Segment.

COMMENT: It was agreed that former State Senator Delma Furniss should be advised that the archaeology is too significant to use the Western Alternative along US 61 in this area, that the shared Central and Eastern alternative would be used instead of the Western Alternative, and that good access to the Welcome Center would be provided from the shared Central and Eastern alternative alignment. Relative to relaying this information to the former Senator, Second District Engineer Jimmy Dickerson stated that, when requested to do so, he could meet with former State Senator Furniss and inform him of this decision.

- A Map of the Tunica County Area, and Comments that the Recommended Preferred Alternative is the Central Alternative – The Central Alternative Segment, from Dubbs Road in the southern part of Tunica County to the northern limits of the project on the SR 304 Spur where SIU 11 connects to SIU 10, is the Recommended Preferred Alternative for the following reasons: it is preferred by the majority of the elected leaders and the public; it has the least amount of wetland impacts; it serves potential economic development best, including close proximity to the new airport and the casino gaming areas; and, it impacts the least archaeology. A negative of this Central Alternative segment is it is the highest cost option due to the cost of providing access at relocated Kirby Road for the nearby gaming areas.

COMMENT: When discussing this item and the previous item, Commissioner Hall asked why there are not any alternatives along US 61 in the Tunica County portion of the study area?

ANSWER: Mr. Walker responded that alternatives in Tunica County west of US 61 were eliminated based on the human and environmental constraints and public input. He advised the Western Alternative proceeded north along US 61 to the Dundee area in Tunica County where the Western Alternative had to leave US 61 on new location to join the Central Alternative in the vicinity of Dubbs Road. The relocation to the northeast was necessary to avoid natural environmental constraints that existed along US 61 south of Dubbs Road and south of the intersection with SR 4 East. Mr. Walker advised that when after the Western Alternative joins the Central Alternative near Dubbs Road, the two alternatives pass east of Tunica and east of the Tunica Airport, which borders the eastern limits of Tunica. After passing east of the airport it would be out of direction to turn back to the northwest to join US 61 for such a short distance between Tunica and Robinsonville before the corridor would have to turn due east to avoid the development along US 61 associated with the gaming industry in the vicinity of Robinsoville. For these reasons, Mr. Walker advised the study alternatives in Tunica County were mostly on new location to the east of US 61.

Mr. Walker concluded his presentation by summarizing that the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative for SIU 11 is the Modified Central Alternative, which would use the Eastern Alternative crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista.

There was a brief discussion on whether or not the MDOT Technical Staff would address the approval of the Recommended Preferred Alternative at the meeting, and it was decided further time was needed to consider the recommendation.

As previously stated, a conflict prevented Chief Engineer Harry Lee James from attending the presentation and most of the meeting, but he did arrive as the meeting before it concluded. This gave him an opportunity to receive a copy of the handout and to briefly discuss the project with lingering attendees in small groups after the meeting.

JRS:jrs

Appendix C
Agency Meetings

August 13, 2008 – Cooperating Agency EIS Discussions

Sign-In Sheet

August 13, 2008

	Name	Location / Tel. #
1.	Robert Walker (N-S)	601-948-3071
2.	Jimmy Shirley (N-S)	601-948-3071
3.	DURWOOD P Graham	23-01 (662) 746-2513
4.	R. CHAD WALLACE (MDOT ENV)	87-01 (601) 359-7920
5.	[illegible] (MDOT ENV)	87-01 (601) 359-7920
6.	Wes Stafford	MDOT (601) 359-7124
7.	Clarborne Barnwell	MDOT 601 359-7920
8.	JOHN UNDERWOOD	MDOT 601-359-1476
9.	Jesse W. Stewart	MDOT 662-563-4541
10.	DREHER HARRIS	" " " "
11.	Stephanie Wade	FHWA 601-965-4227
12.	Cecil Vick	FHWA 601-965-4227
13.	ROBERT SEYFARTH	MDEQ 601/961-5160
14.	Kim Thurman	MDOT (601) 359-7900
15.	Adam Johnson	MDOT. 359-7875
16.	Dixie Dalton	FHWA 965-4217
17.	SUSAN JARVIS	USACE 601-631-5146
18.	Dennis Riecke	MDWFP 601-432-2207
19.	David Felder	USFWS 601 321 1139
20.	KEITH PURVIS	MDOT 601-359-7258

Sign-In Sheet

August 13, 2008

	Name	Location / Tel. #
1.	Bobby Thompson	MS LEVEE BOARD GREENVILLE 662-334-4813
2.	Val Devellis	MDOT - 662-746-2563
3.	Eric Morgan	" "
4.	Davis Abbott	MDAH-601-576-6940
5.	Ntale Kajumba	EPA 404-562-9620
6.	April Wallace	87-01 601-359-7920
7.	Linda patrick	87-01 601-359-7920
8.	Carolyn Taylor	87-01 601-359-7920
9.	Bruce Gray	87-01 -601-359-7920
10.	Ellie	87-01-601-359-7920
11.	Deenda Duke-Bizeman	USDA-NRCS
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		
16.		
17.		
18.		
19.		
20.		

August 13, 2008 Meeting and Follow-up Actions

The MDOT and the Mississippi Division Office of the FHWA conducted Cooperating and Participating Agency Coordination Meetings on multiple projects on August 13-14, 2008. The separate meetings were held in the 8th Floor Conference Room at the MDOT Administrative Building, 401 North West Street, Jackson, MS. The goals of the meetings were to address the status of each of the studies and to discuss any special issues or concerns of the agencies. The studies were in various stages of development from the Final EIS distribution to having the Notice of Intent published in the Federal Register. The meeting for this study on SIU 11 of I-69 was held during the morning of August 13th.

A copy of the Final EIS for review and an approval form for the Cooperating Agencies to sign were provided to each Cooperating Agency contact prior to the meeting on August 13th. With the exception of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, all Cooperating Agencies in this study sent representation to the meeting. The Cooperating Agencies present were:

- **the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency;**
- **the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;**
- **the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;**
- **the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service;**
- **the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks; and,**
- **the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.**

Other agencies and organizations represented at the meeting:

- **the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality;**
- **the Federal Highway Administration;**
- **the MDOT Environmental Division;**
- **the MDOT Roadway Design Division;**
- **the MDOT Second District;**
- **the MDOT Third District; and**
- **Neel-Schaffer, Inc.**

MDOT Environmental Division Engineer Claiborne Barnwell presented a power point presentation on the study's history. His presentation addressed: purpose and need; status of the adjoining SIU 10 and SIU 12; project goals; development of alternatives and constraints; public, agency, and Native American involvement in the development of the alternatives; revisions made in the alignments of the alternatives to avoid natural and human environmental impacts; a follow-up independent economic study comparing benefits of the alternatives; the selected Preferred Alternative; that the selected Preferred Alternative is also the Environmentally Preferred Alternative; a summary of the alternatives' impacts; mitigation of impacts; and, the environmental commitments.

Since the study area was known to contain a large number of recorded archaeological sites and since it was assumed that the study would encounter a number of unknown sites, MDOT Staff Archaeologist John Underwood made a presentation on the study's archaeological findings and the steps taken in the alternative development to reduce the number of impacted sites.

Both Mr. Barnwell's and Mr. Underwood's presentations were informal and the attendees were encouraged to ask questions or make comments at any time during the presentations.

Table S-1 and Table S-2 were referred to by Mr. Barnwell in summarizing the impacts of the study alternatives and the Preferred Alternatives for I-69 and SR 8. For I-69, the Preferred Alternative is a modification of the Central Alternative presented in the Draft EIS at the public hearings. For SR 8, the Preferred Alternative was developed after the public hearings by combining portions of the two alternatives presented in the Draft EIS at the public hearings. Values shown in bold in Table S-1 and Table S-2 were either different than those presented in these tables at the public hearings in the Draft EIS or values that were not presented in the Draft EIS at the public hearings. The impacts referenced by Mr. Barnwell for the Preferred Alternative were shown in the extreme right portion of Table S-1. The totals for the Preferred Alternative were obtained by adding the totals for the following columns shown to the left of the Preferred Alternative:

- **Southern Section, Central**

- **SR 8, Alternative D**
- **Middle Section, Common**
- **Northern Section, Central**

Ms. Ntale Kajumba, the EPA representative, and Ms. Susan Jarvis, the Corps of Engineers representative, suggested improving Table S-1 and Table S-2 in the FEIS to better explain the Preferred Alternative impact changes that had occurred since the Central Alternative was selected as the Preferred Alternative after the public hearings. It was also suggested that more current estimated costs should be shown in these two tables and/or addressed in their footnotes.

For Table S-1 in the FEIS, Ms. Kajumba and Ms. Jarvis also suggested adding a column to the right of the Total for Preferred Alternative. The requested additional column would provide the change in values for the Preferred Alternative from the values shown in the Draft EIS for each impact category. These comparative values could be obtained by combining the I-69 Central Alternative impacts with the Pace Bypass Alternative impacts for the widening of SR 8.

In response to the requests by Ms. Kajumba, Ms. Jarvis, and others, Mr. Barnwell advised Table S-1 and Table S-2 in the Final EIS would be updated to better address their concerns.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Barnwell requested the Cooperating Agency contacts provide their signed approval sheets along with any comments to the MDOT as soon as possible. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife representative brought that agency's signed approval sheet to the meeting and gave it to the project team at the meeting. A copy of that signed approval sheet is contained in Appendix B.

In the weeks after the meeting, signed approval sheets without cover letters and one with a cover letter that did not require a response were received from the following Cooperating Agencies: the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks; and, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. A copy of each of these three approval

sheets and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers cover letter is contained in Appendix B.

After the meeting, the MDOT contacted the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) regarding signing their Cooperating Agency Approval Sheet. The USDA-NRCS referenced a previous letter mailed to the Mississippi Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration dated July 11, 2008. The letter stated in part: "After reviewing the document, NRCS has determined that no WRP easements will be impacted by the preferred alternative. Since the agency will not be impacted, we have no reservations with the project and request to be removed as a cooperating agency." A copy of the July 11, 2008, letter and the unsigned approval sheet is contained in Appendix B.

As stated previously, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) did not send representation to the meeting. After the meeting, Mr. Barnwell contacted HUD and was informed that their representative in the study retired and was not replaced. They stated that HUD had no interest in continuing as a cooperating agency in the study. A copy of their unsigned approval sheet is contained in Appendix B.

Of the original cooperating agencies, the one remaining cooperating agency whose approval of the FEIS needs addressing is the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA signed their approval sheet and provided suggested comments for inclusion in the FEIS or Record of Decision (ROD). A copy of the signed approval sheet is contained in Appendix B.

Based on the actions taken in response to this Cooperating Agency Meeting, the approval sheet at the front of this document was revised to two sheets. The first sheet lists the following as Cooperating Agencies: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks; and, Mississippi Department of Archives and History. The second sheet contains the scanned approval signatures.

The comments received from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for consideration in the FEIS were mainly listed under the categories of Aquatic Resources, Noise, Alternatives, or Summary of Impacts.

Under Aquatic Resources, the first EPA comment advised the tables and narration in the FEIS support the selection of the preferred alignment as potentially impacting the fewest federally jurisdiction waters of the United States.

The second EPA comment under Aquatic Resources concerned minimization of impacts. It stated the preliminary FEIS provided only generic language addressing nationally accepted typical unlimited access roadways that meet the Federal Highways Administrations safety requirements when crossing environmentally sensitive locations that would include not only the federal and state wildlife preserves, management areas, parks and reserves, but would include waters of the United States. The comment referenced specific waters of the United States identified in the preliminary FEIS were open water channels and lakes; submerged and emergent aquatic vegetation; and wetlands adjacent to these waters. The comment identified five specific minimization steps in order of preference for consideration when crossing waters of the United States. The following are the five suggested minimization steps and the actions that will be taken in response to the suggestions:

1. **bridging with scuppers avoided in all bridge designs;**

   RESPONSE: There are several existing bridges that will not be reconstructed in the initial construction phase; however, should any of these bridges be modified, consideration will be given for eliminating use of scuppers. Scuppers will not be included in the bridge designs for the proposed interstate except where determined to be the only practical way to safely handle the drainage.

2. **reduction of required right-of-way by combining outside guard rails combined with vertical wall or 3:1 slopes with approximately 24' wide inside medians with Jersey barriers separating the two directions of traffic;**

   RESPONSE: The location of I-69 SIU 11 is almost entirely through the rural Mississippi Delta where design standards are used to meet drivers' anticipations of long tangents, excellent visibility, wide shoulders, flat roadway slopes and low embankments. This type facility instills a distinct feeling of safety in the drivers. Implementing design features such as narrower medians, guard rails, steeper slopes, vertical walls and median barriers to lessen the footprint of the roadway and reduce right-of-way impacts would deviate from the desired design standards and could be detrimental to driver safety.

   This facility will utilize portions of existing roadways constructed to the proposed typical section and will connect to the similarly constructed SIU 10. Creating an hourglass configuration at the bridge locations would conflict with driver expectations and could compromise safety. Median barriers are seldom used in a rural setting unless to minimize extraordinary environmental or social impacts, none of which have been identified by any of the participating agencies or stakeholders. Narrowing the median through use of Jersey Barriers at bridged locations would only minimally reduce the filled areas.

   Except in the transition for the guard rail end section, the embankment design for the new interstate bridges will provide 3:1 slopes behind the guard rails.

3. **all bridge and road stormwater run-off collected over waters of the United States and 100-year flood plain are to be directed to retention/detention ponds constructed in upland areas outside the 100-year flood plain;**

RESPONSE: Again, this segment of I-69 traverses through the Mississippi Delta where agriculture is the predominant industry. Table 4-20 lists the land uses for the study alternatives as almost entirely cropland with the Preferred Alternative impacting 7,892 acres of cropland. Upland Scrub/Shrub constitutes 29 acres of the Preferred Alternative. Very few ponds that are not naturally formed exist in this area. Retention ponds would be counter productive to and conflict with the drainage requirements for crop management.

Transmission of surface water by man-made means into ponds is practically impossible; in the Delta this is especially true due to the 'flat' terrain. Directing stormwater into retention/detention ponds considering the limited amount of upland areas could, in most cases, only be accomplished by mechanical means. This would be economically unfeasible to establish & more so to maintain.

The practice of collecting bridge and road stormwater and directing it to retention/detention ponds outside the 100 year floodplain has not been undertaken by any of the southeastern states (FHWA performed a poll of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, South Carolina, West Virginia) with the exception of Florida that has utilized detention ponds for some but not all projects.

During design, a commitment will be included to consider the construction of detention/retention ponds for stormwater run-off where such a system would make a measurable difference in water quality, function without mechanical components, and require reasonable degree of maintenance.

4. **wildlife crossing associated with all palustrine forested riparian waters of the United States;**

RESPONSE: The concern for wildlife crossings associated with palustrine forested riparian waters was one of the early issues coordinated with EPA & USF&W in the development of this EIS. From the earliest scoping meetings migration routes, mostly associated with the Mississippi River, were identified. As the alternative routes were developed a commitment to not separate Dahomey Wildlife Refuge from the Mississippi River was made. Furthermore, during the development and refinement of the alternatives considered viable to carry forward, all of their locations continually moved further to the east, not only east of SR 1 but even east of US 61 north of Clarksdale, minimizing the infringements on the migration routes identified as being of concern.

When these areas are crossed by a hydraulic bridge structure adequate means for wildlife to cross will be available. Fencing along the right of way will also guide wildlife to all available crossings of the interstate.

5. **aquatic and aquatic dependent fish and wildlife movement and migration through any culverts will include inverted designs, i.e., below grade with appropriate gravel sized substrate placed above the culvert bottom to historical grade elevation.**

   RESPONSE: To accommodate aquatic and aquatic dependent fish and wildlife movement and migration installation of culverts will include inverted designs. Flat grades and low velocities of channel flow in conjunction with the soil types in the Delta will create a natural substrate by siltation in a very short time. Therefore, the gravel substrate would not provide any useful benefit.

The third EPA comment under Aquatic Resources suggested the commitments to bridge over specific waters of the United States and 100-year floodplains be identified and included in the FEIS and/or ROD.

RESPONSE: During the preliminary design, sufficient hydraulic engineering studies will be performed and shared with the regulatory agencies to determine which waters of the United States and 100-year floodplains will be bridged. When developing the cost estimates for this study's alternatives, the existing roadway drainage structures provided upstream and downstream of proposed crossings were reviewed. If a three or more span hydraulic bridge was provided either upstream or downstream, it was assumed that a bridge would be required at the alternative's proposed crossing. In response to this EPA Comment, Table 8-1 was developed to indicate known bridge crossings for the Preferred Alternative. The future hydraulic engineering studies may determine other locations where bridges are needed.

The fourth EPA comment under Aquatic Resources suggested that the FEIS disclose how mitigation for unavoidable stream impacts will likely be addressed for a more complete evaluation during the NEPA process. As part of this comment, the EPA advised a main consideration regarding the compensatory mitigation will be the State 303(d) listed water bodies (i.e., Harris Bayou, Hushpuckena River, and Coldwater) that may be impacted by the proposed project and a very strong desire to compensate in the watershed to replace the loss of water quality benefits provided to these waterbodies by the unavoidable impact to waters of the United States by this activity.

RESPONSE: Impacted streams will be mitigated as part of the 404/401 permit process. In accordance with the EPA's suggestions, it is anticipated that mitigation would consist of restoration of streams within the same watershed using a ratio to be determined through negotiation between MDOT and permitting agencies.

The EPA comment under Noise noted that five receptor locations will be impacted by noise at levels that exceed the noise abatement criteria or the substantial increase criteria. EPA noted that according to the preliminary FEIS these structures will not be relocated, but an earthen berm is being considered in one location. EPA commented that it supports the need for noise mitigation and suggests that given the limited number of locations where EPA believes noise

mitigation is needed relative to the magnitude of the overall project, additional noise mitigation should be included. For example, possible noise minimization efforts used by the EPA in their comment included insulating individual receptor locations-windows, doors, etc. for installing air conditioning units at impacted sites.

RESPONSE: If a noise barrier analysis determines that a barrier is not justified, The Code of Federal Regulations allow Federal Funding to be used for noise mitigation measures only for public buildings. None of the five impacted receptor locations are public buildings. MDOT's Noise Policy does not provide for noise abatement measures for the five units identified as exceeding noise abatement criteria. This project traverses some 120 miles with a minimum of impacted properties and noise abatement measures are not considered warranted.

The EPA comment under Alternatives suggested that Page S-8 in the Summary which discusses proposed improvements to SR 8 should fully summarize these changes; it should indicate that SR 8 is being widened from a 2-lane section to five and four-lane sections; and, the length of this improvement should also be included in the Summary.

RESPONSE: The EPA's requested changes have been addressed.

The first EPA comment under Summary of Impacts is that the Summary of Impacts indicates a comparison of the impacts of each section of the proposed alternatives. The comment addressed the modifications made to the preferred alternative following the DEIS. The EPA requested that changes in impacts from draft to final should be made clear in the footnote. For example, the EPA pointed out that the DEIS indicates that 68 acres of wetlands will be impacted by this alternative, while the FEIS shows 106 acres of wetlands impacts.

RESPONSE: The footnote(s) to the Summary of Impacts tables have been revised to better explain the changes in impacts from draft to final.

The second EPA comment under Summary of Impacts requested that updated cost estimates be included in the summary of impacts table.

RESPONSE: The summary of impacts tables have been revised to provide updated cost estimates.

Melinda L. McGrath
Deputy Executive Director/
Chief Engineer

Brenda Znachko
Deputy Executive Director/
Administration

MDOT
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Larry L. "Butch" Brown
Executive Director

Steven K. Edwards
Director
Office of Intermodal Planning

Willie Huff
Director
Office of Enforcement

P. O. Box 1850 / Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1850 / Telephone (601) 359-7001 / FAX (601) 359-7110 / GoMDOT.com

March 25, 2009

Ms. Ntale Kajumba
Atlanta Federal Ctr, NEPA Prgm 13th Flr
61 Forsyth Street
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Re: Interstate 69, SIU 11, Environmental Impact Statement
Coahoma, Bolivar, and Tunica Counties, Mississippi

Dear Ms. Kajumba:

In response to your concerns expressed following the August 2008 Scoping Meeting we are providing the attached information. The format we chose includes a complete synopsis of the meeting and then addresses directly the points you presented. This report then will become a part of the final documentation of the FEIS.

This chapter is the last remaining task before requesting approval for distribution of the FEIS from Federal Highway.

Please call if any additional information is needed or if you wish to discuss any aspect of the responses.

Sincerely,

E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer

Cc: Dickie Walters, Federal Highway Administration

enclosures

Appendix D
Public Involvement

Brochure and website
Invitation to environmental justice task force
Invitation to public meetings
September 24-27, 2001 meetings
July 16-18, 2002 meetings
October 21, 2002 meeting
January 29-30, 2003 meetings
April 30-May 2, 2003 meeting and follow-up actions
December 13-16, 2004 public hearings
City and county government resolutions and correspondence
Community organization comments and correspondence
Public comments and correspondence
Comment response summary

Appendix D
Public Involvement

Brochure and website

Interstate 69
Moving Forward

"The completion of the Interstate 69 highway corridor through Mississippi will probably do more to increase the standard of living for those living in the Delta than any other public works project in the last 50 years."

—Zack Stewart
Northern District
Transportation Commissioner

Interstate Highway 69 is the proposed 1,650-mile-long stretch of national highway that will pass through four Miss. Delta counties on its way from Canada to Mexico.

This *Interstate 69 Update* from the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) shows the routes being studied. The new I-69 highway will ensure that the Delta keeps moving forward.

The Road To Our Future

Interstate 69 *Update*

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Mississippi's Top Priority

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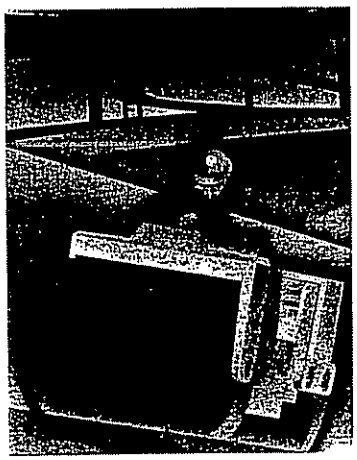
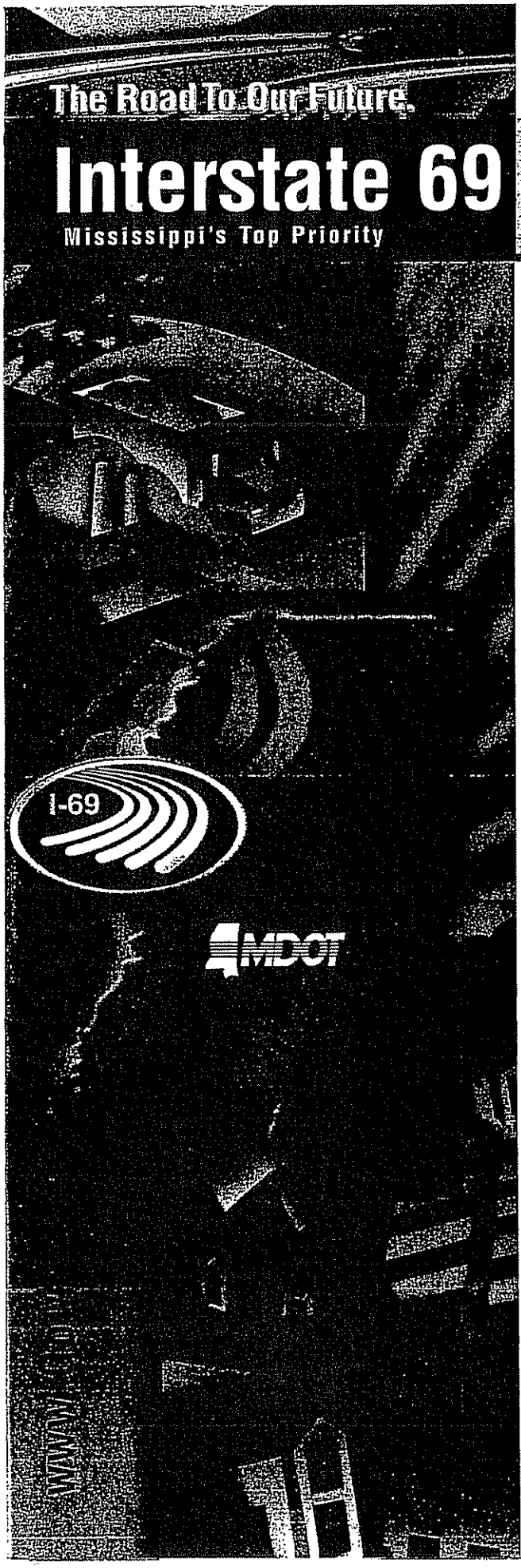
MDOT





Update

Mississippi Rolls Out the Red Carpet for Interstate Highway 69

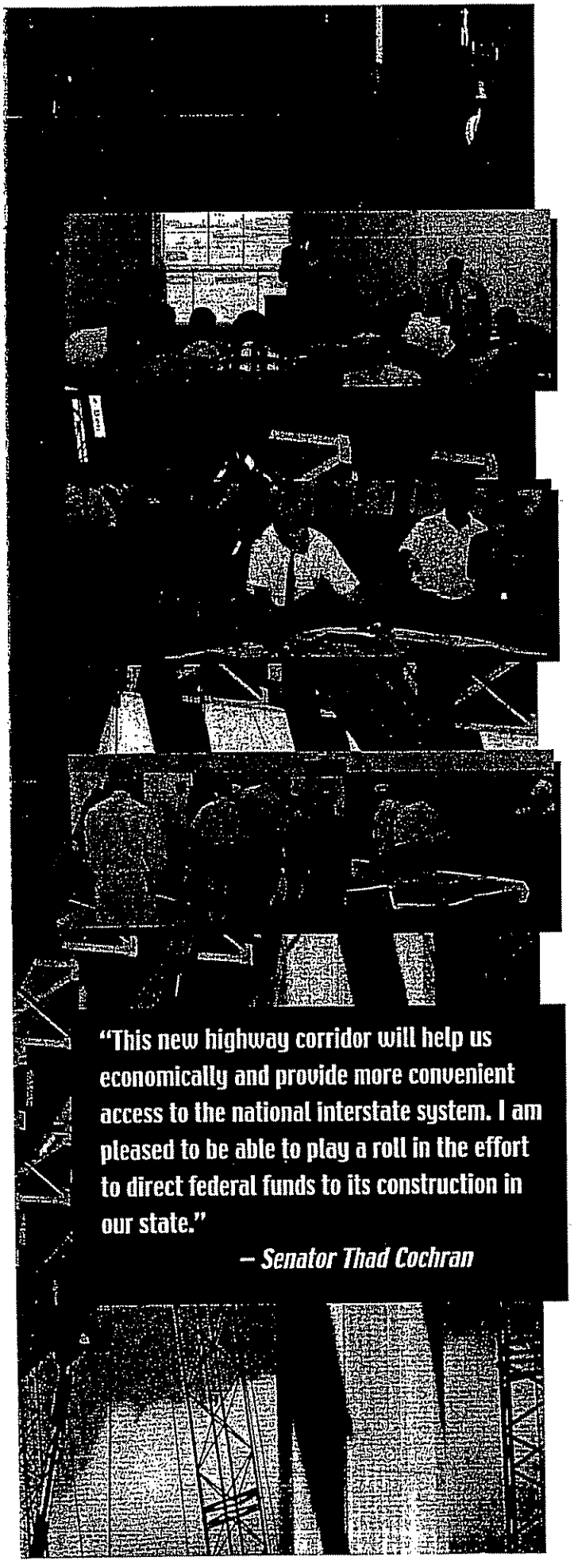
Across the nation, citizens are awaiting the final plans for Interstate Highway 69, a new federal highway project that will provide one long continuous route from the Michigan/Canada border to the Texas/Mexico border.

Mississippi welcomes the opportunity to be part of the I-69 highway project. The proposed route will pass through four Mississippi counties: Tunica, Coahoma, Sunflower, and Bolivar. Travelers from Canada to Mexico will have better access to our state, while local agricultural and manufactured products will be able to reach new markets quicker than ever before. When the new Interstate 69 is complete, the Mississippi Delta will be an even better place to live.

The proposed highway is divided into 32 separate sections called "Sections of Independent Utility" (SIU). The longest section passing through Mississippi is called SIU #11. Beginning at State Route 304 in Tunica County, SIU #11 will extend south through Tunica, Coahoma, Sunflower and Bolivar Counties and will end at State Route 1 near Benoit, Mississippi.

"Once complete, I-69 will link the economic centers of North America and offer the most direct trade highway between Mexico and Canada. Congress recognizes the extremely important economic impact transportation investments can have in the Delta and beyond. I-69 will increase the ease with which goods are brought to and shipped away from points of economic interest. The people of Tunica, Coahoma, Sunflower, and Bolivar Counties will be fortunate to have a continental highway at their disposal."

–Representative Bennie Thompson



"This new highway corridor will help us economically and provide more convenient access to the national interstate system. I am pleased to be able to play a roll in the effort to direct federal funds to its construction in our state."

– Senator Thad Cochran

Interstate Highway 69 Public Meetings

Over the summer, the I-69 consulting team held public meetings in Cleveland, Clarksdale and Tunica. Team members include officials from the Miss. Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and project engineering firm Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT Environmental Division Engineer, and Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager for Neel-Schaffer, Inc., led the presentations. Using topographic survey maps and aerial photographs, the consulting team presented several alternative routes.

Participating citizens posed questions and received take-home information packets about the different routes under consideration.

Citizens could also express their views on the project by completing a comment sheet provided in the packet. Comment sheets are also on the MDOT Web site. These public comments will be considered in evaluating the best route for this section of the I-69 highway.

What is happening now?

Since these public meetings, Neel-Schaffer has held special task force meetings in each community, while conducting detailed studies of the areas shown in the map. The studies include on-site land surveys, cost estimates, etc.

Once gathered, this information will become a report called the "Draft Environmental Impact Statement" (DEIS) that will be submitted to MDOT and the Federal Highway Administration for review. The team will hold another round of meetings sometime in spring 2003 to inform the public of the latest developments and to gather any additional comments before publishing the final version of the DEIS. This report will be completed by late summer or early fall of this year, and will be available for public review.

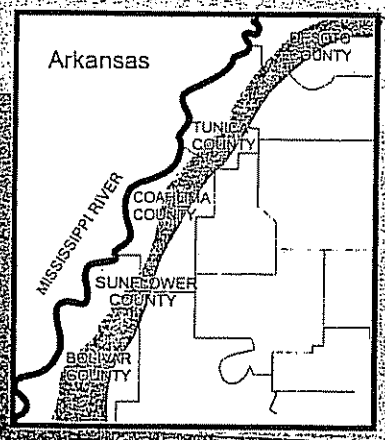
What will happen after the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is published?

After the official DEIS is published and distributed, the team will hold a final public hearing that will provide all interested parties with one more chance to make comments on the report. After this public hearing, the team will address all comments and publish the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

The Road to Our Future

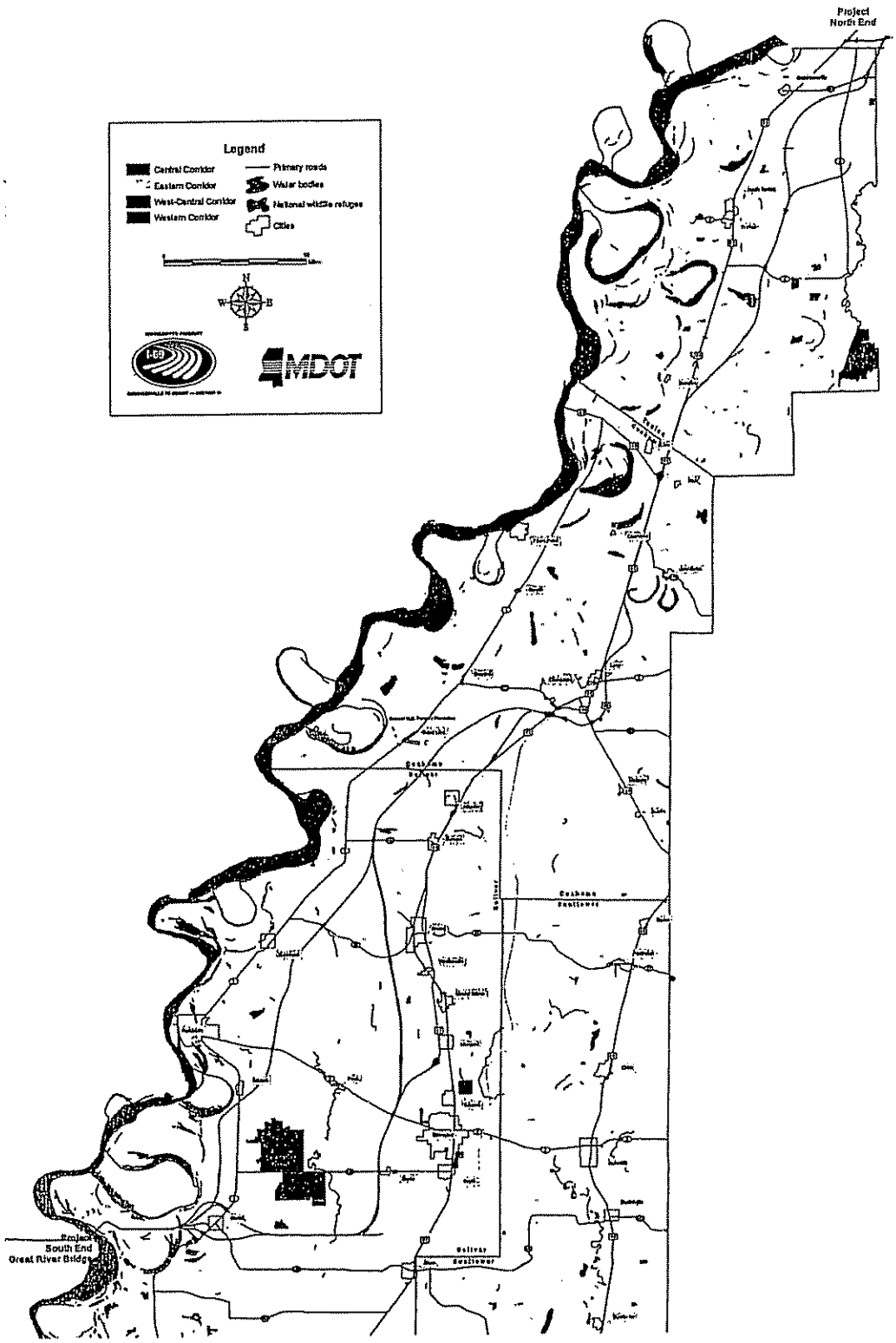
"MDOT greatly appreciates the efforts of the Tunica, Coahoma, Sunflower, and Bolivar citizens in the decision-making process for the new I-69 highway. Many people have participated in several public meetings and provided valuable input for studies on the proposed route."

–Larry L. "Butch" Brown
MDOT Executive Director



"I-69 highway is perhaps the most important transportation project impacting the future of Mississippi. I believe this interstate will bring much needed economic growth to our state, particularly the Delta region."

–Senator Trent Lott



Spring 2003	Summer 2003	Fall 2003	Winter 2003	Early 2004	Spring 2004
Public Meetings	Draft DEIS is published.	Final version of DEIS is published.	Public Hearings	FEIS is published.	Approved I-69 route is announced.

How do I get more information on this project?

A consulting team contracted by the Mississippi Department of Transportation that includes representatives of Neel-Schaffer, Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Coastal Environments, Inc. and Ken Weeden and Associates, Inc. is conducting the study.

The latest public information on the project may be obtained by contacting the I-69 Project Manager at the following address:

Robert Walker
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P.O. Box 22625, Jackson, MS 39225-2625
(601) 948-3071, i69@neel-schaffer.com

or

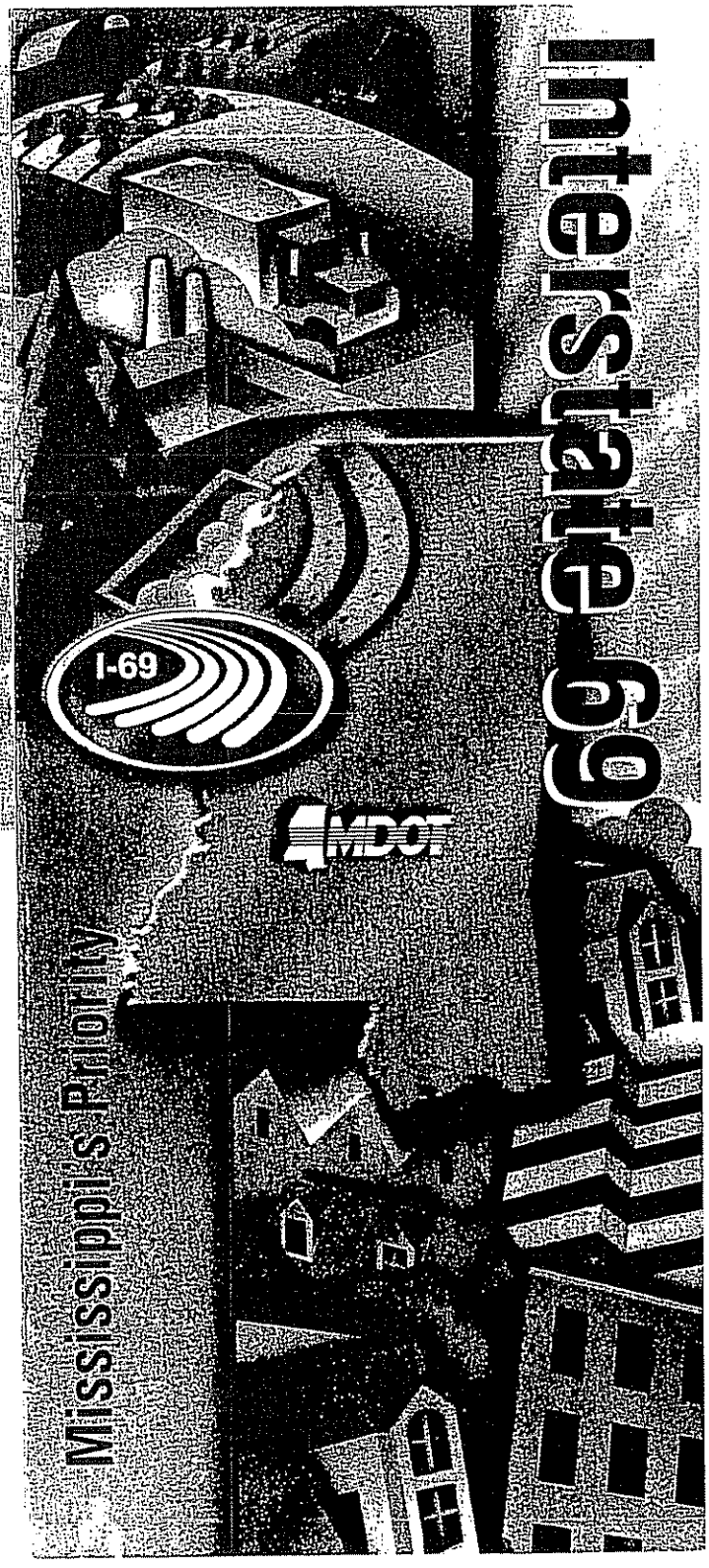
E. Claiborne Barnwell
MDOT Environmental Division
P.O. Box 1850, Jackson, MS 39215-1850
(601) 359-7920, cbarnwell@mdot.state.ms.us

The Road To Our Future

Interstate 69

Mississippi's Priority

MDOT



The Road To Our Future

Mississippi's Priority

Good roads and highways help communities grow. That's why Mississippi aggressively sought to be included in the Interstate-69 project which will connect Canada to Mexico, passing through the Mississippi Delta.

When complete, Interstate-69 will be a catalyst to new economic opportunities in the Delta and long-term economic success.

What is the I-69 Project?

The proposed Interstate 69 will provide a 1,600-mile-long continuous national highway from the Michigan/Canada border to the Texas/Mexico border. I-69 will improve international and interstate movement of freight and people through the states of Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Possible corridors for the new interstate will be studied utilizing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process so that the best possible location may be determined.

What is an Environmental Impact Statement?

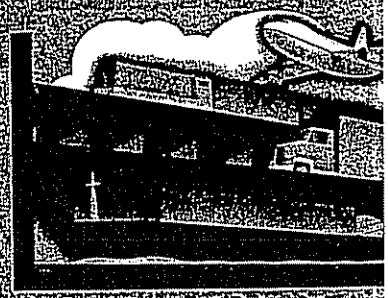
An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the documentation of a study for federal projects that are expected to have significant economic, environmental, and/or social impacts. The purpose is to determine what impacts a transportation project might generate in regard to the natural and physical environment, as well as the relationship of people with that environment. Issues that impact wetlands, streams, rivers and wildlife as well as homes, churches, businesses and communities will be studied in relation to the proposed project.

Why do we need a new 1,600-mile interstate?

I-69 is needed to support the movement of commodities, specifically goods and materials, between Canada, Mexico, and the United States. This new highway also is planned to provide economic growth potential to all states within the corridor, particularly areas such as the Mississippi Delta and Southern Texas.

How much trade is going on now between the United States, Canada and Mexico?

It is estimated that four billion tons of freight are already being transported through our country each year. As trade increases between Canada, the United States and Mexico, freight also will increase. Therefore, I-69 will increase the nation's capacity to accommodate projected demands in freight movement from border to border. It will also significantly reduce travel times and overall costs.



How will I-69 benefit Mississippians?

I-69 will serve many communities in the state that do not have direct access to the U.S. Interstate highway system. Once completed, I-69 is expected to provide the region with new opportunities for economic growth as well as improved and safer access to education, health and commercial services.

Since this project is so large, how is it being managed?

The study area of the Interstate 69 corridor has been divided into 32 separate sections called Sections of Independent Utility (SIU). This is so each SIU could be a viable project standing on its own and serving a local area even if all of the sections of I-69 were not completed. The transportation agencies for the states through which the I-69 corridor passes have the responsibility of studying these sections within their borders.

Where are the SIUs located in Mississippi?

There are four sections in Mississippi:

SIU #9 is located in both Mississippi and Tennessee. This SIU begins just north of Memphis near Millington, Tenn., and ends at the I-55 and new State Route 304 interchange in DeSoto County.

SIU #10 is located entirely in Mississippi. It includes the re-located section of State Route 304 between I-55 and US 61 in DeSoto County, and a connecting road which ties to the existing section of State Route 304 in Tunica County. This section has already been approved as part of the I-69 corridor and is under construction.

SIU #11 the longest segment in the state, begins at the existing State Route 304 in Tunica County. This section will extend to the south through several Mississippi Delta counties and end at State Route 1 near Benoit, Miss.

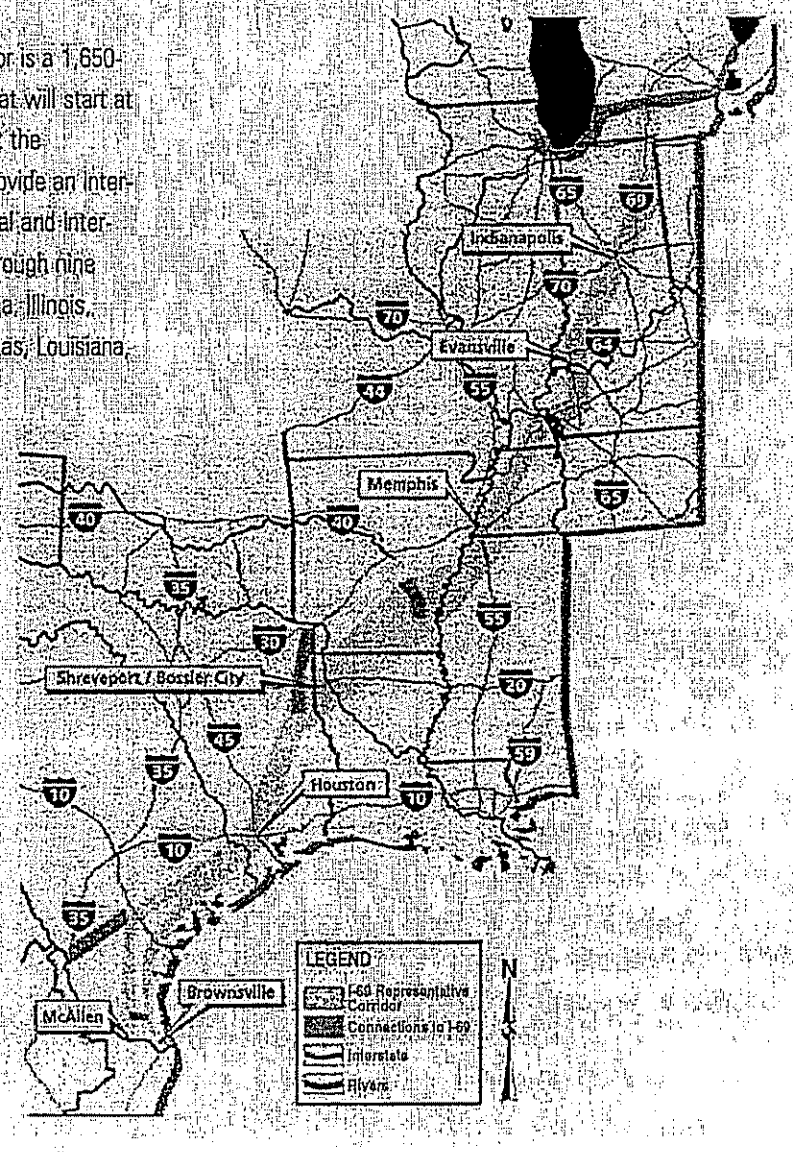
SIU #12 is the last section of Interstate 69 in Mississippi. This section starts at State Route 1 near Benoit, Miss., and proceeds to the southwest across the Mississippi River into Arkansas and ends near McGehee, Ark. A study conducted for this section indicates that the preferred location for I-69 crossing the Mississippi River is the future site of the Great River Bridge.

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

The proposed Interstate 69 (I-69) corridor is a 1,650-mile-long continuous national highway that will start at the Michigan/Canadian border and end at the Texas/Mexico border. The corridor will provide an interstate facility that will improve international and interstate movement of freight and people through nine states. These states are Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas.

The justification for I-69 is to support the movement of commodities, specifically goods and materials, between Canada, Mexico, and the United States. This corridor also will provide economic growth potential to all states within the corridor, particularly the lower Mississippi Delta region. It is estimated that four billion tons of freight are transported within the I-69 corridor each year. As trade increases between Canada, the United States, and Mexico, freight also will increase. Therefore, the I-69 corridor will give the nation new capacity to accommodate the increased demands in freight movement from border to border, thus significantly reducing travel times and overall costs.



The I-69 corridor also will serve regions and communities in the nine states that do not have direct access to the U.S. interstate highway system. This corridor will provide new access to markets, jobs, and services. An area of particular interest is the lower Mississippi Delta region. This area is underserved by the interstate system. The corridor will provide this region with new opportunities for economic growth, as well as improved access to education, health, and commercial services. The I-69 corridor project has been identified by the federal government as the Lower Mississippi Delta Region Initiative.

Sections of Independent Utility within Mississippi

The Federal Highway Administration has divided the I-69 corridor into 32 sections called "Sections of Independent Utility" (SIU). The SIU process was developed so that each state's transportation agency will have the responsibility of studying and evaluating the portion of the I-69 corridor that is in its state. The SIU numbering sequence for the I-69 corridor runs from north to south.

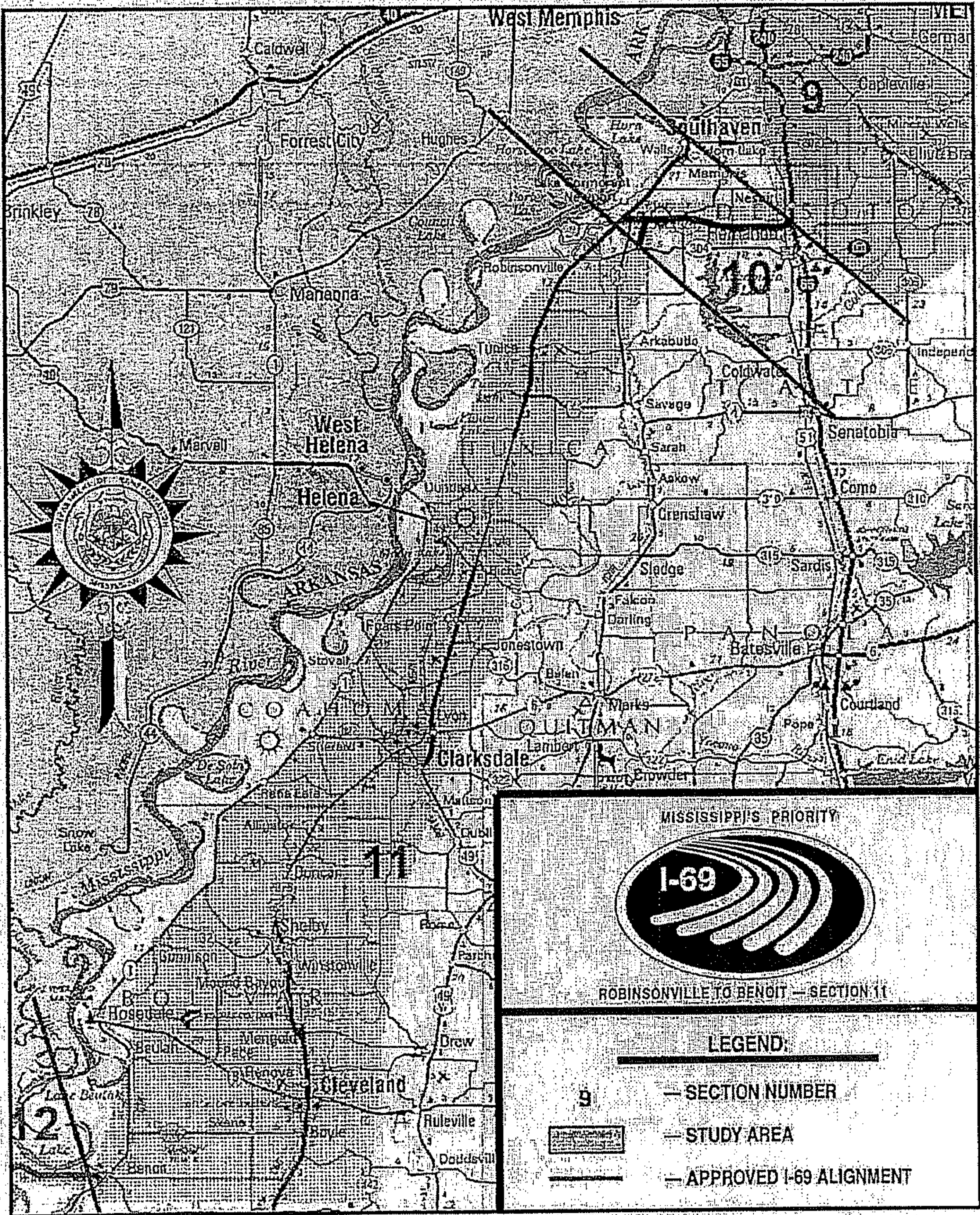
Several states, including Mississippi, have begun environmental studies. These studies are required to move forward with the design and construction of I-69 and are the key component of the environmental process. These studies will help determine the preferred highway alignment of I-69 in each SIU.

Within Mississippi there are four SIUs — 9, 10, 11, and 12 *(see map on following page)*. SIU 9 is located in both Tennessee and Mississippi. The limits of this SIU begin just north of Memphis near Millington, Tenn. and end at the I-55 and new State Route 304 (SR 304) interchange (that will be under construction). In calendar year 2002, this new interchange at I-55 will be located north of the existing SR 304 interchange. SIU 9 is currently in the early stages of the environmental process which, upon approval by MDOT FHWA, will allow the design phase of I-69 to begin.

SIU 10 is located entirely in Mississippi. This area will include the new SR 304 that is currently under construction between I-55 and US 61 in Tunica County. This SIU also will include a connection to the existing SR 304 approximately 1 mile east of SR 3. This section already has been approved as a part of the I-69 corridor.

SIU 11 begins at the new SR 304 spur junction with existing SR 304 in Tunica County. It will extend in a southerly direction through several Mississippi Delta counties and end at SR 1 near Benoit, Mississippi. This section is currently in the early states of the environmental study process.

SIU 12 is the last section of the I-69 corridor located in Mississippi. This section starts at SR 1 near Benoit and proceeds in a southwesterly direction across the Mississippi River into Arkansas and ends near McGehee, Ark. The environmental study for this section is nearly complete. The study indicates that the preferred location for the Mississippi River crossing is the previously-approved location of the Great River Bridge between Arkansas City, Ark. and SR 1 near Benoit, Miss.



MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11
LEGEND:
9 — SECTION NUMBER
— STUDY AREA
— APPROVED I-69 ALIGNMENT
9
10
11
12
West Memphis
Caldwell
Forrest City
Hughes
Southaven
Walls
Horn Lake
Brinkley
Robinsonville
Marianna
Tunica
Arkabutla
Coldwater
Savage
Senatobia
West Helena
Helena
Marvell
Dundee
Sarah
Askew
Crenshaw
Como
Sledge
Sardis
Falcon
Darling
Batesville
Jonestown
Marks
Stovall
Lyon
Courtland
Pope
Clarksdale
Lambert
Crowder
Snow Lake
Alligator
Duncan
Shelby
Gunnison
Rosedale
Beulah
Cleveland
Ruleville
Boyle
Benoit
Drew
COAHOMA
QUITMAN
PANOLA
TUNICA
BOLIVAR
ARKANSAS
Mississippi

This study is being conducted by a consulting team contracted by the Mississippi Department of Transportation. The team includes Neel-Schaffer,Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Coastal Environments Incorporated, and Ken Weeden and Associates, Inc.

For more information, please contact:

Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625
(601) 948-3071
I69@neel-schaffer.com

or

E. Claiborne Barnwell
MDOT Environmental Division
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850
(601) 359-7920
cbarnwell@mdot.state.ms.us

WELCOME TO THE MISSISSIPPI DOT'S PRIORITY – I-69

- TORY
- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
- NEWS
- OTHER I-69 STUDIES
- CONTACT US

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HISTORY

TORY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

NEWS

OTHER I-69 STUDIES

CONTACT US

July, 11, 2001	MDOT meets with Delta officials to discuss I-69 corridor
August 7, 2001	I-69 public meetings well attended; public encouraged to continue providing input
September 13, 2001	MDOT/FHWA to Host Public Meetings on Proposed I-69 Corridor
September 24-27, 2001	Initial Series of Public Meetings

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TORY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

NEWS

OTHER I-69 STUDIES

CONTACT US

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Frequently Asked Questions Concerning The I-69 Corridor

What is the I-69 Project?
The proposed Interstate Highway 69 (I-69) will provide a 1,600-mile-long continuous national highway from the Michigan/Canada border to the Texas/Mexico border. The corridor will provide an interstate-type highway that will improve international and interstate movement of freight and people through the states of Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Possible corridors for the new highway will be studied utilizing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process so that the best possible location may be determined.

What is an Environmental Impact Statement?
An EIS is the documentation of a study for federal projects that are expected to have significant social, economic, and/or environmental impacts. The purpose is to determine what impacts a transportation project might generate in regard to the natural and physical environment as well as the relationship of people with that environment. Issues such as impacts to wetlands, streams, rivers and wildlife as well as homes, churches, businesses and communities, will be studied in relation to the proposed project.

Why do we need a new 1,600-mile interstate?
I-69 is needed to support the movement of commodities, specifically goods and materials, between Canada, Mexico, and the United States. This new highway also is planned to provide economic growth potential to all states within the corridor, particularly economical depressed areas such as the Mississippi Delta and Southern Texas.

CONTACT US

TORY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

NEWS

OTHER I-69 STUDIES

CONTACT US

You can get the latest information public information on the project by clicking here, or you can contact the I-69 Project Manager, Mr. Robert Walker with Neel-Schaffer, Inc. at the following address:

Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625
(601) 948-3071
i69@neel-schaffer.com

or
E. Claiborne Barnwell
MDOT Environmental Division
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850
(601) 359-7920
cbarnwell@mdot.state.ms.us

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Appendix D
Public Involvement

Invitation to environmental justice task force

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY

I-69

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
TELEPHONE: 601.948.3071 • FAX: 601.948.3178 • EMAIL: I69@neel-schaffer.com

CORRECTED LETTER: (discard first letter, thank you)

Lyn Arnold
P. O. Box 1888
Tunica, MS 38676

Dear Lyn Arnold:

This is to follow-up on the community involvement outreach (Environmental Justice) portion of the Interstate 69 (I-69) Study on Section 11 in the State of Mississippi. As you were made aware last summer, Section 11 of this proposed national interstate highway would be located through portions of several northwest Mississippi Delta counties. You may have attended one of this study's initial series of public meetings last fall in Tunica, Clarksdale, Cleveland or Benoit.

The Federal Highway Administration, the Mississippi Department of Transportation, and their consultant team of engineers, planners, and scientists are conducting the environmental and engineering work for this study. Even though the study is a major undertaking, it is progressing very well.

The purpose of Environmental Justice is to ensure fair and full participation by all involved parties, particularly minority and low-income populations; avoidance or mitigation of impacts on these affected populations; and the proportionate spreading of benefits associated with the project. This is a very important aspect of the overall study. A major step in our outreach efforts is the establishment of an *"I-69 Environmental Justice Task Force"*. This Task Force would be composed of representatives and citizens of Tunica, Coahoma, Bolivar, and Sunflower counties. As an interested citizen, we would like for you to participate in establishing this Task Force.

During the first week of March, we want to meet with you and other citizens of your county to discuss more details about organizing the Task Force. We will follow up by telephone with details of the location and time prior to your county's meeting. It is our hope that you will agree to become involved in this important planning aspect for this study.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please telephone me at 1-877-824-6525 or Robert Walker, the Project Manager with Neel-Schaffer, Inc., at 1-601-948-3071.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Weeden
Environmental Justice Coordinator
I-69 Study Team
Pc: Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

I-69 Environmental Justice task force

Meeting Schedule

March 5-7, 2002

Thank you for participating in the establishment of the *"I-69 Environmental Justice Task Force"*. This Task Force will be composed of representatives and citizens of Tunica, Coahoma, Bolivar, and Sunflower counties. Although it is *one* overall group, the first meetings will be held with each county's sub-group (except combining Sunflower with Bolivar)-The initial meetings will explain the proposed intent of the Task Force and how you as citizens can help in our Environmental Justice efforts for this important project. Dinner will be provided (Lunch, in Tunica). Hope to see you, and thanks again.

Bolivar/Sunflower County Group

Tuesday, March 5, 2002

Time: Dinner Meeting, 6 p.m.
Location: Cleveland, MS- Airport Grocery Restaurant
3442 Hwy 8, West. –contact: Dean Morganti-662-843-2712

Coahoma County Group

Wednesday, March 6, 2002

Time: Dinner Meeting, 7 p.m.
Location: Clarksdale, MS-Ranchero Restaurant, 1907 State Street (HWY 61)-contact: Peg Meek-662-627-7337

Tunica County Group

Thursday, March 7, 2002

Time: Luncheon Meeting, noon.
Location: Tunica Chamber of Commerce Office
1371 Main St. Tunica, Ms. –contact: Kay Little-662-8363-2865

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President of Tunica Casino Group
Grand - Bally's- Sheraton
13615 Old Highway 61 North • Robinsonville, MS 38664
Phone 662-357-6090: • Fax 662-357-3394: 1-800-WIN-4WIN EXT 6090
• Email: E-Mail: lucasj@grandcasinos.com

The Fitzgeralds®
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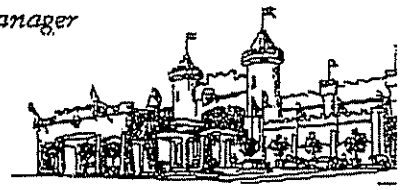
Domenic Mezzetta
Vice President/General Manager

711 Lucky Lane
P.O Box 327
Robinsonville, MS 38664
1-662-363-LUCK
1-800-766-LUCK
FAX 1-662-363-7160



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Appendix D
Public Involvement

Invitation to public meetings

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

4:30-7:00 PM Presentations @ 5:00 & 6:00

Public Information Meetings

- **Tuesday, March 13 in McGehee, Arkansas**
- **Wednesday, March 14 in Benoit, Mississippi**

Watch your mailbox and local paper for more information!

How to give your input:

Attend one of the public meetings or hearings.

Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department

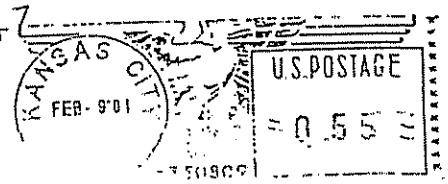
Mississippi Department of Transportation

Write to: **I-69 Mississippi River Crossing EIS**
c/o Betty Burry - HNTB Corporation
1201 Walnut, Suite 700
Kansas City, MO 64106

Call: **Betty Burry at (816) 527-2679**

Katy 816 527 2547

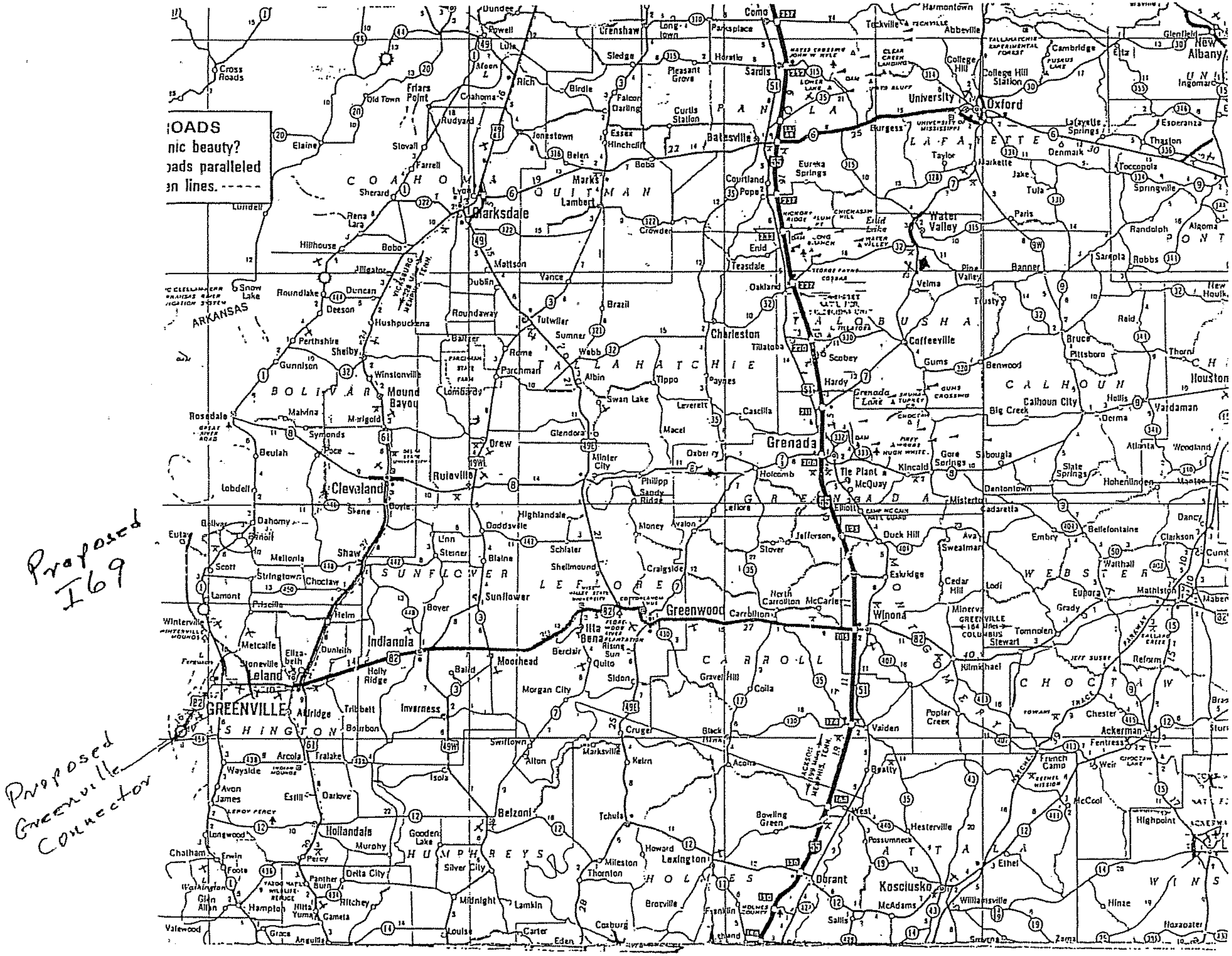
Elaine



I-69 Mississippi River Crossing

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing EIS
c/o Betty Burry -
HNTB Corporation 1201 Walnut, Suite 700
Kansas City, MO 64106

Mr Early Ewing
Town of Benoit
P O Box 60
Benoit, MS 38725



Proposed I69
Proposed Greenville Connector
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GREENVILLE
Leland
Indianola
Cleveland
Clarksdale
Greenwood
Grenada
Batesville
Oxford
University
Winona
Kosciusko
Durant
Lexington
Belzoni
Hollandale
Charleston
Ackerman
New Albany
C O A H O M A
Q U I T M A N
B O L I V A R
S U N F L O W E R
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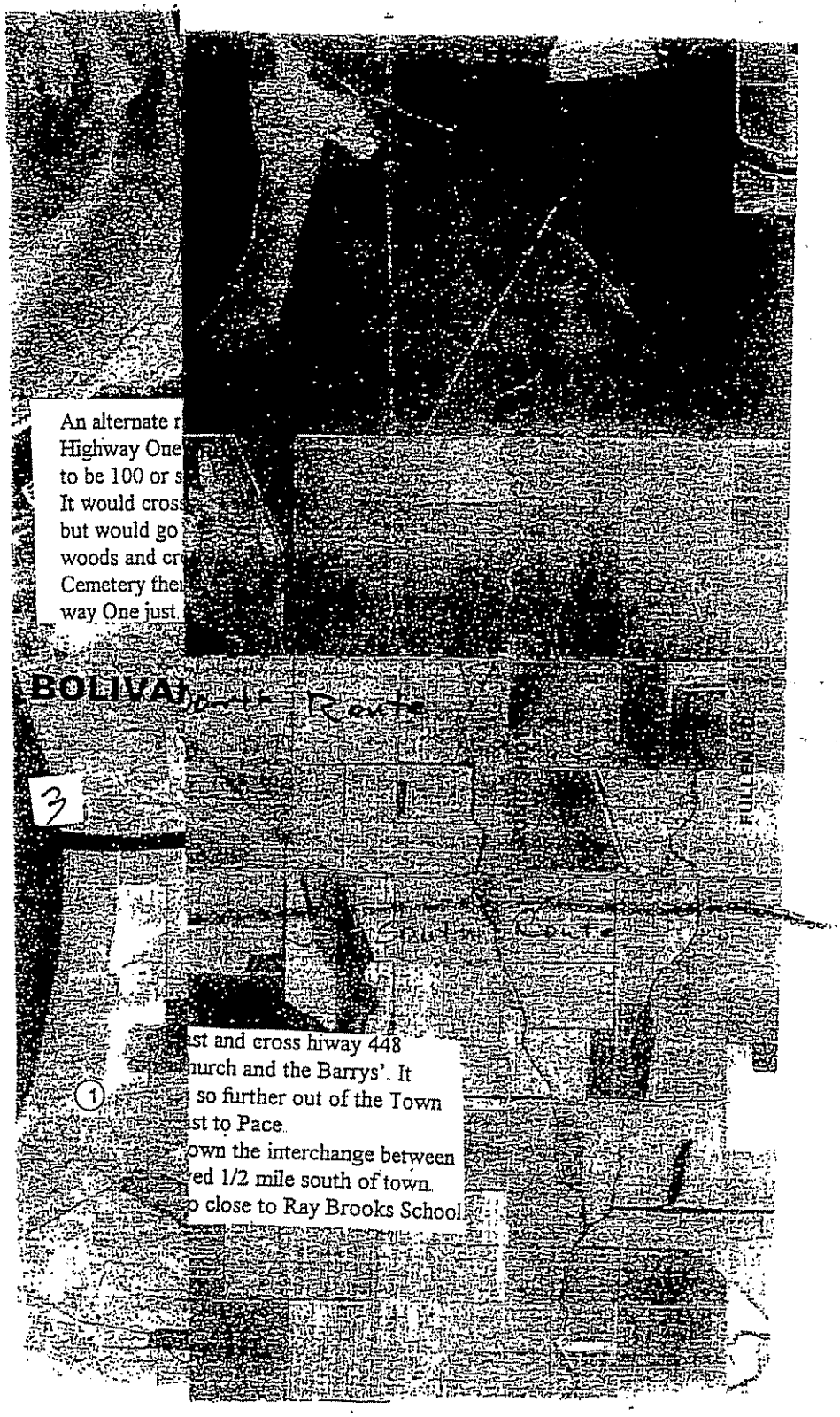

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BOLIVA North Route

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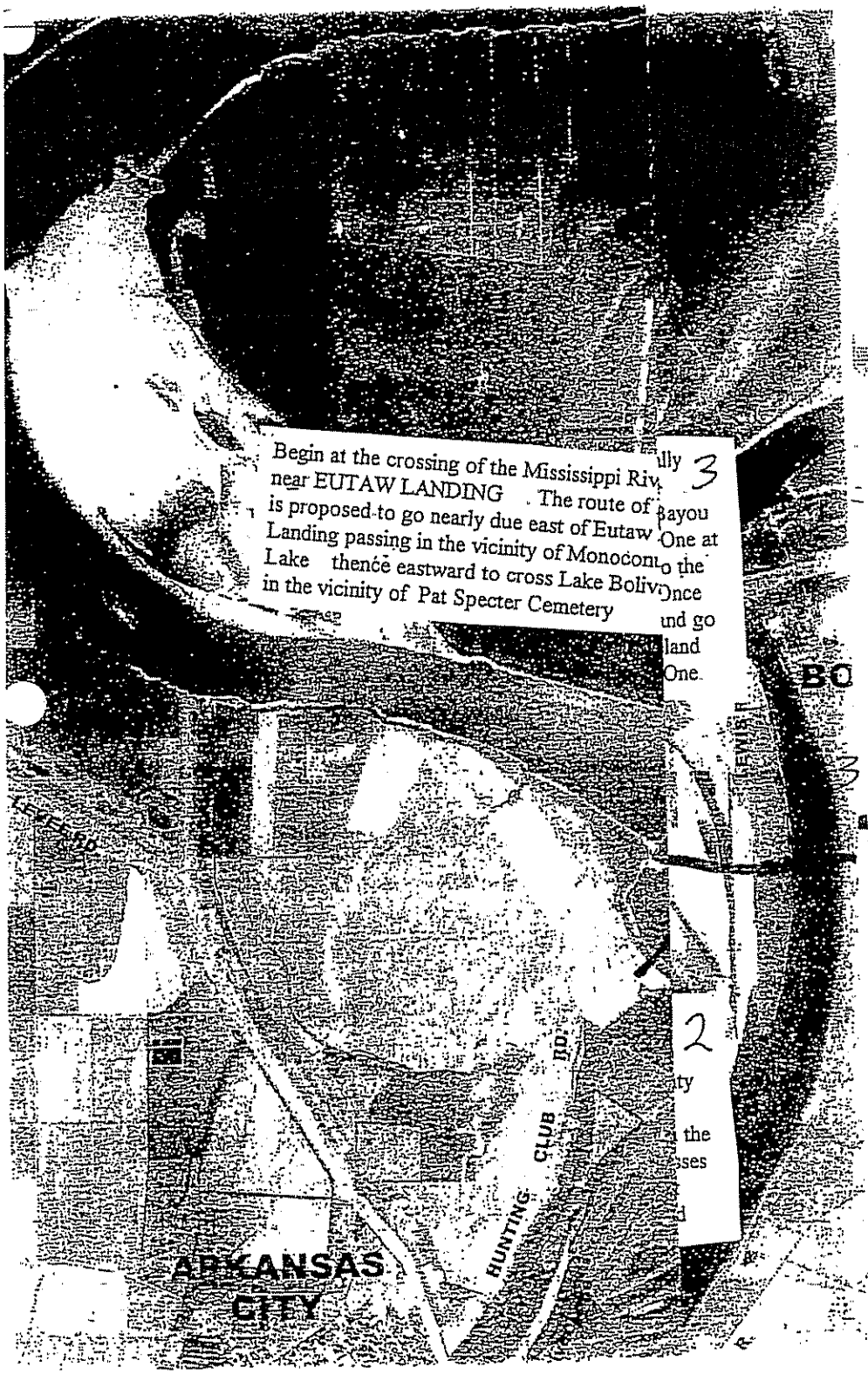
o close to Ray Brooks School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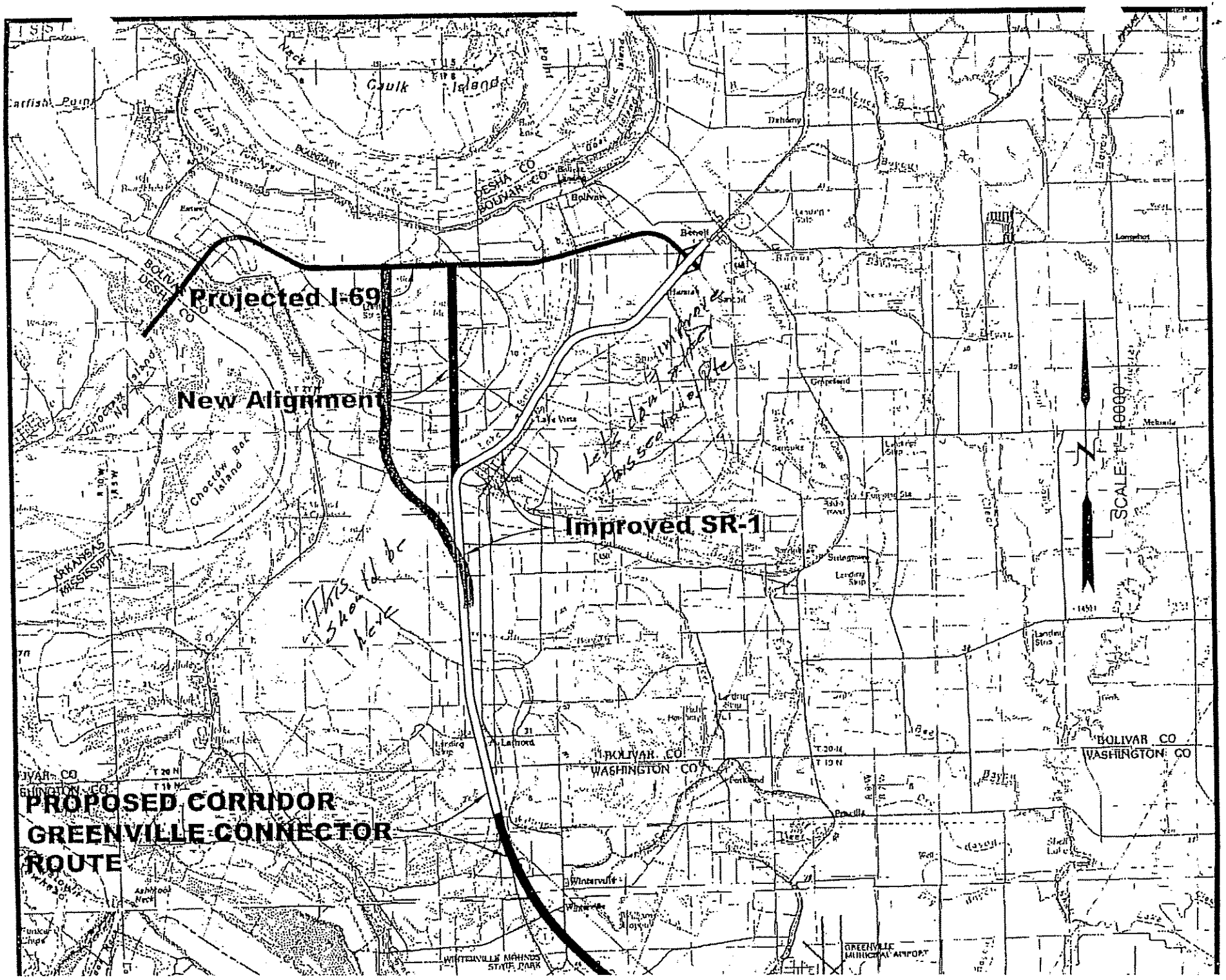

Projected I-69
New Alignment
Improved SR-1
PROPOSED CORRIDOR
GREENVILLE CONNECTOR
ROUTE
BOLIVAR CO
WASHINGTON CO
SCALE 1" = 10000'
N

Barry

File: T30

Town of Benoit

Committee to Promote Interstate 69 and the Mississippi River Bridge
P O Box 60, Benoit, MS 38725
Tel. 662/742-3435 or 742-3751

Memo: March 7, 2001
To: Committee Members- Mills, Gammage, Kline, Johnson, Dreher, Nokes
From: Early C. Ewing, Jr., Chairman

Subject: Objectives of the Committee

On Wednesday, March 14th. There will be an Open House-Public Information Meeting at the Ray Brooks School-1827 South Highway No. One. 4:30 -7:00 PM - come and go as you please. There will be short presentations at 5:00 and 6:00 PM.

The purpose of this meeting will be to solicit our help in determining the best possible location for the proposed I69 crossing (probably Eutaw Landing) and route of the highway to the east of the Bridge.

In order that you may study possible routes beforehand I am providing you with a copy of a brochure describing the bridge prepared by HNTB Corp. the bridge engineers. This talks primarily about the bridge.

This meeting, will I think, be concerned mainly with the route of the highway from the bridge site North past the town of Benoit toward Pace and a connector to Greenville and Highway 82. This spur would branch off just east of the bridge and go across the Deltapine Cattle Ranch toward Lamont.

More details are provided with the maps.

It will be desirable for us to meet about this prior to March 14th and I suggest that we meet Tuesday afternoon, the 13th at 5:00 PM at the Town Hall.

over

Other things that we will need to consider as the highway gets closer are the extension of the towns limits and its rezoning. The possibility of changes to our building code. We will have to get some grants for our water and sewer.

An important part of this will be our efforts to attract new businesses to Benoit. We need to plan what type of enterprises we want and possibly where they might go. This sort of effort will probably take some outside help and we have a little money we could put on this. Mrs. Estes, Johl Leveck, Mae Powell, Dr. George Green, John Daniel, lots of others and I won this in a beautification contest about 40 years ago and it has been in the bank ever since just waiting for a worthwhile project. Maybe this is it?($2100)

The people of Benoit are counting on us whether they know it yet or not. Make your plans to attend our meeting on March 13th and the Open House on the 14th.

Sincerely,

Early C. Ewing, Jr.

cc: John Daniel, Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce, Bolivar County Board of Supervisors.

The following is a list of the members appointed to the Town of Benoit Interstate Hiway 69 and Bridge Committee. These appointments were made by the board February 6, 2001. Rodney Mills was appointed subsequently by the Mayor. The purpose of the committee is explained in the attached memo.

members:

Mr. Rodney Mills, 604 Littion Road, Benoit, MS 38725, 662/754-4034

Ms. Deborah Gammage, PO Box 271, Benoit,MS38725, 662/742-9368

Mr. James F. Kline, PO Box 161, Benoit, MS 38725, 662/742-3338

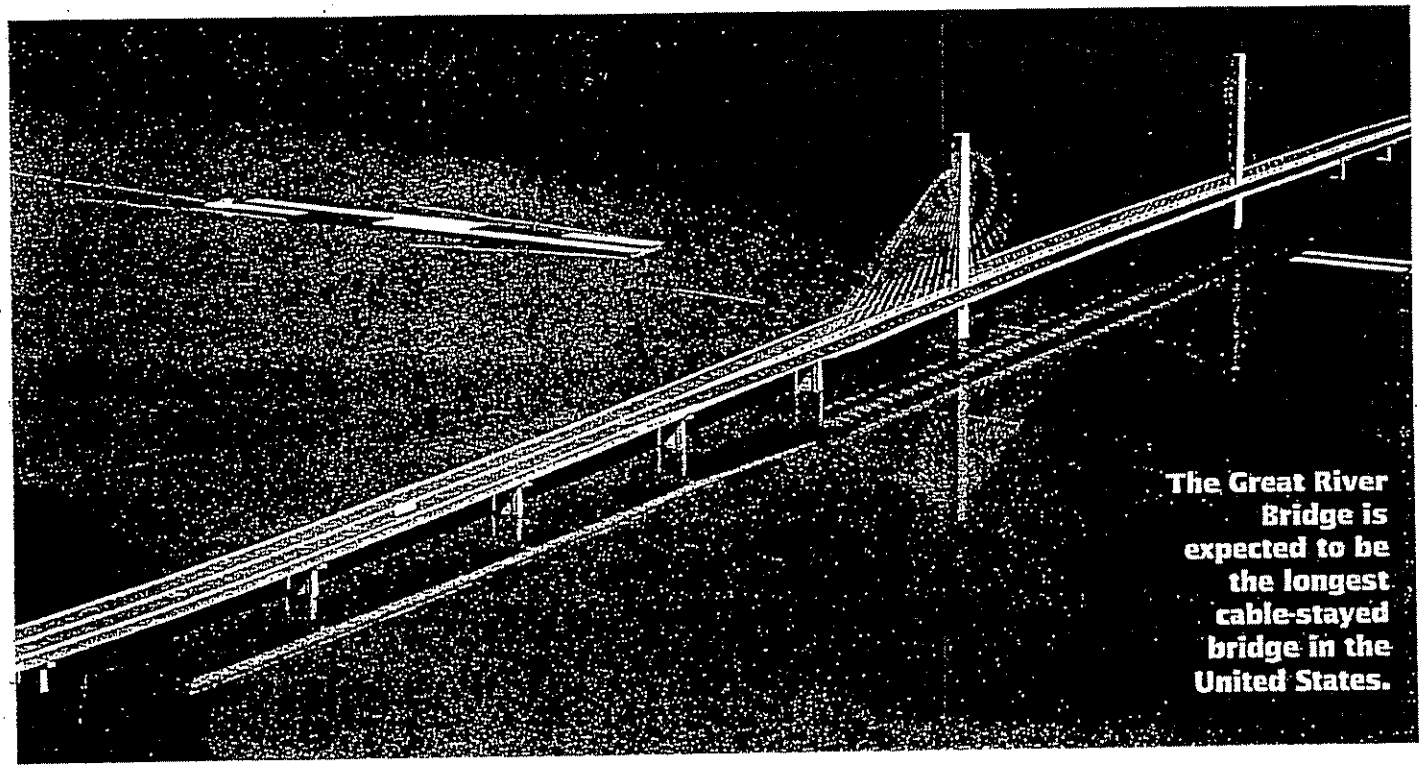
Mr. Robert Johnson, PO Box 208, Benoit, MS 38725,662/742-3736

Ms. Mary Jo Dreher, PO Box 157, Benoit, MS 38725, 662/742-3231

Mr. Early C. Ewing, Jr. PO Box 60, Benoit MS 38725, 662/742-3435

Ex. Officio: Mr Toby Nokes Mayor Town of Benoit 662/742-3751

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing



The Great River Bridge is expected to be the longest cable-stayed bridge in the United States.

The Great River Bridge (GRB) is destined to be one of the Delta's most important Mississippi River crossings. It will be a new, key link between Arkansas and Mississippi and will help create new jobs, investments and opportunities for the region.

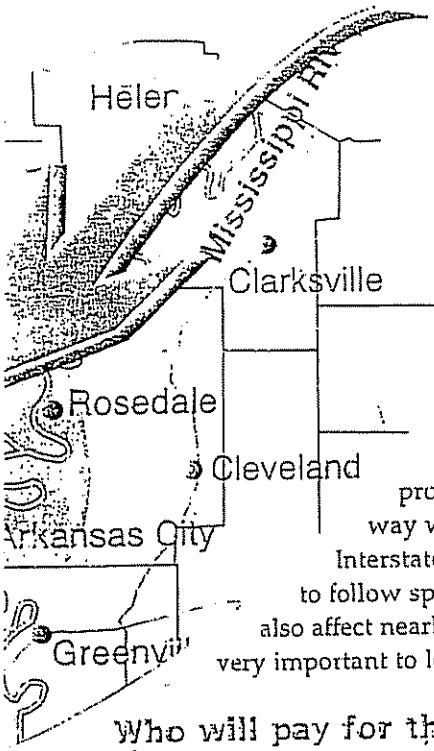
Leaders from both Arkansas and Mississippi have been working together since the early 1980s to make the Great River Bridge (GRB) a reality. In the '80s and '90s, citizens, states, communities and a wide range of public agencies worked together to decide on the best possible place for the bridge. The GRB is planned as a four-lane bridge, and will serve the area for the next 75 to 100 years

In 1999, the Southern Alternative was identified as the best possible location for the four-lane bridge and a two-lane highway leading to and from the bridge. That location was detailed in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In early 2000, the Federal Highway Administration approved the Southern Alternative location, between Arkansas City, Arkansas and Benoit, Mississippi.

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing

Studies are now underway to determine if the GRB should also be the Mississippi River Crossing for I-69 (also known as Corridor 18). I-69 is a national highway project and a national transportation priority. When finished, I-69 will connect Mexico and Canada. In anticipation of the proposed I-69 crossing at the GRB, a new Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has now been initiated for a four-lane, Interstate highway and river crossing.

As part of I-69, the highway leading to the bridge will need to meet four-lane, Interstate highway standards. The highway must also be designed to connect in a logical way with other planned parts of I-69. Because of the differences between a four-lane Interstate and the approved two-lane GRB approaches, a new EIS must be completed



The I-69 GRB Environmental Impact Statement study area includes areas in both Bolivar County, Mississippi, and Desha County, Arkansas.

Will the bridge alignment change?

Although possible, it is unlikely. The data, public input and research all point to the Southern Alternative as the best possible location for the river crossing.

Will the highway alignments change?

Maybe. The highway alignments closest to the bridge probably won't change. On the east and west ends, the highway will need to connect in a logical way with the rest of the Interstate, and may change. Also, an Interstate has to be designed to follow specific rules, mostly tied to safety issues. An Interstate may also affect nearby properties differently than a two-lane highway. It is very important to look at all of these issues carefully.

Who will pay for the bridge?

The bridge, like most major transportation projects, will require significant federal funding. Representatives from both Mississippi and Arkansas have been working with elected officials to try to make that funding happen.

should I get involved?

First, the project is important to the community, and will likely cause some very real changes in the area. Second, this is everyone's bridge - not just elected officials or community leaders. Your tax dollars help pay for the bridge and highway, and your input will help make sure that the project serves the community in the best way possible.

ıen will construction begin?

Construction on the highway and bridge could start as early as 2002 or 2003. Before construction can begin, final designs must be completed and property purchased. Due to the complexity of the project, it must be built in phases.

- Draft EIS formally submitted to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) with four alternatives for the bridge location.
- Public hearings held. Input from the public and agencies led to the consideration of a fifth location.
- Supplemental Draft EIS started, including a fifth location.

- FHWA's Record of Decision (ROD) approves two-lane highway and four-lane bridge at the Southern Alternative location.
- EIS for I-69 Mississippi River Crossing started, relying heavily on earlier GRB work.

- GRB design work started.
- I-69 Mississippi River Crossing public hearings to be held.

Future Work:
- Property a
- Bridge con pending fi
- I-69 highw pending fi
- I-69 highw pending fi

- Supplemental Draft EIS circulated, naming the Southern Alternative, located roughly between Benoit and Arkansas City, as the preferred location for the bridge.
- Public hearings held

at River Bridge onmental Impact nent (EIS) started.

1993 1996 1999 2000 2001

Appendix D
Public Involvement

September 24-27, 2001 meetings

INTERSTATE 69

SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY NUMBER 11
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Minutes for Initial Series of Public Meetings

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley Date Prepared: November 29, 2001

Introduction

Four identical public meetings to discuss the proposed Interstate Highway 69 (I-69) project were conducted between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. during the week of September 24, 2001. Officials from the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the consultant team were in attendance at these meetings to discuss the project with the public, address the public's questions, and receive their comments.

The dates and locations for these meetings were:

- Monday, September 24, Ray Brooks School gymnasium, 1827 Highway 1 South, Benoit;
- Tuesday, September 25, Delta State University, State Room, First Floor of the H.L. Nowell Union Building, Highway 8 West, Cleveland;
- Wednesday, September 26, Coahoma County Exposition Center, 1150 Hickory Street, Clarksdale; and
- Thursday, September 27, Tunica Economic Complex, 3092 Highway 61 South, Tunica.

Information on potential corridor alternatives was presented at these meetings using an informal, come-and-go format for the convenience of the public. Among the items that were presented for public review and comments were several displays of one-mile wide possible corridor segments, and combinations of these segments that could be connected to develop alternatives. These displays showed some of the known natural and human environmental features within these one-mile wide segments. Another display provided a means for the public to compare the possible combination segments by summarizing the known potential environmental impacts and other known data within those segments. There was also one large mapping display, which contained the one-mile wide segments on aerial mapping. That display afforded the public the opportunity to easily view this entire project. It also provided the public an opportunity to identify their concerns or comments by writing on the display.

Each person attending these meetings received a project packet. One of the items contained in the packet was a project brochure. The brochure presented the project history and assignment in an informative question-and-answer format. Instructions on how to obtain additional project information were also included in the brochure. The following other items were contained in the project packet: a copy of the press release for the public meetings, a fact sheet on the establishment of the website, and reduced size fact sheets of two large displays used at the public meetings to compare the initial corridor segments. The reduced size fact sheets were a map of the initial alternative segments that were being presented at the public meetings, and the corridor screening analysis of initial connecting segment options.

Introduction (continued)

At each meeting, brief statements were made by Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT Environmental Division Engineer, and Mr. Robert Walker, the I-69 Project Manager for the consultant team. Their statements included a welcome and a description of the purpose for conducting these initial public meetings. They encouraged the public to discuss the proposed project with the officials from the MDOT, the FHWA, and the consultant team in attendance at the meeting. In their closing remarks, Mr. Barnwell and Mr. Walker encouraged the public to ask questions, complete the comment sheet contained in their project packet, and furnish their comments to the project team. From the project packet, a copy of the map fact sheet and a copy of the corridor screening fact sheet are attached. Also attached are the registration sheets for the attendees at each of the four public meetings.

Benoit Meeting

There were thirty-eight people who registered for the meeting at Benoit. Of these thirty-eight people, seventeen were representatives of the MDOT, FHWA, or the consultant team. The twenty-one remaining people were mostly landowners in the project study area, governmental officials or their representatives, civic leaders, concerned citizens, or members of the media. Presently, the adjacent study on Section of Independent Utility (SIU) 12 has three alternates for its eastern termini in or near the Town of Benoit. HNTB Corporation is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement on SIU 12. Because the contract for the location and environmental studies on SIU 12 was awarded sometime before the contract on SIU 11, HNTB's study is currently over a year ahead of this study on SIU 11. There will obviously be some overlap of these two studies in the SR 1 area in or near Benoit. For that reason, the two study teams recognize the need to coordinate their work in the overlap area and the importance of educating the public in the Benoit area of these requirements. At the meeting in Benoit on September 24, these requirements were emphasized when discussing the possible alternative segments for crossing SR 1 in the Benoit area.

There have already been several public meetings at Benoit concerning the HNTB study on SIU 12 and the Great River Bridge Project. Most of the public that attended this meeting at Benoit for SIU 11 was familiar with the crossings of SR 1 that HNTB is evaluating for their study. The public appeared to understand the overlap requirements for the two studies. Therefore, most of the discussions at this meeting on SIU 11 were about the alternative location segment options presented from Benoit to Clarksdale. Major items of concern expressed by the public were the location for the crossing of SR 8 and the control of access that an interstate highway requires on adjacent property. The people in attendance at the meeting that would be impacted by these access control changes to their property were obviously concerned. The public recognized Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is a sensitive environmental area. Should Dahomey NWR expand to the west toward the Mississippi River, the public appears to recognize that an alternative bypassing the refuge to the south and east may be necessary to avoid environmental damage to the refuge. If a bypass of the refuge to the south and east becomes mandatory, some of the people made verbal comments on whether they favored an eastern or western bypass of Cleveland. Among the people making verbal comments, more preferred the B4 alternative that bypasses Cleveland to the west than the B5 alternative that bypasses Cleveland to the east. A couple of people commented to a member of the consultant team their preference for routing I-69 along the shortest distance possible. At the large mapping display of the initial possible alternative segments, the public was asked to identify the approximate location of natural or human environmental features that were not shown on the mapping. The public did identify a few features, such as rural cemeteries and churches.

Benoit Meeting (continued)

As of November 12, 2001, we received three comment sheets from people who were registered as attendees at this meeting in Benoit. One comment was from the Town of Benoit's I-69 Committee. That committee supports the northern crossing of SR 1 over the other two crossings that are under consideration by HNTB on their adjacent study of SIU 12. After the northern crossing of SR 1, their comment favored an alternative that went south of the Dahomey NWR and crossed SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland. The Benoit I-69 Committee supports the B1-B2-B4-B8 segments for I-69 in Bolivar County. A second comment sheet we received supported a northern route at Benoit. However, that comment favored using the SR 1 corridor, to the west of the Dahomey NWR, and crossing SR 8 approximately halfway between Rosedale and Cleveland. This person believes such a route would preserve the Benoit community more than other alternatives, provide Benoit the potential for economic development, and have the least disruption to existing local traffic at Benoit. That person believes their suggested route would have the least impact on church communities and cemeteries in the Benoit area, and provide greater regional growth opportunities to the cities with the greatest growth potential. The person making this second comment stated those cities are Cleveland and Rosedale. That person also believes their suggested route would leave Dahomey NWR undisturbed. Evidently this person was not aware of the refuge's planned expansion to the west of SR 1. This second comment prefers the B1-B3-B7-B8 or the B1-B3-B6 segments for I-69 in Bolivar County. The third comment favored the middle crossing of SR 1 that bisects the Town of Benoit. That person believes businesses would then locate in Benoit and that other enhancements for Benoit would follow.

Cleveland Meeting

There were fifty-one people who registered for the meeting at Cleveland. Of these, seventeen were representatives of the MDOT, the FHWA, or the consultant team. As was the case at the Benoit meeting, the remaining thirty-four people were mostly landowners in the project study area, governmental officials or their representatives, civic leaders, concerned citizens or members of the media. Most of the people attending the meeting supported the project, but there were differing opinions as to whether it should bypass Cleveland to the west or to the east. Of the people attending the meeting with interests in the western part of Bolivar County, most of them favor bypassing Cleveland to the west. Of the people attending the meeting with interests mainly in Sunflower County, they favor bypassing Cleveland to the east. Most of the public representatives appeared satisfied with the alternative segments presented at the meeting. One person wanted an eastern alternative on relocation from Cleveland to the west of the State Penal Farm at Parchman. This person's desired alternative would connect near Clarksdale to the Bypass or it would connect to the segment presented at the meeting on relocation northeast of Clarksdale. A couple of people expressed concern about the alignments HNTB is considering in Mississippi for their adjacent study on SIU 12, which includes the Great River Bridge crossing of the Mississippi River. There were also a couple of people who expressed their opinion on a connector to Greenville. The questions and comments received at the large mapping display were similar to those received at the Benoit meeting.

Cleveland Meeting (continued)

As of November 12, 2001, we received nine comment sheets from people who were registered as attendees at this meeting in Cleveland. Five of these comments were from Sunflower County elected officials and/or citizens. The people from Sunflower County making these comments believe an eastern alternative on relocation through northwest Sunflower County should be used for I-69 between Clarksdale and Cleveland. They state that US 61 is either four-laned or under construction to provide four lanes in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica counties. They also state that there is not another four-lane, north-south, highway between I-55 and US 61. To better address the economic needs of Mississippi and the Delta area between I-55 and US 61, they believe a relocation alternative through northwest Sunflower County should be considered. One of these five comments is from Indianola Mayor James Hutcherson, who is a member of Mississippi Governor Ronnie Musgrove's Delta Summit Steering Committee. In his comment, Mayor Hutcherson advises of some discussion about a future Wayport Airfield for the Delta Region near the State Penal Farm at Parchman. For this reason, he believes consideration should be given to an eastern alternative on relocation in Sunflower County near the State Penal Farm.

We received four other comment sheets from people who attended the meeting at Cleveland. Three of these four comments were from people specifically interested in Cleveland and/or Bolivar County. One of those comments was from a representative of the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce. He believes I-69 should give a priority to benefiting Cleveland, which he considers the most viable city in the Delta. This chamber representative recognizes that smaller towns would, or should, be positively impacted by I-69. However, he believes it is imperative to locate I-69 near Cleveland to ensure that city remains strong. This representative also believes a priority for locating I-69 should be given to the Mississippi River Port at Rosedale. He advises the Port is a strong asset for Bolivar County. This representative strongly supports the B1-B2-B4-B8 segments for the route in Bolivar County. Another comment is from the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Director. He also supports the B1-B2-B4-B8 segments for I-69 in Bolivar County. The third comment was from a representative of the City of Cleveland. This city representative supports the combination of the B4 and B8 segments for routing I-69 through Bolivar County. His reasons are those segments appear to have the least impact on the environment, and the location of those segments is more advantageous to the west part of Cleveland and the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port.

The remaining comment, that we received from a person who attended the meeting in Cleveland, was from the Mayor of Greenville. He supports an east-west location for I-69 at the crossing of the Mississippi River in the Benoit area. The Mayor believes a Greenville connector should be included in the study for this EIS. Should the I-69 Mississippi River Bridge be one of the initial I-69 projects, he believes it is important to connect such a bridge with four-lane interstate access to the City of Greenville. He believes the population base for the City of Greenville justifies his connector comment.

Clarksdale Meeting

There were forty-eight people who registered for the meeting at Clarksdale. Of these, fifteen were representatives of the MDOT, the FHWA, or the consultant team. The remaining thirty-three people were mostly landowners in the project study area, governmental officials or their representatives, civic leaders, concerned citizens, or members of the media. The public representatives appeared pleased with the alternative segments, and they did not mention any other segments for consideration. Because the US 61 Bypass at Clarksdale is a controlled access facility with access allowed only at interchange locations, most of the people appeared to support using the Bypass for I-69 around Clarksdale. The overall project discussions were similar to those at the meetings in Benoit and Cleveland. Questions and comments received at the large mapping display were also similar to those at the Benoit and Cleveland meetings.

As of November 12, 2001, we received three comment sheets from people who registered as attendees at this meeting in Clarksdale. One person advised the meeting was very informative, and that all participants seemed knowledgeable and concerned about doing the right thing. Another person believes the SR 1 option needs eliminating. He believes the eastern relocation alternative and the US 61 alternative in Coahoma County are acceptable. That person advises the US 61 alternative seems logical, if not less expensive. The remaining comment sheet was unsigned and stated; "make southbound traffic follow the western corridor and northbound traffic along the eastern corridor. Thus with Hwy 61 in between, everyone gets a piece of the action!"

Tunica Meeting

There were seventy-four people who registered for the meeting at Tunica. Of these, fifteen were representatives of the MDOT, the FHWA, or the consultant team. The remaining fifty-nine people were mostly landowners in the project study area, governmental officials or their representatives; civic leaders, concerned citizens, or members of the media. More people attended this meeting than the meetings in Benoit, Cleveland, and Clarksdale. According to the local citizens attending the meeting, the permanent housing residential growth is occurring to the west of US 61 near Tunica, and more prime farmland at Tunica is to the west of US 61 than to the east. With the airport located to the east of US 61 and the railroad to the east of the airport and SR 3, some of the community leaders believe the T15 alternative segment provides the best opportunities for Tunica's economic growth. These leaders were also concerned that the T16 alternative segment was too far to the east to benefit Tunica. Questions and comments received at the large mapping display were similar to those at the previous three meetings. Near the end of the meeting, several families expressed concern that western alternatives would have a major impact because those alternatives would take or divide farmland in which they had interests. The views expressed verbally by most of the local citizenry favored an eastern bypass of Tunica rather than a western bypass.

Tunica Meeting (continued)

As of November 12, 2001, we received three comment sheets and one letter from people who registered as attendees at this meeting in Tunica. The comment sheets were from people who receive their mail in Oxford, Clarksdale, and Memphis. The person from Oxford did not offer any reasons for favoring segments B1-B2-B4-B8-C2-C5-C6-C10-T2-T6-T10-T15-T18-T19. His alternative would go south of the Dahomey NWR, turn north and cross SR 8 west of Cleveland, and intersect US 61 near Merigold. It would then utilize US 61 from Merigold to a point south of SR 4 East near Tunica. From that point, his recommended alternative would leave US 61 on relocation to the east. It would go just east of the Tunica Airport and intersect SR 304 to the west of SR 3. From that point it would continue northeast along SR 304 across SR 3 and the railroad to the spur connecting existing SR 304 to the new section of SR 304. A husband and wife from Clarksdale are interested in the B2 segment in Bolivar County because the wife owns land in the Litton community. They commented that the displays were well presented and explained. They thanked us for the opportunity to attend the meeting; and they commented that they look forward to attending future meetings when possible. The person from Memphis favored alternative segments B1-B3-B7-B8-C2-C5-C7-T3-T16. He made this recommendation based on the corridor screening analysis on the initial alternative segments that was included in his project packet. His segment would use the SR 1 corridor from Benoit to Beulah, and proceed on relocation to the northeast crossing SR 8 between Rosedale and Pace before intersecting US 61 near Winstonville. From Winstonville to the Clarksdale Bypass, his alternative would use US 61. Then from the Clarksdale Bypass to the SR 304 intersection at the spur, his suggested alternative would be the easternmost alternative on relocation.

The letter we received on the meeting at Tunica was from the Executive Director of the Tunica County Chamber of Commerce. In looking at the overall impact of the proposed I-69, from an economic development perspective, she believes the T15 segment for bypassing Tunica will provide the most benefit. She bases her recommendation on the airport expansion, possible future rail service, and available land for industrial use. She advises three locations have been identified for future industrial development and expansion. The first location is the existing industrial park at the intersection of US 61 and SR 4 East. The chamber representative expects that location to remain a viable industrial park. For the second industrial development location, she advises the County has identified property near the airport. For the third location, the chamber representative states the County intends to set aside property in the Banks community near the intersection of new and existing SR 304 with SR 3. She believes placing the new I-69 route on the eastern side of the county affords the greatest opportunity for future industrial expansion by having interstate highway access, rail access and air access in the same area. Opening property to the east of the town of Tunica and east of the casino properties, according to her, will allow for better positioned residential, commercial and industrial growth. For the bypass segments under consideration between the Mississippi River and US 61 to the west of Tunica, the chamber representative believes the property adjacent to those segments is more appropriate for environmental, scenic, and recreational purposes.

Conclusion

Since these initial public meetings were conducted, we have received twenty-six comment sheets and one letter from people who were not registered as attendees at any of these meetings. We also received a copy of a resolution from the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors.

The twenty-seven people furnishing these additional comments did not provide any major reasons supporting their comment or recommendation that has not been previously documented in these minutes. To furnish their comment, the people who sent us the twenty-six comment sheets all used the comment sheet developed for the public meeting at Cleveland.

Twenty-one of those twenty-six comment sheets we received had Cleveland mailing addresses. Nineteen of those twenty-one people support the B4 segment that bypasses Cleveland to the west. Included in the people making those nineteen comments are the past president of Delta State University, the Bolivar County Engineer, and the Bolivar County Administrator. One of those twenty-one comments supported a western bypass of Cleveland, but that person did not state his preference on an alternative segment. The remaining one of those twenty-one comments supported the Great River Bridge, but he did not provide any information on which alternative segments he favors.

The remaining five comment sheets were from people with Sunflower County mailing addresses. Citing poor economic conditions and believing that a new four-lane highway near them would improve those economic conditions, they favor an eastern alternative on relocation in Sunflower County. One of those comments was from the Mayor of Drew.

The one letter we received was from a person with a Clarksdale mailing address. She supports using the US 61 Bypass at Clarksdale for I-69.

The names and mailing addresses of the people furnishing these post public meeting comments were added to the contact list so they could be provided future project updates. Future comments we receive will be treated in a like manner.

The resolution by the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors supports bypassing Cleveland to the west using the B4 and B8 segments. Their resolution supports I-69, using the Great River Bridge for the I-69 crossing of the Mississippi River, and providing economic development opportunities for the entire county and the Mississippi Delta. The resolution recognizes the environmental concerns related to the Dahomey NWR and makes reference to the possible expansion of Dahomey NWR to the west towards the Mississippi River. Their resolution also states the Board seeks increased development at the Port and Industrial Park in Rosedale.

We had received several resolutions from Bolivar County groups prior to the Environmental Scoping Meeting that was conducted in Clarksdale on July 11, 2001. Those resolutions supported an I-69 crossing of SR 8 between Cleveland and Rosedale. The groups adopting those resolutions were the City of Rosedale, the Bolivar County Council on Aging, the Cleveland-Bolivar County Industrial Development Foundation, the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors, the Economic Development District of Bolivar County, the Cleveland – Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce, the City of Cleveland, the Town of Benoit, and the Rosedale – Bolivar County Port Commission.

Conclusion (continued)

After the minutes were distributed on the Environmental Scoping Meeting, we received a copy of a resolution the Sunflower County Board of Supervisors adopted on July 16, 2001. That resolution requested studying the merits of an I-69 route which would run east of Cleveland and south of the Dahomey NWR. The MDOT, FHWA, and the consultant team considered this request when preparing for the initial series of public meetings.

After the initial public meetings were conducted, there were people contacting the MDOT, the FHWA, and the consultant team requesting a copy of the project packet. Those people were mailed a packet, and the contact list was updated to include their names and mailing addresses. This action will continue in response to future requests for this type project information. A slight change was recently made to the comment sheet contained in the project packet. The title of that sheet was changed from public meeting comment sheet to comment sheet. This change provided another means of identifying post public meeting comments.

JRS:jrs
Attachments

Appendix D
Public Involvement

July 16-18, 2002 meetings

INTERSTATE 69

SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY NUMBER 11
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Minutes for Second Series of Public Meetings and Follow-up Actions

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley Date Prepared: August 30, 2002

Introduction

Three identical public meetings for the proposed Interstate Highway 69 (I-69) project were conducted between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. during the week of July 15, 2002. Officials from the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the consultant team were in attendance at these meetings to discuss the project, address questions, and receive comments.

The dates and locations for these meetings were:

- Tuesday, July 16, Cleveland High School Gymnasium, 300 West Sunflower Road, Cleveland;
- Wednesday, July 17, Clarksdale High School Cafeteria, 1101 Wildcat Drive, Clarksdale; and,
- Thursday, July 18, G.W. Henderson Center Gymnasium, 1165 Abbay Drive, Tunica.

Information on the proposed 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors recommended for further study was presented at these meetings using an informal, come-and-go format for the convenience of the public. Among the items that were displayed on easels were several maps of corridor segments that were connected to develop the recommended alternatives. These mapping displays identified some of the known natural and human environmental features within the 1,000 feet wide segments. Another easel display provided a chart that enabled the public to compare a summary of known potential environmental impacts and other data for the recommended alternative segments. Displays of a typical roadway section with and without frontage roads were also placed on easels for the public's benefit. Two large aerial photography displays of the alternative corridors recommended for further study were provided and placed flat on tables in separate viewing areas. In these two viewing areas, four to six tables were required for the exhibit. The 1,000 feet wide recommended alternative segments, some known natural environmental information, and some known human environmental information, could be observed at the aerial photography exhibits. The aerial photography displays afforded the public an opportunity to easily view this entire project, and these displays also enabled the public to better understand the locations of the corridors recommended for more detailed studies relative to above ground features of which they were familiar.

Each person attending these meetings received a project packet. One of the items contained in the packet was a project brochure. The brochure presented the project history and assignment in an informative question-and-answer format. Instructions on how to obtain additional project information were also included in the brochure. The following other items were contained in the project packet: a comment sheet, a copy of the press release for the public meetings, a fact sheet on the establishment of the website, and reduced size fact sheets of two large displays that were being presented at the meeting. The reduced size fact sheets of the displays were the environmental features map of the 1,000 feet wide corridors recommended for further study, and the chart comparing the screening analysis conducted on those alternatives.

Introduction (continued)

At each meeting, brief presentations were made by Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT Environmental Division Engineer, and Mr. Robert Walker, the I-69 Project Manager for the consultant team. Their presentations included welcoming comments, furnishing the status of the project, describing the purpose for conducting the second series of public meetings, and addressing questions. During their presentations, Mr. Barnwell and Mr. Walker encouraged the public to view the information being presented at the meeting and to discuss any questions or concerns they have about the project with the officials from the MDOT, the FHWA, and the consultant team in attendance at the meeting. In their closing remarks, Mr. Barnwell and Mr. Walker encouraged the public to complete the comment sheet contained in their project packet, and furnish their comments to the project team.

Cleveland Meeting

There were 129 people who registered for the meeting at Cleveland. Of these 129 people, 23 were representatives of the MDOT, FHWA, or the consultant team. The 106 remaining people were mostly landowners in the project study area, governmental officials or their representatives, civic leaders, concerned citizens, or members of the media.

Presently, the adjacent study to the west on Section of Independent Utility (SIU) 12 has three alternates for its eastern termini at State Route 1 (SR 1) in or near the Town of Benoit. HNTB Corporation is nearing completion of its Draft Environmental Impact Statement on SIU 12. Because the contract for the location and environmental studies on SIU 12 was awarded sometime before the contract on SIU 11, HNTB's study is currently approximately one year ahead of this study on SIU 11. There will obviously be some overlap of these two studies in the SR 1 area in or near Benoit. For that reason, the two study teams recognize the need to coordinate their work in the overlap area and the importance of educating the public in the Benoit and Cleveland area of Bolivar County of these overlap requirements. At the meeting in Cleveland on July 16, these coordination requirements were emphasized when discussing the SIU 11 alternative corridors that were being recommended for further study. The central alignment corridor that HNTB considered in their study intersects SR 1 near the middle portion of the Town of Benoit. The northern and southern alignments being studied by HNTB intersect SR 1 outside of the built-up area of the town. Because of the negative factors associated with connecting the SIU 11 alternatives under consideration east of SR 1 with HNTB's central alignment corridor at SR 1, the SIU 11 study team eliminated HNTB's central corridor crossing of SR 1 from consideration. Some of the negative factors of keeping that SR 1 crossing option in the SIU 11 study were: it bisected the town and increased the noise level on the town; there would be a number of relocates involved; and, it was very difficult to avoid directly impacting an historical property and cemetery without directly impacting active churches and other cemeteries.

There have already been several public meetings at Benoit about the HNTB study on SIU 12 and the Great River Bridge Project. Most of the public attending the meeting at Cleveland was familiar with the crossings of SR 1 that HNTB used for their study, and the public appeared to understand the overlap requirements for the two studies. The public also appeared to understand why the SIU 11 study team dropped from consideration the option of connecting to HNTB's central alternative corridor that intersects SR 1 near the middle of Benoit.

Most of the public continues to recognize that the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is a sensitive environmental area, and that I-69 will probably have to be located south and east of the Dahomey NWR. Although a possible southern expansion of the Dahomey NWR to Litton Road was not openly discussed at the meeting, the study team had modified one of the alternatives presented at the initial series of public meetings to accommodate this other possible expansion of the refuge. The alignment corridor that was

Cleveland Meeting (continued)

modified originally intersected SR 1 north of Benoit, proceeded east remaining south of the refuge and north of Litton Road until it cleared the refuge, and then turned north. The modified corridor intersected SR 1 at the same location north of Benoit, but it then proceeded southeast to cross Litton Road west of the refuge before proceeding east. This modification created some negative comments from the public for being out of direction and for creating a loop around Benoit.

As was the case at the initial series of public meetings, most people supported the project, but there were differing opinions as to where I-69 should cross SR 8. Believing the expansion of Dahomey NWR to the west does not prevent the western corridor from being a viable alternative, a few people expressed their support of the western corridor. That corridor crosses SR 8 between Pace and Rosedale, is the shortest corridor alternative from Benoit to Clarksdale, and provides the closest access to the Mississippi River Port at Rosedale. Most of the people attending the meeting with interests in Bolivar County appear to believe the western corridor is not a viable alternative. These people supported the central alternative corridor, which has a location south of the Dahomey NWR and a crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland and east of Pace. Of the people attending the meeting with interests mainly in Sunflower County, most favored the alternative that bypasses Cleveland to the east and crosses SR 8 between Cleveland and Ruleville.

Most of the public representatives appeared satisfied with the alternative segments recommended for further study at the meeting. However, one person expressed concern about the alignments HNTB is considering in Mississippi for their adjacent study on SIU 12. This person, who farms land between the Mississippi River and SR 1, believes the Mississippi approach should be adjusted to the south and east in a manner that would cross SR 1 just north of Scott. This person believes that after crossing SR 1 an eastward turn could connect his suggested revised approach to the southern recommended alternative corridor for SIU 11 at its crossing with SR 448. Such a modified crossing of SR 1 would be a major change and is something that this person discussed with the HNTB representative for the SIU 12 study in attendance at the meeting. There were also a couple of people who expressed their opinion on a connector to Greenville. The Mayor of Greenville provided the project team with a copy of a connector study that a consulting engineering firm had prepared for the city.

As of August 30, 2002, there were 30 comment sheets received from people who registered as attendees at this meeting in Cleveland. All of the comment sheets concerned the section of I-69 between Benoit in Bolivar County and the southern terminus of the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County. The following is an overview of those comments.

- Three comments stated a preference for the western corridor that crosses SR 8 between Rosedale and Pace.
- Seventeen (17) comments stated a preference for the central alternative corridor that crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland and east of Pace.
- One comment stated a preference for a corridor that crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland. That comment offers support for both the central corridor and the western corridor.
- One comment stated a preference for the western corridor and concern about the central corridor.
- One comment stated concern about the eastern corridor, which crosses SR 8 east of Cleveland and west of Ruleville.
- Four comments stated a preference for the eastern corridor.

Cleveland Meeting (continued)

- One comment stated a preference for an alternative as far south and east as possible; therefore, this other comment is being interpreted as the fifth comment preferring the eastern corridor.
- One comment wanted a more southern alternative corridor, which was outside the study area and crossed US 61 near the SR 450 intersection south of Shaw.
- The final comment did not offer support for any alternative, but stated the need for coordination with the Levee Board if the western alternative was studied in more detail.

The following is a summary of the comments submitted by the three people who noted a preference for the western corridor that crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland between Pace and Rosedale.

- We are in the empowerment zone, poorest part of county, our people need jobs, and the Rosedale Port needs to be close to I-69. The Bolivar County Industrial Park in Rosedale needs I-69 to be as close to SR 1 as possible. There is a State Park in Rosedale that is right off SR 1 that is good for tourism. Having a four-lane highway along the Mississippi River would give the state a four-lane in the west, east and middle parts of the state.
- It is the most direct and shortest route, and it does not parallel Highway 61.
- The route is shorter, thus cheaper, and it scored lower on ever category on your chart, with the exception of potential wetlands, which by your own admission is a nebulous figure. The western route seems the only logical choice.

Of the 17 comment sheets submitted by people noting a preference for the central alternative corridor that crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland and east of Pace, five individuals – including the Mayor of Cleveland – did not provide any reasons for preferring that corridor. The following summarizes the information that was noted on the 12 remaining comment sheets concerning preference for the central corridor.

- Seems more beneficial to all concerned. Would be less invasive to wildlife/hunting areas.
- Would like for the central corridor to be selected – what an economic benefit for the Delta!
- Is the most sensible. Some of the right of way has already been acquired and construction already has been done; therefore it should be the least expensive. Would benefit the depressed areas of Bolivar County and North Sunflower County the most.
- For the safety benefits to the 4,000 students attending Delta State University, I-69 should come as close to Cleveland as is feasible.
- Avoids environmentally sensitive areas near the Mississippi River. Is close to the Rosedale, Cleveland, Ruleville midpoint and therefore close to their industries
- Feels the central corridor provides the best overall design. With the understanding that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is interested in acquiring the area between the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and the Mississippi River Levee for future expansion, the western corridor would interfere with such an expansion. The eastern corridor crosses the Big Sunflower River several times requiring large bridges each time. The central corridor provides greater access for Bolivar County with interchanges at a number of existing highways. Access to the Port of Rosedale and several industrial parks would be enhanced.
- Presently there are several industrial parks located in Shelby, Cleveland, and Rosedale. In addition, the Mississippi River Port at Rosedale is included in the Federal Empowerment Zone (MDEZA). The central route would provide easier access to these industrial parks by providing four-lane connector roads (SR 1 and SR 8). Bolivar County towns would also be better served by the central route, which shows the highest economic impact on the analysis.

Cleveland Meeting (continued)

- Represents the greatest economic benefit for the various communities along the route. Provides equal access from east and west with potential for development on both sides of the corridor. The eastern or western corridors will isolate many areas thru the corridor.
- Provides the most positive economic benefits for the City of Cleveland and the Port of Rosedale.
- Believes the route with the greatest economic impact would be the central route. Building the interstate is not only about transportation but about access to areas to create jobs and economic growth.
- It would appear that the most westerly route and the most easterly route would result in something like the Florida Sunshine Parkway, which only has service stops at fifty to seventy five mile intervals. As a result, it would seem that these two routes would have a negligible socio-economic impact. The central corridor, following generally the route of Highway 61, with interchanges for the existing communities, would offer much more of a socio-economic impact. The writer is unaware of any new communities arising appurtenant to I-55 since the construction of that interstate highway many years ago, so it is doubtful that I-69 would generate such an effect.
- Cleveland is the pride of the Delta as far as economic development is concerned and we need to work to see that it remains so. I do not believe that the eastern route does any better service to other communities as many have suggested. The Port of Rosedale has development land available and could be much better served by the central corridor. We have been through the wildlife issues with the Great River Bridge. Therefore, I feel the western corridor should be omitted.

The following is a summary of the comments submitted by the one person who noted a preference for an alternative corridor crossing SR 8 somewhere west of Cleveland.

- After reviewing the maps and the latest routes for I-69 and after reviewing the economic impact study stats, I feel it is imperative that I-69 go west of Cleveland. The one item not considered in the charts is the proximity of I-69 to the Port of Rosedale. We have put a lot of our efforts and funding into developing the port and we need to keep this project alive with the union of the port and I-69.

The following is a summary of the comments submitted by the one person who noted a preference for the western corridor and concern about the central corridor.

- The central corridor would affect my land and farming. It would cross several parcels from north of Highway 8 through the southern turn. It would also hinder movement of equipment and daily trips to Cleveland for all farmers west of the corridor. The central corridor would be coming through most roads in Bolivar County, which should mean more frontage or exits. This could cause problems because it is only two miles from the west side of Cleveland. I think the highest economic route would be the west corridor once Highway 8 is four-laned.

The following is a summary of the comments submitted by the one person who noted concern about the eastern alternative corridor that crosses SR 8 east of Cleveland and west of Ruleville.

- Believes the corridor should be carefully considered for elimination or at least studied closer in depth. The reason is the corridor takes the project farther away from the population centers that stand to be economically enhanced by tourism, business growth, and revitalization and jobs. The other corridors are closer to existing business and population centers and the other corridors may prove more viable.

Cleveland Meeting (continued)

There were four comments submitted by people who noted a preference for the eastern alternative that crosses SR 8 east of Cleveland and west of Ruleville. Two of the comments were the same and they were furnished to the project team by a form letter. The following is a summary of the four comments.

- The land is less populated. Therefore, less access ramps, frontage roads, and less funding would be needed. The western corridor is my second choice. The middle corridor would need more access ramps, longer frontage roads, and cost too much money.
- In order for I-69 to have the maximum impact of the most communities in the Mississippi Delta, we would like the merits of the eastern alignment carefully examined. The representative corridor for I-69 extends to an area east of Cleveland. We view that an alignment proceeding east of Cleveland and south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge would be a desirable location environmentally, economically, and that it would offer special consideration to the economic development of those communities located in the general vicinity of an area between Clarksdale, Cleveland, Greenwood, Leland, Indianola, Itta Bena, Grenada, Ruleville, Drew, and points in between. One of the reasons for the corridor is economic development. If the studies show some additional costs for the easternmost route, such as bridges that must be built over the next 100 years, these costs will be very incidental. To benefit the rest of the Delta, the I-69 corridor needs to go as far south as possible.
- The eastern corridor would provide benefits for both Bolivar and Sunflower County businesses/residents. If the goal is to provide economic impact to the Delta, then the route selected should benefit the most people/businesses.
- The farmland that would be lost in the eastern corridor is not as developed (i.e., irrigated, land formed) and has considerable less value (production capabilities) than the farmland in the other two corridors. Therefore, the eastern corridor would be less disruptive to the agricultural community than the other routes. Since the Delta's economy is so highly dependent on agriculture, the least disruptive route should be considered the best alternative (eastern corridor).
- The eastern corridor is least disruptive to the catfish industry with only 2.6 acres in ponds versus 56.3 acres in the central corridor and 11.4 acres in the western. The catfish industry in the Delta has already endured enough hardship without the destruction of productive ponds in the central corridor which could lead to more economic woes for the industry.
- While consideration for existing industry is certainly a concern, the potential growth of business and industry should also be considered. The eastern corridor provides opportunities of Ruleville, Drew, and Parchman while still providing opportunities for Bolivar County/Cleveland businesses. This is not the case with the central and western routes. There is very little opportunity for Sunflower County with these routes.
- Unemployment in Sunflower County is a major economic factor, more so than Bolivar County. If this highway is to truly address economic issues, the route that contributes the most to bringing employment to the area should be the best alternative. That route is the eastern corridor.
- The eastern corridor would not disrupt existing communities along Highway 61 since this route is primarily rural (less environmental impact).
- Consideration should be made for providing the most economic impact for minorities. The eastern corridor has the best opportunity to have the greatest impact for minorities.

Cleveland Meeting (continued)

The fifth comment which was understood to express support for the eastern alternative corridor that crossed SR 8 between Cleveland and Ruleville was from the Mayor of Greenville. The following are his comments.

- The routing of I-69 must come as far east and as far south as possible in order to positively impact the Delta.
- Routes along the River that follow the levee are environmentally and engineering sensitive due to farmlands and sinkholes.
- The proposed route that goes west of Benoit and then doubles back to cross SR 1 north of Benoit is out of direction and appears to benefit specific ownership of properties.
- A connector from the new US 82 Bridge south of Greenville to the I-69 crossing is imperative.
- It would be a folly to build a four-lane bridge at Benoit years prior to the actual I-69 crossing at Benoit. A four-lane interstate connection from the Leland-Greenville area would avoid the complication that a Benoit Bridge was being built to "no where".
- A Greenville Connector would instantly accomplish a solid traffic flow on the Benoit Bridge and properly link Arkansas to Mississippi via two routes.

Clarksdale Meeting

There were 76 people who registered for the meeting at Clarksdale. Of these, 22 were representatives of the MDOT, the FHWA, or the consultant team. The remaining 54 people were mostly landowners in the project study area, governmental officials or their representatives, civic leaders, concerned citizens, or members of the media.

The detailed discussions at this meeting primarily concerned the alternatives in Coahoma County. Most of the public representatives appeared pleased with the alternative segments, and they did not suggest any other segments for consideration. Because the US 61 Bypass at Clarksdale is a controlled access facility with access allowed only at interchange locations, many of the people attending the meeting expressed their support for using the Bypass for I-69 around Clarksdale. The public's questions, comments, and discussions with the project team were generally very encouraging.

As of August 30, 2002, there were six comment sheets received from people who registered as attendees at this meeting in Clarksdale. Any comments these six people made about the alternative segments concerned the section of I-69 in Coahoma County, and the following is an overview of the six comments.

- Two of the comment sheets were complimentary about the meeting and the project, but these two sheets did not contain any comments about the alternative corridors being recommended for further detailed study.
- One comment sheet concurred in the recommendation of the central corridor that uses the controlled access portion of the Clarksdale Bypass for I-69 around Clarksdale. However, that person did not state a corridor preference for the remaining portion of I-69 outside of Clarksdale.
- Two comment sheets concurred in the central corridor that uses the Clarksdale Bypass for I-69, and supported the central corridor in Coahoma County outside of Clarksdale.
- The one remaining comment opposed the east corridor south of Clarksdale, and supported using the central corridor along US 61 for I-69 south of Clarksdale.

Clarksdale Meeting (continued)

The following summarizes the comments of the person who only commented on supporting the central corridor that uses the fully controlled access portion of the Clarksdale Bypass for I-69 around Clarksdale.

- Keep it as close as possible to Clarksdale by using the Bypass
- Expedite the work
- We needed this started 20 years ago

The following summarizes the comments of the two people who supported the central corridor alternative.

- In my opinion, the closer to US 61 the highway is, the better and less expensive it will be to build.
- I am told there is no alternative under consideration that does not utilize the US 61 Bypass through Clarksdale. I will be satisfied only when the final decision is made and that still stands.
- I think from an engineering and economic impact basis that the central route is the one that makes the most sense.

The following comment was furnished by the person who south of Clarksdale opposed the eastern corridor and supported the central corridor.

- The east road going south from Clarksdale goes through my farmland dividing it completely in two. I have spent a lot of money on drainage, irrigation wells, and land leveling. I rent my land for growing cotton, beans, corn, wheat, and rice. I depend on the rent for my income. I'm 72 years old and do not need my farm income taken away. This east route would disastrously impact my farm.
- The 61 route would be the best route for helping the economy and helping the small towns along the highway. It could possibly be done quicker, which would be a big help to us in the near future.

Tunica Meeting

There were 83 people who registered for the meeting at Tunica. Of these, 23 were representatives of the MDOT, the FHWA, or the consultant team. The remaining 60 people were mostly landowners in the project study area, governmental officials or their representatives, civic leaders, concerned citizens, or members of the media.

The detailed discussions at this meeting primarily concerned the alternatives in Tunica County. Most of the public representatives appeared pleased with the alternative segments presented at the meeting for further study. Like the meeting at Clarksdale the previous evening, the discussions at this meeting were generally supportive of the project. However, there was more concern expressed about potential damage to farmland and conservation easements at this meeting than at either of the other two meetings.

As of August 30, 2002, there were 11 comments received from people who registered as attendees at this meeting in Tunica. Ten of the eleven comments concerned alternatives in Tunica County and the remaining comment concerned the east alternative south of Clarksdale in Coahoma County. The following is an overview of those comments.

Tunica Meeting (continued)

- Three of the comments were from county officials or representatives, and they provided support for the West One Alternative.
- Three comments were from two individuals of a family who believed I-69 should be as far east as possible.
- Three comments were from a family who supported the eastern alternative and opposed the central alternative in the northern part of the county because they believed the corridor would negatively impact their farm.
- One comment was from a landowner in Coahoma County expressing concern about the eastern alternative south of Clarksdale in Coahoma County.
- The 11th comment was from a member of the local print media, and that comment did not offer support or opposition for any of the alternatives.

A 12th comment was received by e-mail on August 1, 2002, from an individual who was unable to attend the meeting at Tunica. This individual is a landowner who opposes the eastern alternative. To assist him in developing his comments, this individual was mailed a copy of the handout that was presented at the Tunica Public Meeting.

The following summarizes the comments given by the county officials and representatives for supporting the West One Alternative in the north part of Tunica County and an alternative similar to the West One Alternative in the south part of Tunica County.

- The Comprehensive Master Land Use and Transportation Plan for Tunica County and the Town of Tunica, performed by Allen & Hoshall independent of this I-69 study, had recommended this location for I-69.
- The route offers the greatest economic benefit for future development.

The following summarizes the comments given by the two individuals who believed I-69 should be as far east as possible.

- The eastern alternative has less noise impacts and disruptions to wildlife patterns, hunting, agriculture, etc.
- The western proposed corridor runs through an Indian Village somewhere near Bond Road and Verner Road, and you will have trouble with that alignment.
- Keep it to the east as far as you can. See that there is an exit for Woolfolk Road. The maps were nice and the meeting was well staffed. I like the yellow route.

The following summarizes the comments given by the three individuals of the same family who supported the eastern alternative and opposed the central alternative.

- The central corridor would mess up the drainage of 1,000 acres at the south end of our farm. There is a one and a half mile ditch used to drain this area of the farm. The central corridor would come in where the drainage goes into Buck Island Drainage.
- The central corridor is going through a flood plain.

Tunica Meeting (continued)

The following summarizes the comments received from a Coahoma County landowner concerning the east alternative south of Clarksdale in Coahoma County.

- During the 1940s the Health Department sprayed her family's owned tenant homes with DDT to control insects. She is concerned there might still be some contamination, and that disturbing those areas might be harmful.
- Following US 61 would avoid this land where she advises DDT was used, she believes that is the best choice.
- She believes following US 61 in this area, rather than opening a new transportation corridor, will better preserve the current environment.

The following summarizes the comments of the member of the local print media that attended the Tunica Meeting.

- A way for the public to better study your alternatives would be to provide the alternative mapping displays, with photography, in the county seats or city halls for several weeks.
- People, who could not make the meeting or need more time to view the alternative mapping displays, could see more precisely where the alternatives are crossing local roads and section lines.

The following summarizes the comments of the e-mail received from the landowner who did not attend the meeting, opposes the eastern alternative, and requested a copy of the handouts to assist him in developing his comments.

- There would be a loss of prime farmland, especially in Section 28, Township 4 South, and Range 10 West. This land is some of the most productive for crops in Mississippi. These soils are Class I. This would result in economic loss from income and rental fees.
- There would be loss of fish and wildlife along the Buck Island Bayou, with native trees and brush bordering the stream and drainage way.
- There would be added cost in construction over Buck Island Bayou and encroachment of wetlands.

Comments received from people not registered as attendees at the Second Series of Public Meetings

There were 14 comments received from people who were not registered as attendees at any of these meetings conducted on July 16-18, 2002. Of the 14 comments, 13 concerned the southern section from Benoit to Clarksdale and one concerned the north section of Tunica County.

The following is an overview of the 13 comments in the southern section from Benoit to Clarksdale.

- Eleven of the comments supported the eastern alternative. In order to provide their comments supporting the eastern alternative, two people who attended the meeting at Cleveland used a form letter. The same form letter was used by these eleven people to express their support for the eastern alternative.
- One comment supported the eastern alternative for some of the same reasons as those provided in the form letter.
- The final comment did not provide any reason for supporting the central alternative.

Comments received from people not registered as attendees at the Second Series of Public Meetings (continued)

The 14th comment received concerned the north section in Tunica County. The comment expressed opposition to the central alternative at the Booth Family Farm because the project would adversely affect the drainage. This is the same comment that was provided at this location by others who attended the meeting at Tunica.

Correspondence in response to requests made during or after the Second Series of Public Meeting

On July 22, 2002, the following people were mailed the following information they requested.

- Ms. Rose Baenke, with the Mississippi River Parkway Commission, a copy of the Project Packet handout provided at the Second Series of Public Meetings
- Mr. Lynn May, a Tunica County farmer with Berry Farm Enterprises, a map of the Tunica area alternative corridors presented at the Second Series of Public Meetings
- Mr. Curtis A. Berry, a Tunica County farmer and landowner, a map of the Tunica area alternative corridors presented at the Second Series of Public Meetings
- Judge Ellis Woolfolk Darby, of the Tunica County Justice Court, a copy of the Project Packet handout provided at the Second Series of Public Meetings
- Mr. Derrick Cherry – a resident of Starkville, MS – a copy of the I-69 Project Packet handout provided at the Second Series of Public Meetings
- Mr. Martin Shofner – with Shofner Evans Architects in Nashville, TN – a copy of the Project Packet handout provided at the Second Series of Public Meetings

On July 30, 2002, the following people were mailed the following information they requested.

- Mr. Delbert Farmer, a Bolivar County farmer and landowner, a copy of the mapping of the 1,000 feet wide corridor alternatives in south Bolivar County between the Mississippi River and SR 446
- Mr. John Norfleet, a Tunica County landowner, a copy of the mapping of the 1,000 feet wide corridor alternatives near SR 3 and Prichard Road

Special Meeting with Mr. Chuck Jepsen in Jackson at Neel-Schaffer on July 31, 2002

This meeting was held with Mr. Chuck Jepsen to discuss the potential impacts the eastern alternative corridor could have on land he and his family own near Prichard Road in Tunica County.

In addition to Mr. Jepsen, those present at the meeting were Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer, Inc. Because he was on the contact list for this project, a post card was mailed to Mr. Jepsen inviting him to attend the public meetings. However, since he lives in the Jackson area his schedule did not allow him to attend any of the meetings.

As a result of the briefing Mr. Jepsen was provided at this special meeting, he provided us his comments by e-mail the following day on August 1st. Those e-mail comments opposing the eastern alternative are provided on Page 9 of this correspondence.

Special Meeting with MDOT Third District in Jackson at MDOT on August 6, 2002

This meeting was held in the Environmental Division at the request of Third District Engineer Walter Lyons. The purpose of the meeting was to hear the Third District's concerns and suggestions about the western relocation corridor between Benoit and the Clarksdale Bypass.

The people who attended this special meeting were: Messrs. Walter Lyons and Carl Middleton from the MDOT Third District; Mr. Claiborne Barnwell from the MDOT Environmental Division; and Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley from Neel-Schaffer.

The southern portion of the current western relocation alternative is located west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and east of the Mississippi River. This location blocks the planned westward expansion of the Dahomey NWR to the Mississippi River. Everyone in attendance at the meeting agreed such a location would probably prevent the alternative from receiving serious consideration entirely through the environmental process. To make sure a west relocation alternative, a central alternative, and east relocation alternative receive serious consideration from Benoit to Clarksdale, it was agreed the consultant team would determine if a new central to west relocation alternative could be developed by combining the current central alternative with the current west alternative. From Benoit to SR 8 west of Cleveland, the central to west relocation alternative would use the current central alternative. The central to west relocation alternative then would leave the central alternative and connect to the current western alternative south of the crossing of SR 444. The alignment for the central to west alternative would not impact any westward expansion of the Dahomey NWR to the Mississippi River.

Subsequent to this meeting, the consultant team developed the new western relocation alternative, and the project team determined the new alternative merited further study. Steps were taken to bring the degree of the study on the new central to west alternative to the same level as that which had been conducted on the other alternatives that remain under consideration.

Special Morning Meeting with Mr. Penn Owen Jr., in Jackson at Neel-Schaffer on August 7, 2002

This meeting was held at the request of Mr. Penn Owen Jr., who is a large landowner in the northern portion of Tunica County. The purpose of the meeting was to provide Mr. Owen a copy of the alternative mapping in the north part of the county near SR 304 and to address any questions or concerns he might have. The people who attended this meeting were Mr. Owen and Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer.

The primary discussions at the meeting concerned the western alignment and potential interchange locations for that alignment between Arkabutla Dam Rd and the north end of the project at SR 304. Mr. Owen appeared satisfied with the responses provided to his questions, suggestions, and comments.

Special Afternoon Meeting with Mr. Jack Coleman in Jackson at Neel-Schaffer on August 7, 2002

This meeting was held at the request of Mr. Jack Coleman, with the U.S. Department of Interior. The people who attended the meeting were Mr. Coleman and Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer.

Special Afternoon Meeting with Mr. Jack Coleman in Jackson at Neel-Schaffer on August 7, 2002 (continued)

Mr. Coleman opened the meeting by asking for a summary of this study's history, with special attention being given as to why the western relocation alternative between the Dahomey NWR and the Mississippi River does not appear to be a viable alternative. While receiving the project history summary, Mr. Coleman was given the project packet handout for the Second Series of Public Meetings. He was made aware of the correspondence received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service expressing concerns about any alternative between the Dahomey NWR and the Mississippi River, and he was made aware of the meetings that had been conducted with that agency concerning any such alternative.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Coleman was encouraged to complete the comment sheet, contained in the project packet, and return the sheet to document any concerns he might have.

Special Presentation in Jackson to MDOT Commission on August 13, 2002

Mr. Robert Walker made this presentation to update the Transportation Commission on the status of this study and upcoming actions. The presentation was delivered at one of the Commission's regularly scheduled meetings.

JRS:jrs

Appendix D
Public Involvement

October 21, 2002 meeting

Minutes, Special Tunica County Meeting

Greater New Saint Paul Church October 21, 2002

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley Date Prepared: November 7, 2002

This meeting concerned the Oak Grove M.B. Church, the Prichard Road area west of the church, the Verner Road area near the Verner Road Park, and the Bonds Road area east and north of the Verner Road Park. The meeting had three goals. Informing the people living in this area or attending Oak Grove M.B. Church that the location of the I-69 alternative corridor receiving the most favorable comments in this portion of Tunica County could impact their home or pass near this church was the first goal. The second goal was to address these people's questions, problems, and concerns. The final goal of the meeting was to provide these people an opportunity to furnish their written comments.

The arrangements for scheduling and conducting the meeting were coordinated by Mr. Ken Weeden under the project's Community Involvement and Environmental Justice outreach efforts. The meeting was well advertised by letters to key community contacts, flyers in nearby community gathering places, and by making an announcement at a worship service conducted in the Oak Grove M.B. Church. There were 74 people who registered their attendance at the meeting conducted east of Tunica in the Fellowship Hall of the Greater New Saint Paul Church. Of these 74 people, four were registered as project team representatives and the remaining 70 were local or area residents.

An invocation was given by the minister of the Greater New Saint Paul Church to open the meeting, and the project team provided a status report. The general session portion of the meeting then adjourned into approximately eight areas. Aerial photography mapping of the alternative corridors under consideration was provided at these eight areas for the public to view, ask questions and make comments.

The alternative corridor that had received the most favorable comments crossed Prichard Road slightly west of the Oak Grove M.B. Church, extended north across Verner Road, turned northeast after crossing Arkabutla Dam Road, continued northeast paralleling SR 304 to the south, and turned north after crossing SR 3 to connect with the SR 304 Spur presently under construction. This alternative had received the most favorable comments because it was closer to the Town of Tunica, the Tunica Airport, planned industrial expansion associated with the airport, US 61, Robinsonville and its casinos.

For the alternative that had received the most favorable public comments, the people interested in the Oak Grove M.B. Church were advised an interchange could be provided at Prichard Road without directly impacting the church or the adjacent cemetery. Upon learning this, the people with concerns about the church property appeared satisfied.

For the alternative that had received the most favorable comments, most of the comments concerned the residences that would be relocated by the crossing of Verner Road and the noise impacts to those residences that would remain along Verner and Bonds Road. The land at

Verner Road is low and frequently floods. Many Verner Road residents stated they would like the crossing of Verner Road to require their relocation so they could leave this low area.

After the break-out sessions, the meeting closed with a general session. Some of the items documented in these minutes were discussed again at this time either in the form of questions with answers from the project team or in the form of comments from the local citizenry. The project team advised the attendees that a follow-up meeting would be conducted after the study alternatives were further refined and the residential relocations were identified at the crossing of Verner Road. The meeting concluded with the project team encouraging the people attending the meeting to submit their written comments.

Six written comments were received in response to this meeting. The comments were all from people who wanted to be relocated from this area prone to flooding, and a couple of the comments were from people who asked relocation assistance questions.

JRS:jrs

COMMENT SHEET

SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING—OCTOBER 21, 2002
GREATER NEW SAINT PAUL CHURCH—TUNICA COUNTY, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: October 21, 2002

NAME: John & Joree Walton

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 1659 Tunica, Ms 38676, 3286 Verner Road

REPRESENTING: Lot #14 on Verner Road

COMMENTS: I think the Express Way Should come Straight through Verner Rd. Because We would like to be relocated. We and all my neighbors. We would like to be relocated because our yards is beautiful better set in our yard, This the Expressway will be best for the Airport and the Casino's and the Residents will come straight through our Yard

John & Joree Walton

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET

SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING—OCTOBER 21, 2002
GREATER NEW SAINT PAUL CHURCH—TUNICA COUNTY, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 10-21-02

NAME: Sally and Billy Jackson

MAILING ADDRESS: Sally and Billy Jackson
P.O. Box 2284, Tunica, MS 38676

REPRESENTING: 3252 Verner Rd. (Lot 16) (363-3496)

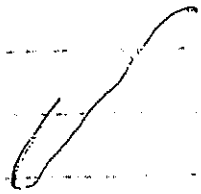
COMMENTS: Sally and Billy Jackson Lot 16 on Verner Road, we would gladly sell my property because we've had nothing but heartaches since we bought this property. When we first moved here, we didn't know it was a flood zone until the big rain came. We were flooded out of our homes for 8 whole weeks with nowhere to stay. We had to move back with parents during this time. We also had to take off of work, and the kids missed days of school. We understand that some people have lived here a long time, but we haven't. They haven't had to leave their house for almost a month. We feel that the county knew about the land, but they didn't tell us. If this is a way of getting us out of this hole, we'll gladly take it.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

Sally and Billy Jackson

3252 Verner Rd (Lot 16)

I also feel that the county should be responsible for helping us more since they knew about the land.



COMMENT SHEET

SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING—OCTOBER 21, 2002
GREATER NEW SAINT PAUL CHURCH—TUNICA COUNTY, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 10-22-02

NAME: John & Linda Watson

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 1214

Tunica, MS 38676 662-357-1034

REPRESENTING: The Watson Family 3033 Verner Rd

COMMENTS: I would like to know that if We have to be relocated or our house moved is it possible to pick up a brick house and its four Acres and place it some where else is that possible and if not do you pay or an un paid house that would be the problem if not able to move it / or what do you do what that / how much would you pay on the land if not how can We pay for two dwelling places

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET

SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING—OCTOBER 21, 2002
GREATER NEW SAINT PAUL CHURCH—TUNICA COUNTY, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 10-24-2002

NAME: Robert & Carolyn Whalen

MAILING ADDRESS: 3190 Verner Rd

REPRESENTING: Verner Rd. Incedent

COMMENTS: Dear Buyer!! of Verner Road Project, Please Come by 3190 Verner Rd Tunica, MS. 38676 and Give Robert & Carolyn Whalen a Price to Buy Out Quickly

Thank You

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET

SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING—OCTOBER 21, 2002
GREATER NEW SAINT PAUL CHURCH—TUNICA COUNTY, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 11-05-02

NAME: Robert + Carolyn Whalen

MAILING ADDRESS: 3190. Verner Rd Tunica, ms. 38676

REPRESENTING: Verner Road Subdivision.

COMMENTS: We are for the Inter-Section Coming Through Verner Road and would like to relocate and be bought out. But we do not want to live next to the I-69 Section. And if we are bought out out at a fair price.

Robert + Carolyn Whalen

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET

SPECIAL COMMUNITY MEETING—OCTOBER 21, 2002
GREATER NEW SAINT PAUL CHURCH—TUNICA COUNTY, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

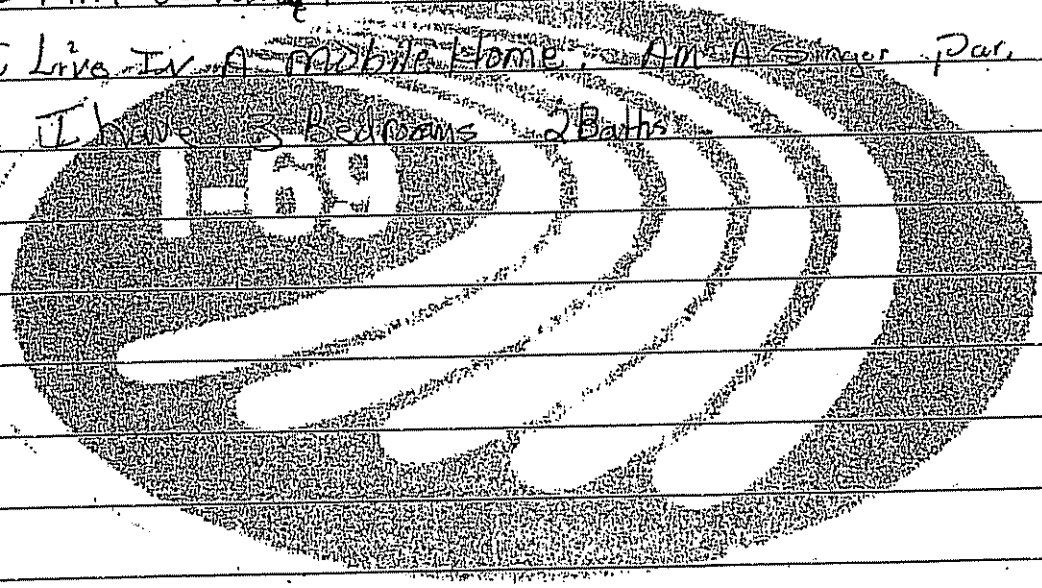
DATE: 11-17-02

NAME: Gladys Whalen

MAILING ADDRESS: PO Box 2447
Tunica Ms 38676

REPRESENTING:

COMMENTS: This is Miss Whalen
I Live At 3224 Verner Rd.
I am willing to make a Yeild
I Live In A Mobile Home. Am A Senior Par.
Oh I have 3 Bedrooms 2 Baths



After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

ATTENTION!!!

1. RESIDENTS OF THE PRICHARD ROAD, VERNER ROAD AND BONDS ROAD AREA,

AND

2. MEMBERS OF THE OAK GROVE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Special Community Meeting

Greater New Saint Paul Church
White Oak Road
Monday, October 21, 2002, 4 p.m.

To discuss impacts the location of the proposed Interstate 69 Highway might have on the Verner Rd. and Bonds Rd. area and the Oak Grove M.B. Church.

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is in the process of planning this new highway, and in Tunica County there are three alternative corridors under evaluation between State Highway 4 and State Highway 304. Two of the three corridors may impact the Oak Grove Church property, and those two corridors will have different impacts on residents in the area of Verner Road and Bonds Road.

PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND THIS SPECIAL MEETING TO BE HELD MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2002, AT THE GREATER NEW SAINT PAUL CHURCH, BEGINNING AT 4 P.M.

The highway planners and engineers will be present at this Special Community Meeting to discuss the alternative corridors with area residents, Oak Grove church members, and County officials, as well as to receive additional input from the local citizenry. If you have any questions, please contact Kenneth Weeden, Environmental Justice Coordinator, at 1-877-824-6525, (910-762-6297), or Robert Walker of Neel-Schaffer Engineers, at 601-948-3071, or Greg Hurley, 363-2515, Tunica Co. Planning Department.

Appendix D
Public Involvement

January 29-30, 2003 meetings

MINUTES

I-69 COMMUNITY OUTREACH MEETINGS
JANUARY 29-30, 2003

INTERSTATE 69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY # 11
BETWEEN SR 304 EAST OF ROBINSONVILLE IN TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
AND SR 1 NEAR BENOIT IN BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Prepared By	Date Prepared	
David Ruhl & Jimmy Shirley	February 10, 2003	

SPECIAL BENOIT MEETING

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) conducted this special meeting at the Ray Brooks School near Benoit at 10:00 AM on January 29, 2003. The meeting's purpose was to update the Ray Brooks School, community, and farming contacts in the Benoit area on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternatives presented for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting by Mr. Ken Weeden, the Environmental Justice Coordinator for the project.

Upon entering the meeting room, the invitees were able to view maps of the alternatives in the Benoit area and discuss the alternatives with representatives of the MDOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and consultant team. During this informal period, a sign-in sheet was distributed to register the attendance at the meeting. Most of the discussions concerned the alignments from SR 1 west to the connecting point on the adjacent study that HNTB Corporation is conducting for Section of Independent Utility (SIU) 12. The following concerns from SR 1 west to the connecting point for the SIU 12 were expressed.

- separation of farmland and potential farmland access issues
- has seep water problems
- drainage
- proximity of alignments to the school (potential safety and noise issues)

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, Environmental Division Administrator for the MDOT, asked everyone to be seated, and he then made some welcoming and opening comments. At Mr. Barnwell's request, everyone

attending the meeting introduced themselves and stated their association with the project. There were 17 people who registered their attendance on the sign-in sheets. Of these 17 people, six represented the MDOT, one represented the FHWA, four represented the consultant team, four represented farm interests, one represented the school, and one represented the Benoit I-69 Committee. Mr. Barnwell then introduced Mr. Robert Walker, the Project Manager for the consultant team, and Mr. Walker provided a status report on the study.

The questions, requests, responses, and comments that occurred while viewing the mapping displays that need documenting are as follows:

QUESTION: Mr. Wayne Farmer asked why the HNTB Study didn't consider a south of Benoit interchange crossing of SR 1 in the Lake Vista area.

RESPONSE: Mr. Barnwell responded that the HNTB study for SIU 12 considered three possible interchange locations in its study independent of the SIU 11 Study. These interchange locations included one interchange close to town, one interchange north of town, and one interchange south of town.

COMMENT: Mr. Wayne Farmer remarked that the West Alternate does not appear feasible because it blocks the proposed westward expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. He continued by stating the interchange location north of town does not appear feasible because it is out of direction for an alternative proceeding east to the south of Litton Road. Since these two alternatives north of Benoit do not appear feasible, he asked consideration be given to adding a southern alternative that would cross SR 1 between the Ray Brooks School and Scott in the vicinity of the Lake Vista area.

RESPONSE: Mr. Barnwell responded that he would request the SIU 11 consultant team to conduct a study sufficient enough to determine if this request merits further study as an additional alternative in the DEIS.

QUESTION: Mr. Early Ewing, Chairman of the Benoit I-69 Committee, asked about providing an interchange between the I-69 Great River Bridge that could serve as a connector to SR 1 and Greenville.

RESPONSE: Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with the consultant team, advised Mr. Ewing this was beyond the Scope of Work for the SIU 11 study from Benoit to Robinsonville.

QUESTION: Mr. Early Ewing expressed his concern that a SR 1 Bypass of Benoit would be needed if the alternative crossing north of Benoit is not selected as the Preferred Alternative.

RESPONSE: Mr. Jimmy Shirley advised projected traffic for the 2030 Design Year would be developed for I-69 interchange alternatives at Benoit in the DEIS. He advised Mr. Ewing it was doubtful the projected traffic for SR 1 would warrant a SR 1 bypass of Benoit for any of the alternatives.

COMMENT: Mr. Early Ewing commented that he thought the view of Lake Bolivar along SR 1 at Lake Vista was one of the most scenic sites in the State of Mississippi.

RESPONSE: None

Mr. Barnwell closed the meeting by emphasizing the need for the attendees to use the comment sheet they received at the meeting as the means to record any comments they want documented about this meeting. He advised they could either turn in their comment sheet to a member of the project team at the conclusion of the meeting or they could return it by mail to the project team.

HWY 61 NORTH BOLIVAR COUNTY MAYORS MEETING

The MDOT conducted this meeting at Crawdad's Restaurant in Merigold at Noon on January 29, 2003. The meeting's purpose was to update the mayors along US 61 between Merigold and Alligator on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternatives presented for detailed study in the DEIS. Invitation letters to the mayors of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, Duncan, and Alligator were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting by Mr. Ken Weeden, the Environmental Justice Coordinator for the project.

When the project team arrived at the meeting, the mayors, a couple of concerned citizens, and the President of the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors were already in attendance and seated around a group of tables that had been assembled to form one large table. A sign-in sheet was circulated and a brief introduction was made by Mr. Ken Weeden of the consultant team. At the conclusion of his remarks, Mr. Weeden introduced Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, the MDOT Environmental Division Administrator.

Mr. Barnwell provided his welcoming comments, and he then asked everyone attending the meeting to state their name and association with the project. There were 19 people who registered their attendance on the sign-in sheets. Of these 19 people, four represented the MDOT, one represented the FHWA, five represented the consultant team, five were mayors, one is a town clerk, one is a Bolivar County Supervisor, and two were concerned citizens. Of the municipalities of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, Duncan, and Alligator, the only mayor not in attendance at the meeting was the Mayor of Duncan. After introductions, Mr. Barnwell stated the need for written comments to the project. Mr. Barnwell stated that verbal comments would not become a permanent part of the record unless written and submitted to the project team. He made the attendees aware of the comment sheet they could use to furnish their written comments. Mr. Barnwell stated that the intent of the project is to choose the best alternative through consensus and that a major role of this project is to provide economic opportunities to the Delta.

During the introductions, the mayors, county supervisor, local official, and concerned citizens made statements concerning their desires for the outcome of this project. All the mayors and local officials wanted an alignment closest to their municipality because they believed such an alignment would provide the greatest economic impact. All agreed that the best alternative would be the alignment that converts existing US 61 to I-69. They also requested good access to the interstate from their municipality and some, including the Mayor of Alligator, requested an interchange next to their community.

Mr. Jimmy Stokes, a citizen from Mound Bayou, emphasized that Bolivar County is a poor rural area which greatly needs economic stimulus. Mr. Stokes reminded the group of the creation of the Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone and the need to provide an economic boost to the communities in Bolivar County through the I-69 project.

Mr. Barnwell replied that one of the primary objectives in addition to providing for the movement of freight from Canada to Mexico for this project is economic stimulus. Mr. Cecil Vick, FHWA Environmental Coordinator for the Jackson Division Office, added that one of Congress' specific purposes for the I-69 project was addressing poverty in the Mississippi Delta and the Lower Rio Grande Valley in the State of Texas.

Next, the attendees reviewed the maps depicting the alternative alignments recommended for detailed study in the DEIS between Cleveland and the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line. Most of the discussion concerned the central alternative that would convert as much of existing US 61 as possible to I-69. Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with the consultant team, explained the following concept of how the conversion for that alternative would be accomplished.

- Southwest of Merigold, an interchange would be provided to separate I-69 and US 61. Except for short-term lane closures, four-lane traffic could be maintained on US 61 during this construction.
- From Merigold to the north part of Shelby, widening would be accomplished to the east of US 61. When completed, the widening would provide the northbound lanes of US 61 and any needed east frontage road. Except for some short-term lane closures, four-lane could be maintained while accomplishing this widening by the traffic using the existing northbound and southbound lanes of US 61. Widening to the east was chosen instead of widening to the west because the east has less apparent impact on the human and natural environments. After the northbound lanes of I-69 are completed the northbound lanes of US 61 would be closed and the northbound traffic would be shifted to the new northbound lanes of I-69. During this time when the closed lanes are reconstructed to become the future southbound lanes of I-69, the southbound traffic would remain on the existing southbound lanes of US 61. After the reconstruction of the closed lanes is completed, the southbound traffic would be moved from the existing southbound lanes of US 61 to the southbound lanes of I-69. The existing southbound lanes of US 61 would then be converted to a two-lane, two-way west frontage road.
- From the north part of Shelby to the south part of Hushpuckena, the central alternative calls for I-69 to be constructed entirely on relocation and slightly east of US 61. The relocation is necessary to avoid the electric substation and an abandoned crop dusting airport. During the relocation construction, four-lane traffic can be maintained by using the existing lanes of US 61.
- Between Hushpuckena and the county line, widening would be added to the east of US 61 using the same construction approach as that for the segment between Merigold and the north part of Shelby. As was the case for the segment between Merigold and the north part of Shelby, widening to the east of US 61 was selected over widening to the west because the east widening has less apparent impact on the human and natural environments.

During Mr. Shirley's discussion of the construction concept for converting US 61 to I-69 between Merigold and the county line, questions were asked concerning interchange locations and how these six

municipalities would be accessed from the interchanges. Those questions were addressed in the following manner by Mr. Shirley.

- For the purpose of comparing alternatives in the DEIS, interchange locations for the central alternative are proposed at the following locations.
    - Southwest of Merigold to separate US 61 and I-69.
    - At Mound Bayou on the county road that currently provides direct access from US 61 to the Health Center.
    - At north Shelby on the county road south of the US 61 Bypass connection to Old US 61.
    - Just south of Alligator
- The six municipalities would be serviced by the above listed four interchanges in the following manner.
    - Merigold – Northbound I-69 traffic would use the interchange southwest of Merigold. Southbound I-69 traffic could exit at the Mound Bayou Interchange and travel the west frontage road south to a grade separation bridge that takes a county road over I-69 to old US 61, or this traffic could exit at the interchange southwest of Merigold.
    - Mound Bayou – Northbound and southbound I-69 traffic could exit at the Mound Bayou Interchange. For locations between Merigold and Mound Bayou, northbound I-69 traffic could exit at the interchange southwest of Merigold and travel the west frontage road to a grade separation bridge that takes a county road over I-69 to old US 61. For locations between Mound Bayou and Shelby, southbound I-69 traffic could exit at the Shelby Interchange and travel the west frontage road to a grade separation bridge that takes a county road over I-69 to old US 61.
    - Winstonville – Northbound I-69 traffic would exit at the Mound Bayou Interchange and travel the west frontage road to Winstonville. Southbound I-69 traffic would exit at the Shelby Interchange and travel the west frontage road to Winstonville.
    - Shelby – Northbound I-69 traffic would have the option of using the Shelby Interchange or exiting at the Mound Bayou Interchange and taking the west frontage road to Shelby. Southbound I-69 traffic would use the Shelby Interchange.
    - Duncan – Northbound I-69 traffic would exit at the Shelby Interchange and travel the west frontage road to Duncan. Southbound traffic would exit at the Alligator Interchange and travel the west frontage road to Duncan.
    - Alligator – Northbound and southbound I-69 traffic could exit at the Alligator Interchange. There would be an interchange at the Bobo community just north of the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line. This is where I-69 would leave US 61 for several miles on relocation. Southbound I-69 traffic desiring to access locations between Alligator and Bobo could use the Bobo Interchange.

Mayor Westerfield of Merigold asked the project team to review the concept for the interchange southwest of Merigold and determine if any improvements could be made in the concept to provide better access for Merigold. Mr. Shirley advised Mayor Westerfield that his request would be investigated and any needed adjustments in the concept for the DEIS would be implemented.

Mr. Barnwell closed the meeting by reminding the attendees to record any comments they want documented about the meeting on the comment sheet and to return the sheet to the project team as soon as possible.

BOLIVAR/SUNFLOWER COUNTIES COMMUNITY ISSUES COMMUNITY MEETING

The MDOT conducted this dinner meeting at Crawdad's Restaurant in Merigold at 6:00 PM on January 29, 2003. The meeting's purpose was to update the county task force on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternatives presented for detailed study in the DEIS. Invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting by Mr. Ken Weeden of the consultant team. A sign-in sheet was circulated to register the attendance at the meeting.

Mr. Weeden provided some welcoming comments. He briefly discussed the previous meetings that the three community issues committees had conducted, the meetings that were held earlier in the day with other groups, and the meetings that are scheduled for the following day. Mr. Weeden advised the group that a second meeting with the Tunica County Committee was held last October to provide that committee information on the alternatives in Tunica County. He stated the Tunica County alternative information provided at that committee's meeting last October is similar to the alternative information in Bolivar and Sunflower County that will be provided to this group at this meeting. He advised the group that a meeting was scheduled tomorrow with the Coahoma County Committee Issues Committee to review the Coahoma County alternative information with them. Mr. Weeden then introduced Mr. Claiborne Barnwell of the MDOT.

After making a welcoming statement and commenting on the status of the project, Mr. Barnwell asked everyone attending the meeting to state their name and association with the project. Of the 26 people attending the meeting, four represented the MDOT, one represented the FHWA, five represented the consultant team, and the remaining 16 were Bolivar and Sunflower County officials and/or residents. After introductions, Mr. Barnwell stated the need for written comments to the project. Mr. Barnwell stated that verbal comments would not become a permanent part of the record unless written and submitted to the project team. Mr. Barnwell stated that the intent of the project is to choose the best alternative through consensus and that a major role of this project is to provide economic opportunities to the Delta.

Mr. Barnwell advised an informal format would be used for the dinner meeting. He suggested that everyone place their order from the menu, and then view the alternative mapping for Bolivar and Sunflower counties with the project team while the meals were being prepared. In response to a request by Mr. Ken Weeden, Reverend J.Y. Trice asked the blessing.

The overwhelming comments from the attendees were the need to build the new interstate as soon as possible and to provide for the greatest economic stimulus to the area. Most of the people with Bolivar County interests stated their support for an alternative south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge that crosses SR 8 as far west of Cleveland as possible. By contrast, most of the people with Sunflower County interests continue to support an alternative that passes south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge,

crosses US 61 north of Shaw, SR 8 east of Cleveland, and continues to the east on relocation until connecting to the south end of the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County. There was not much discussion concerning the central alternative north of Merigold. This was probably due to the central alternative being discussed in such detail earlier in the day at the North Bolivar County Meeting. There was also not much discussion concerning the west alternative between Benoit and Rosedale that passes between the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and the Mississippi River. Those in attendance apparently accept that western alternative is not viable because it blocks the proposed westward expansion of the Refuge. There were no major expressions of interest for or against the modified western alignment that crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland at the same location as the central alternative and then proceeds northwest on relocation to connect to the western alternative near SR 444.

The questions, requests, responses, and comments that occurred while viewing the mapping displays that need documenting are as follows:

> REQUEST: Reverend J.Y. Trice asked Mr. Robert Walker to determine if the central alternative crossing of SR 8 could be moved any further west.
>
> RESPONSE: After the meeting, Mr. Walker discussed the request with Mr. Jimmy Shirley of the consultant team. Mr. Shirley advised moving the crossing any further west would be out of direction and add mileage to the central alternative. Although it might not add mileage to the modified west alternative, a westward relocation would move the modified west alternative farther away from the established municipalities of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, and Shelby. More bridges and unnecessary pipeline crossings would also be required if the crossing of SR 8 is moved farther west.
>
> QUESTION: During small group discussions while viewing the alternative mapping, Mr. Shirley was asked several times which alternative he thought would eventually become the Preferred Alternative recommendation.
>
> RESPONSE: Mr. Shirley's response was always that he did not know. He advised the people asking this question that the study of relocation alternatives in the environmental document must take into account the impact of providing adequate connecting roads at interchange locations. Mr. Shirley told these people that considering those impacts will be substantial in areas where US 61 could be used for I-69. However, Mr. Shirley also advised these same people that converting US 61 when possible to I-69 would have high maintenance of traffic cost during the construction. He advised these people it is unknown at this time whether using US 61 as much as possible or being on relocation as much as possible would have the least negative impacts on the human and natural environments.

Mr. Barnwell closed the meeting by reminding the attendees to record any comments they want documented about the meeting on the comment sheet and to return the sheet to the project team as soon as possible.

COAHOMA COUNTY COMMUNITY ISSUES COMMITTEE MEETING

The MDOT conducted this meeting at the Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce in Clarksdale at 10:00 AM on January 30, 2003. The meeting's purpose was to update the Committee on the status of the project

and to obtain their input on the alternative corridors presented for detailed study in the DEIS. Invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting by Mr. Ken Weeden of the consultant team. A sign-in sheet was circulated to register the attendance at the meeting.

After making a welcoming statement and commenting on the status of the project, Mr. Barnwell asked everyone attending the meeting to state their name and association with the project. Of the 19 people attending the meeting, three represented the MDOT, one represented the FHWA, five represented the consultant team, and the remaining 10 were Coahoma County officials and/or residents. After introductions, Mr. Barnwell stated the need for written comments to the project. Mr. Barnwell stated that verbal comments would not become a permanent part of the record unless written and submitted to the project team. Mr. Barnwell stated that the intent of the project is to choose the best alternative through consensus and that a major role of this project is to provide economic opportunities to the Delta. He then introduced Mr. Robert Walker of Neel-Schaffer, Inc., Project Manager for the I-69 Study.

Mr. Walker presented the following sequence of alternatives in a south to north format for Coahoma County.

- Three alternatives from the Bolivar-Coahoma County Line to the south part of the Clarksdale Bypass.
- One alternative from the south part of the Clarksdale Bypass through central Coahoma County to near the US 49 intersection at the future welcome center site.
- Two alternatives from near the US 49 intersection at the future welcome center site to the Tunica County Line.

Mr. Walker commented that current plans call for conducting one more public meeting in March of this year prior to preparing and submitting the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in late summer of this year for approval to advertise a series of identical public hearings. He then turned the program over to Mr. Ken Weeden of the consultant team.

Mr. Weeden provided some welcoming comments. He briefly discussed the initial meetings that the three community issues committees had conducted. Mr. Weeden advised the group that a second meeting with the Tunica County Committee was held last October to present to that group the alternatives for detail study in the DEIS. He stated a similar second meeting was conducted the previous evening with the Bolivar-Sunflower Counties Community Issues Committee to present the alternatives for detail study in those two counties to that group. Mr. Weeden concluded his remarks by stating the importance of submitting written comments on the presented alternatives.

Next, Mr. Claiborne Barnwell restated the need for the committee to furnish the project team with written comments to the project. Mr. Barnwell stated that verbal comments would not become a permanent part of the record unless written and submitted to the project team. Mr. Barnwell discussed the schedule for the environmental document and that once approved, special moneys, which cannot be appropriated until a

final environmental document is approved, would be necessary to design and construct the project. Mr. Barnwell commented that the team is already looking at connectors and interchanges to provide a transportation network for the whole Mississippi Delta. Finally, Mr. Barnwell stated that the MDOT will provide commitments and consideration in the final environmental document as part of the decision-making process that will be carried forward for future implementation of the right of way and construction contracts.

Mr. Cecil Vick discussed the purpose of the I-69. Mr. Vick stated that unlike most transportation projects, which are constructed to alleviate congestion in an area, this project's main purpose is to move freight traffic from Mexico to Canada and in between these two points. Another purpose is to provide economic opportunities to the historically depressed Mississippi Delta and the Lower Rio Grande Valley. He suggested that one way of increasing economic vitality is through providing a good interstate system to increase the robustness of the whole transportation infrastructure which includes the roads, ports, air and rail. Mr. Vick closed by stating the SIU #11 Environmental Study is ahead of the other studies and that we need to finish the study as soon as possible so that when funds are appropriated to design and build the new I-69, the section in Mississippi will qualify for using those funds.

Next, the attendees reviewed the alignments around the US 61 in Coahoma County. Some of the issues discussed included how the interstate would be accessed from the existing road network and a concern about coordination of the location of I-69 with the planned City of Clarksdale Airport Expansion. Neel-Schaffer is responsible for performing the engineering services for the planned airport expansion. Therefore, the Neel-Schaffer members of the project team for the I-69 project addressed this concern by stating the work on these two projects was being coordinated through their Jackson Office.

VERNER ROAD AREA CITIZENS MEETING

The MDOT conducted this meeting south of Tunica at the Tunica County Economic Development Building at 5:00 PM on January 30, 2003. The meeting's purpose was to update the Oak Grove Church members and residents of the Bonds/Verner/Prichard Road areas on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternative corridors presented for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting by Mr. Ken Weeden to the attendees of the previous meeting conducted in October of 2002.

Upon entering the meeting location, a sign-in sheet was provided to register the 52 people who attended. Of these 52 people in attendance, six represented the MDOT, one represented the FHWA, five represented the consultant team, and the remaining 40 people were interested citizens or officials of the Tunica County area. This meeting was scheduled in response to a request by residents of the Bonds/Verner/Prichard Road areas The residents had also requested an MDOT specialist in right of way issues to be present at the

meeting. In response to that request, there were two specialists in attendance from the Jackson Office of the MDOT and one from the MDOT Second District Office located at Batesville.

Mr. Ken Weeden provided welcoming and opening comments. He explained that the alternates had been revised and that this meeting was being held to give the citizens a change to ask question concerning the new alignments and to address any possible relocation or acquisition questions. He advised there were MDOT relocation specialists attending the meeting that could respond to specific questions or concerns of the project. Mr. Weeden then introduced Mr. Claiborne Barnwell of the MDOT.

Mr. Barnwell discussed the history of the I-69 project and that one of the major goals of the project was providing economic development opportunities for the Lower Mississippi Delta, which includes Tunica County. Mr. Barnwell stated that verbal comments would not become a permanent part of this meeting's record. He advised the attendees they need to furnish their written comments for the record using the form they received when registering their attendance. Mr. Barnwell stated that the MDOT will provide commitments and consideration in the final environmental document as part of the decision-making process to minimize certain impacts to the local communities affected by the construction of the project. He then introduced Mr. Robert Walker.

Mr. Walker provided a status report on the project. He commented that current plans call for conducting one more public meeting in March of this year prior to preparing and submitting the DEIS in late summer of this year for approval to advertise a series of identical public hearings. He advised that Mr. Jimmy Shirley of the project team would provide an update on the two alternatives for crossing Prichard Road. As part of that update, Mr. Walker advised an estimate would be provided for the number of residents that would be relocated at the Verner Road crossing for the alternative closest to Tunica. He advised that after the update is given an opportunity will be provided to ask questions prior to viewing the mapping displays for the alternatives.

Mr. Cecil Vick with the FHWA then provided some comments. He stated that unlike most transportation projects, which are constructed to alleviate congestion in an area, this project's main purpose is to move freight traffic from Mexico to Canada and within the United States between those two points. Another purpose is to provide economic opportunities to the historically depressed Mississippi Delta and the Lower Rio Grande Valley. He suggested that one way of increasing economic vitality is through providing a good interstate system to increase the robustness of the whole transportation infrastructure which includes the roads, ports, air and rail. Mr. Vick closed by stating the SIU #11 Environmental Study is ahead of the other

studies and that we need to finish the study as soon as possible so that when funds are appropriated to design and build the new I-69 this section in Mississippi will qualify for using those funds.

Mr. Shirley commented there were two alternatives for crossing Prichard Road. He explained that one alternative passes just east of the airport; proceeds north roughly paralleling US 61 while crossing Goad Road, Verner Road, and Arkabutla Dam Road to near Robinsonville; and then turns east to parallel SR 304. Of the two alternatives under consideration in this area, he advised this alternative is closer to Tunica and provides the better access to the casinos at Robinsonville. Mr. Shirley advised the other alternative crosses Prichard Road farther east at a point near SR 3.

For the alternative closer to Tunica that crosses Verner Road, Mr. Shirley commented there is not much room to adjust the location of the alternative in this area because of the following limitations.

- The crossing of Prichard Road needs to remain west of Oak Grove Church.
- The crossing of Verner Road needs to be east of the Verner Road Park and west of a large ditch to keep the alternative as far west of Bonds Road as possible.

Mr. Shirley then discussed the potential residential displacements if the crossing of Verner Road remains in its current location. He advised if Verner Road was taken over I-69, the residents between the park and the large ditch were potential displacements. This amounted to two permanent residents and four mobile home residents. Mr. Shirley advised it would probably be better to take Verner Road over the interstate for the following reasons.

- For this alternative, it is proposed that a continuous landscaped earthen mound will be added at the right of way line to lessen the I-69 visual and noise impacts to residents in the Bonds and Verner Road area.
- For the landscaped area to be as effective as possible in reducing the noise level, Verner Road should go over the interstate.
- Over time, the expansion joints in bridges can become loose. An impact noise then occurs when trucks cross over the joints. Since there would be less traffic on Verner Road than the interstate, there is less potential for this type impact noise becoming a problem by taking Verner Road over the interstate.

Mr. Leslie Rankin, MDOT Second District Right of Way contact, stated that MDOT had relocation specialists at the meeting to address any questions on relocation and acquisition.

Mr. Cecil Vick further discussed the relocation and acquisition of properties. Mr. Vick stated that the intent of relocation is to put the person in a similar or better condition than they were in before. Mr. Vick stressed that this project may not be built for several years and that the local people should not alter their lives or plans based on the location of any proposed alignments.

There were a couple of questions from the audience concerning how a Verner Road bridge over I-69 might be constructed and if there would be an advantage to constructing such a bridge on relocation so that residential displacements would occur only on one side of Verner Road. In his responding to these questions, Mr. Shirley advised that Verner Road would probably be closed and Goad Road used as a detour if the bridge was built on existing alignment. If Verner Road was left open and the bridge was built on

relocation, Mr. Shirley advised the bridge would probably be built to the north because the park is located to the south of Verner Road.

The meeting then moved to an informal format where the attendees could view the mapping displays for the alternatives and discuss their relocation type questions with the right of way specialists.

Some of the concerns discussed included access to the interstate, access to property, relocation assistance and potential noise and aesthetic impacts along the interstate. The map of the Verner Road area included updated locations of manufactured and brick homes within the proposed 450 foot corridor along Verner Road. Several people were in attendance at the meeting who either owned or rented homes within the alternative corridor that crosses Verner Road.

This concludes the minutes for these community outreach meetings.

MEETING SCHEDULE: I-69 CITIZENS INPUT MEETINGS-Community Participation
January 29-31, 2003: Bolivar, Sunflower, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties-*Ken Weeden & Associates, Inc.,; Neel-Schaffer Engineers; M-DOT; FHWA*

DATE:	*TIME-frame*	*Meeting*	*NOTES:*
Wed. 29th	10 a.m. –11 a.m. Ray Brooks, Elementary School	Benoit-Citizens Group	Notice letters were sent out week of Jan. 13th.
Wed.-29th	Noon- 2pm:	Bolivar Hwy 61 Mayor's Group meeting- Merigold, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Shelby, Duncan, and Alligator	The meeting will be held at Crawdad's restaurant, in All Mayors have been notified, via mail, and some confirmed over the phone. NOT INTENDED TO BE A LUNCHEON MEETING, BUT I WILL CHECK W/ our Host, Mayor of Merigold, owner of Crawdad's.
Wed.-29th	6 p.m. dinner meeting	Citizen's Task Force Meeting- to update the Citizens in Bolivar-Sunflower, on latest alignments- *in Merigold, also at Crawdad's restaurant.*	All members of the committee from Bolivar and Sunflower counties, who attended last March, were notified via mail. *Will* be a dinner meeting. *Overnight in Cleveland.*
Thursday-30th	10 a.m.-noon; M eeting will be held at the Clarksdale Chamber of Commerce office.	Clarksdale: Meet with Coahoma Citizens Task Force, to update them on the latest alignments affecting Coahoma County.	All members of the committee from Coahoma county, who attended last March, were notified via mail. *Travel to Tunica in the afternoon.*
Thursday-30th	5 p.m.-6:30 p.m. Meeting will be held at the Tunica County Economic Building—(President's Building). All attendees from last mtng who signed in, were notified via mail. Also, ad was placed in *Tunica Times* newspaper.	This is a follow-up meeting to the one conducted in Oct. '02, for Oak Grove Church, and residents of the Bonds Road/Verner Road/Prichard Road area to update citizens, and answer questions.	This meeting was requested by some of the citizens to clear up questions concerning possible acquisitions-relocations, with an MDOT relocation specialist present. *Overnight in Tunica*

{DRAFT LETTER : Benoit Citizens Group. Meeting to be held at Ray Brooks Elementary |School, Wed. Jan. 29th , at 10 a.m.}

Dear Citizen:

This is to inform you of a special meeting concerning the status of the proposed I-69 Highway and how recently updated alignments, as proposed by HNTB Engineers might affect you and the Benoit community. **This meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, January 29, 2003, at 10 a.m., at the Ray Brooks Elementary School, Benoit, MS**. Project engineers from Neel-Schaffer, Inc., and Mississippi DOT will be present to provide more detailed information on the I-69 proposed alignment. Your input is valued and needed by the project engineers at this point in the planning process. Please plan to attend.

Thank you for your participation. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please call me, at 1-877-824-6525, or Robert Walker, project manager, Neel-Schaffer Engineers, 1-662-948-3071.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Weeden,
Environmental Justice Coordinator

{DRAFT LETTER : Mayors of Bolivar County Old Hwy 61 Towns, i.e, Merigold, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Shelby, Alligator, and Duncan}

meeting to be held Wed. Jan. 29th, at Crawdad's

Dear Mayor_____:

This is to inform you of a special meeting concerning the status of the proposed I-69 Highway and how recently updated alignments might affect your community and others in northern Bolivar County. This is a meeting especially for the Mayors of Merigold, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Shelby, Alligator, and Duncan. **The meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, January 29, 2003, at 12 noon, at Crawdad's restaurant, Merigold, MS.** Project engineers from Neel-Schaffer, Inc., and Mississippi DOT will be present to provide more detailed information on the I-69 proposed alignment. Your input is valued and needed by the project engineers at this point in the planning process. Please plan to attend.

Thank you for your participation. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please call me, at 1-877-824-6525, or Robert Walker, project manager, Neel-Schaffer Engineers, 1-662-948-3071.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Weeden,
Environmental Justice Coordinator

Cc: Robert Walker
Claiborne Barnwell
Cecil Vick

{DRAFT LETTER TO BOLIVAR-S'FLOWER-COMMUNITY ISSUES COMMITTEE MEMBERS}

Meeting to be Wed. evening, Jan. 29th at Crawdads's
(Letter will be sent to all who attended the Meeting in March, 2001 at Airport Grocery)

This is to provide you with updated information on the progress of the I-69 proposed highway study and to announce another meeting of our Community Issues Committee. All of you were invited to, and many attended, public meetings last summer to review the latest proposed alternative routes of the proposed highway. Those meetings provided opportunities for citizens to review the proposed alignments, ask questions, provide input, etc.

As we discussed at our first meeting, after the citizens had the opportunity to review the latest alternative routes, our Committee would meet again to further discuss potential community impacts. The project engineers have recently updated the proposed alignments and we would like to convene a meeting of our committee to present and discuss them. So, please plan to attend the Bolivar-Sunflower segment of the **"Four County I-69 Community Issues Committee" to be held on Wednesday evening, January 29, 2003, at 6 p.m., at Crawdad's Restaurant, in Merigold, MS,** off of Old Hwy. 61. This will be a dinner meeting.

Thank you again for your participation. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please call me, at 1-877-824-6525, or Robert Walker, project manager, Neel-Schaffer Engineers, 1-662-948-3071.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Weeden,
Environmental Justice Coordinator

{DRAFT LETTER TO COAHOMA COMMUNITY ISSUES COMMITTEE MEMBERS}

Meeting to be Thursday morning, Jan. 30, 2003, 10 a.m., at Clarksdale Chamber of Commerce
(Letter will be sent to all members of the Coahoma Comm. Issues Committee)

This is to provide you with updated information on the progress of the I-69 proposed highway study and to announce another meeting of our Community Issues Committee. All of you were invited to, and many attended, public meetings last summer to review the latest proposed alternative routes of the proposed highway. Those meetings provided opportunities for citizens to review the proposed alignments, ask questions, provide input, etc.

As we discussed at our first meeting, after the citizens had the opportunity to review the latest alternative routes, our Committee would meet again to further discuss potential community impacts. The project engineers have recently updated the proposed alignments and we would like to convene a meeting of our committee to present and discuss them. So, *please* plan to attend the Coahoma County segment of the **"Four County I-69 Community Issues Committee" to be held on Thursday morning, January 30, 2003, at 10 a.m., at the Clarksdale Chamber of Commerce office, in Clarksdale, MS,** (address).

Thank you again for your participation. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please call me, at 1-877-824-6525, or Robert Walker, project manager, Neel-Schaffer Engineers, 1-662-948-3071.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Weeden,
Environmental Justice Coordinator

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL BENOIT MEETING

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ January 29, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

PAGE 1

DATE: 2-2-03

NAME: SAM CRESPITO

ADDRESS: 336 S. GAMWYN DR.
GREENVILLE MISS
38701

COMMENTS: YOUR NEWEST NORTH PATTERN RUNS RIGHT AT BASE OF LEVEE ON MATTHEWS FARM #763 where there are many BERES & places that are prone TO SEEP WATER OR WATER boils and this ROUTE IS much more INTERFEering with ground wher IRRIGATIM of COTTON FIELDS & WELLS & PADS are impeeded. The previous BLUE ALIGNMENT WAS muc LESS IMPEEDING.

ANY North of BENOIT MISS ROUTE STILL CALLS FOR ROAD TO GO North NOT South FOR 3½ miles FROM POINT where ROBINSONVILLE TO

RECEIVED
NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC
FEB 4 2003

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL BENOIT MEETING

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ January 29, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

PAGE 2

DATE: 2-2-03

NAME: Sam Crespino

ADDRESS: ~~Same~~ Reminder NOTE!!. I FARM IN BOLIVAR COUNTY in direct path of new ROAD.

COMMENTS: The (Robinsonville TO ~~NEAR BENOIT~~) other { SECTION } AFTER going near Hiway 1. EAST of Dodomey Refuge goes on TO CROSS Litim Road & Line One EAST of Benoit. After crossing Litim Road TO GO BACK North 3½ miles is almost Ludicros. The new Control ALIGNMENT has Less IMPACT TO FIELDS And IRRIGATI of Fields

As has been previously mentioned ALL of your different FACTIONS of this project should TAKE NOTE of MR GALEN LAWRENCE and

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL BENOIT MEETING

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ January 29, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

PAGE 3

DATE: 2-2-03

NAME: Tom Crespino

ADDRESS: ~~Same~~

COMMENTS:

his ideas and proposals because he is the major Landowner effected by any route taken from Benoit to River Crossing. He also owns much Land east of Hiway 1. His ideas about Lake Vista crossing should be studied and also there Mr Lauren owns a great deal of Land east of Hiway 1. This could mean no noise around Benoit and only 1 Land owner for many many miles not 7 or 8 Landowners that want no part of I-69 or any road to cross their property

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL BENOIT MEETING

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ January 29, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

DATE: 2-2-03

NAME: SAM CRESPINO

ADDRESS: SAME

COMMENTS: AGAIN ROSEDALE & CLEVELAND RESIDENTS ONLY NEED TO USE HIWAY 8 TO REACH INTERSTATE TO GO NORTH OR SOUTH. THE CITY OF GREENVILLE MISS REMAINS THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO ROAD TRAFFIC ON THIS INTERSTATE. FOR GREENVILLE & AREA RESIDENTS THE CLOSER THIS INTERSTATE IS THE BETTER.

THE CITY & MAYOR OF GREENVILLE ARE PROPOSING A DIRECT ROUTE TO INTERSECT ROAD TO BRIDGE LOCATION. ANY EXTRA ROADS WOULD INHIBIT FARM LAND AND PIVOTS AND IRRIGATION SYSTEMS, ALSO MEAN FARMS AND COURSE HAVOC FOR GETTING TO AND AROUND FARMLAND. THERE ARE SOME PREVIOUS PROPOSALS MENTIONED

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL BENOIT MEETING

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ January 29, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

Page 5

DATE: 2-2-03

NAME: Sam Crespino

ADDRESS: ~~Same~~

COMMENTS:

by me among others that should be studied and looked at. Any North of Benoit Route besides extra miles faces many objections by many landowners and will cause many problems for any farmers and their land travel. You people need to find a route that least affects Landowners, Farmers irrigation systems and pivots. Since much of the land affected is owned by 1 Landowner it seems like you people should listen to Mr Lawrence & work to appease him and study any of his ideas and you should also realize that dealing with 1 Landowner would for many miles make negotiations simpler and impact to Landowners and Farmers Less Hardship.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET

NORTH BOLIVAR COUNTY

MAYORS MEETING

I-69 SECTION 11 - ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday * January 29, 2003 * 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Crawdad's Restaurant
Merigold, Mississippi

DATE: JANUARY 29, 2003

NAME: MAYOR KENNEDY V. JOHNSON
CITY OF MOUND BAYOU

ADDRESS: 106 SOUTH GREEN AVE.
P.O. BOX 680
MOUND BAYOU, MS 38762

COMMENTS: DEAR MR. WALKER:

I enjoyed the meeting at Crawdad's on Wednesday, January 29, 2003 concerning the I-69 section II project. A lot of valuable information was available and shared with everyone. The concern of everyone present was that the central route be chosen, because of its impact on economic development in the delta. Also the current 61 Hwy could be easily incorporated into this project.

I am submitting this letter to support the central route and to support the location of the Mound Bayou exit and overpass as shown on January 29, 2003.

Kennedy V. Johnson
Mayor

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
NORTH BOLIVAR COUNTY
MAYORS MEETING

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ January 29, 2003 ♦ 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Crawdad's Restaurant
Merigold, Mississippi

DATE: February 4, 2003

NAME: Richard M. Coleman, Sr.

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 753
Shelby, MS 38774

COMMENTS: As County Supervisor for the Third District, (I feel that the center corridor is the best XXXX and will will serve all the towns in my district, including Alligator and Duncan, Shelby, Winstonville, Mound Bayou and Merigold. Also, all municipal leaders concur with this position. To be more specific, the infrastructure that is already in place to gain great economic benefit, morever, the Port will be a great XXXX attraction for manufacturing industries. The towns stand to receive great economic benefit from the new businesses that I-69 will attract.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
BOLIVAR/SUNFLOWER COUNTIES
COMMUNITY ISSUES COMMITTEE MEETING

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ January 29, 2003 ♦ 6:00 p.m.
Crawdad's Restaurant
Merigold, Mississippi

DATE: 2/10/03

NAME: W. W. Gresham Jr

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 690
Indianola, MS 38751

I'm speaking for Indianola Chamber of Commerce, Sunflower County Economic Con, Delta Council, and AHEAD.

COMMENTS: I'm writing this because I'm extremely interested in economic development in the Delta. I believe transportation and workforce training are the two biggest needs in the Delta.

Highways are the largest part of transportation and I69 is being planned & built for economic development. The Delta missed out on the interstate system since only I55 is ord'd the Delta from Memphis to Jackson. Much work has been put in 61 & 49 W thru the Delta, but it is not interstate & now I69 will be part of the interstate system.

I highly recommend the most easterly route on your chart from Clarksdale to Cleveland & Benoit. This route is closest to all of the Delta. To upgrade US61 from Clarksdale to Cleveland has been explored but partially meets the needs. But there is nothing east of this 61 route until you get to I55.

With I69 going east from Clarksdale to Cleveland & Benoit, it will be serving most of the Delta. Shaw, Ruleville, Indianola, Granada, Greenwood, Leland, & Greenville. These areas need better transportation such as I69. I believe it will be less expensive in the overall cost.

Improving 61 to interstate requirements such as limited access & frontage roads will be extremely costly. It will cost more than constructing new route from South of Clarksdale to Cleveland & on south almost to Shaw & west to Benoit. Thanks for all the good work your MDOT is doing on this project.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
BOLIVAR/SUNFLOWER COUNTIES
COMMUNITY ISSUES COMMITTEE MEETING

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ January 29, 2003 ♦ 6:00 p.m.
Crawdad's Restaurant
Merigold, Mississippi

DATE: 1-30-03

NAME: Jim Pettigrew, Mayor of Drew

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 311
Drew, MS 38737

COMMENTS:

I would like to see I-69 come as close to Sunflower County as possible. I would prefer the EAST Route or yellow Route that is shown on the map.

Jim Pettigrew

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
FOLLOW-UP TUNICA COUNTY COMMUNITY MEETING
PRICHARD ROAD AND VERNER ROAD AREA

I-69 SECTION 11 -- ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Thursday ♦ January 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Economic Development Building
Tunica County, Mississippi

DATE: January 30, 2003

NAME: Marilyn Williams

ADDRESS: 1054 Emma Williams Rd
Tunica, Ms 38676

COMMENTS: I think there has been lots of
thought and work put in this study so far.
I feel the local community and generations
in the future will benefit as a result
of having Interstate 69 come through
this part of the MS Delta.

Marilyn Williams

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

Appendix D
Public Involvement

April 30-May 2, 2003 meeting and follow-up actions

INTERSTATE 69

SECTION OF INDEPENDENT UTILITY NUMBER 11
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

MINUTES
SPECIAL FOLLOW-UP BENOIT MEETING ON APRIL 30, 2003
SPECIAL ROSEDALE MEETING ON APRIL 30, 2003
THIRD SERIES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS ON APRIL 30-MAY 1, 2003
SPECIAL ROBINSONVILLE CASINO MEETING ON MAY 2, 2003
AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS COMPLETED THROUGH OCTOBER 17, 2003

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley Date Prepared: October 17, 2003

Special Follow-up Benoit Meeting at 10:00 AM on April 30, 2003

Subject: I-69 SIU 11 Crossing Alternatives of SR 1 in Bolivar County near Benoit

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the consultant team conducted this special follow-up meeting at Ray Brooks School in Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Hawley's office.

Background to this Special Benoit Meeting

A previous Special Benoit Meeting, attended by 17 people, was conducted in Dr. Hawley's Office at Ray Brooks School on January 29, 2003. The purpose of the previous meeting was to update the Ray Brooks School, community, and farming contacts in the Benoit area on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternatives presented for detail study in the Draft EIS. The western limit of the discussions at the meeting was a point on the adjacent HNTB study on SIU 12 east of the Great River Bridge near Eutaw Landing. The eastern limits of most discussions at the previous meeting were the crossings of SR 448. The primary discussions at the previous meeting concerned the crossings of SR 1 southwest of Benoit, and a request to study

a crossing of SR 1 farther southwest of Benoit at Lake Vista. Some of the attendees at the meeting believed the Lake Vista crossing has the best soil conditions, the least environmental impacts, and the least negative impacts on farming operations. They also believed from the common point on the SIU 12 study near Eutaw Landing, a Lake Vista crossing of SR 1 could be accomplished by extending the Eutaw Landing tangent to the southeast. Then, after crossing SR 1 at Lake Vista, the requested alternative could turn east and then northeast to cross SR 448 at the same location as a crossing being used by one of the alternatives undergoing study. After the requests made at the previous meeting were analyzed, it was decided the crossing of SR 1 at Lake Vista merited study.

Purpose of Special Follow-up Benoit Meeting on April 30, 2003

There were two meeting locations chosen for the Third Series of Public Meetings scheduled for April 30-May 1, 2003, in Cleveland and Clarksdale respectively. Since the Lake Vista crossing was one of the three alternative crossings that would be presented to the public for comments at the meeting in Cleveland that evening, it was appropriate to schedule the follow-up meeting at Benoit. Everyone that attended the previous meeting on January 29th was invited to this follow-up meeting. Because making changes west of the crossing of SR 1 will impact the adjacent study on SIU 12, the SIU 12 contacts with HNTB and the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department were invited to this follow-up meeting.

The second purpose of the meeting concerned the Cleveland – Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce and other community leaders near Benoit. The Chamber has been actively involved in the Great River Bridge project since its conception. Because it is likely that I-69 will use the Great River Bridge crossing of the Mississippi River on SIU 12, this group also needed to be advised of the history behind the alternative crossings of SR 1 that would be presented at the meeting in Cleveland that evening. By inviting this group to the follow-up meeting, they would have an opportunity to ask questions, express any concerns, and make comments prior to the meeting in Cleveland that evening. The appropriate members and officials of the Chamber, as well as other community leaders they deemed appropriate, were invited to the meeting by the Chamber.

Attendees at Special Benoit Meeting on April 30, 2003

There were 26 people who were registered as attendees at this meeting. Of the 26 people, nine were representatives of either the SIU 11 or SIU 12 project teams. The remaining 17 people were farmers, Chamber officials, City of Cleveland officials, Bolivar County officials or Ray Brooks School officials.

Welcome at Special Benoit Meeting on April 30, 2003

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, the MDOT Environmental and Location Division Engineer, provided a welcoming statement and briefly discussed the purpose of the meeting. He then turned the program over to Mr. Jimmy Shirley of the consultant team.

Presentation at Special Benoit Meeting on April 30, 2003

Mr. Shirley discussed the three alternative crossings of SR 1 that HNTB selected for the eastern limit of their adjacent environmental and location study on SIU 12. Mr. Shirley advised the environmental document for the SIU 12 study would state that the eventual crossing of SR 1 would be determined by the study to the east on SIU 11. Mr. Shirley then discussed how the SIU 11 study began by using the SIU 12 crossing alternatives of SR 1, but as the engineering and environmental studies for SIU 11 progressed adjustments were needed in the SR 1 crossing alternatives. The following describes his discussion.

- The HNTB crossing location of SR 1 north of Benoit was eliminated from further detailed study because it was too far out of direction to proceed southeast and cross Litton Road prior to the current western limits of the Dahomey NWR.

- The HNTB crossing location of SR 1 just south of Downtown Benoit was eliminated because it had too many negative natural and human environmental impacts to connect with the remaining alternative alignment corridors to the east that are undergoing study.

- The HNTB crossing location of SR 1, southwest of Benoit and just south of Ray Brooks School, was adjusted south to the first curve in SR 1 south of the school. The adjustment in this crossing point was needed to avoid impacting the expansion of the school's athletic fields, and to connect with the SIU 11 study alternatives proceeding east from Benoit.

- The SIU 11 recommended SR 1 crossing location alternatives are just north of Ray Brooks School, at the first curve south of Ray Brooks School, and further south of the school at a point known as Lake Vista.

Mr. Shirley advised the attendees that based on initial environmental and engineering studies, as well as a field inspection, it was determined the SR 1 crossing at Lake Vista appears to be a viable alternative to connect the HNTB study on SIU 12 with the SIU 11 study. He explained the SIU 11 alternative crossings of SR 1 just north of the school and just south of the school connect to SIU 12 on a shared tangent between Lake Bolivar and Eutaw Landing. Mr. Shirley explained the Lake Vista alternative would use a new tangent proceeding southeast from Eutaw Landing across Lake Bolivar. He advised the attendees that an aerial photography mapping display was available for them to view these alternatives recommending for further study in the Eutaw Landing, Lake Bolivar, Ray Brooks School, and Benoit areas. He concluded his remarks by informing the attendees that these were the SR 1 crossing alternatives that would be presented to the public at the meeting in Cleveland later that day.

Questions, Comments, Concerns & Responses at Special Benoit Meeting

While seated and in a formal type setting, some of the attendees asked questions, made comments, and expressed concerns. The following were the primary questions, comments, or concerns expressed and any response that needed documenting to those questions, comments or concerns.

- Some of the major farmers in the area expressed their appreciation that the Lake Vista alternative was recommended to be added to the SIU 11 study.

- The Cleveland – Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce representatives expressed concern that adding the Lake Vista alternative would delay obtaining a Record of Decision (ROD) for the HNTB study on SIU 12. The Chamber representatives advised they hope to obtain I-69 funding to supplement or in lieu of Great River Bridge funding for the Mississippi River crossing. They wanted assurance that adding the Lake Vista alternative would not delay obtaining the ROD on the SIU 12 study so the Great River Bridge construction could begin as soon as possible.

    - RESPONSE: The state highway officials from Arkansas and Mississippi advised they believed this could be worked out; however, they emphasized they could not say that for certain to the group today.

    - RESPONSE: The Chamber representatives were not satisfied with the highway officials' response.

Comment Forms or Letters Received on Special Benoit Meeting

The following summarizes the two comment forms submitted by this meeting's attendees.

- One comment form received was from a citizen of Cleveland, who is a member of a Chamber industrial development committee. He had the following primary points on his form.
    - The new southern (Lake Vista) route from Hwy 1 to the Great River Bridge is absurd; this route was ruled out by earlier studies some time ago.
    - The only route that would be economically feasible for the ultimate economic success of the MS Delta is either the orange or red route.
- The other comment form received was from a farmer, and the following summarizes his comments.
    - No hurry should be commitment of all of you to get best possible route of road from east of Benoit to the Bridge Location.
    - It appears that many have decided the crossing of SR 1 north of Benoit needs to be eliminated. That's been my concern all along, but you still list it.
    - The new alignment under consideration would be my preferred alignment. This would take road outside the Benoit area, eliminating most noise concerns. The Lake Vista alignment would take the schools concerns about traffic into consideration.
    - The Lake Vista alignment would also put nearly all the road on one major landowner. He has experience in land dealings with highways and has concerns and thoughts and ideas that you should seek, deeply consider, and work with him to your fullest effort.
    - The City of Greenville needs to be more involved in the planning for I-69 in Mississippi. The closer the route can get to Greenville the easier their concerns for access will be.
    - An interchange should be considered at the SR 448 crossings southeast of Benoit.

This concludes the minutes for the Special Meeting at Benoit on April 30, 2003.

Special Rosedale Meeting 1:30 PM on April 30, 2003

Subject: SR 8 Widening in Bolivar County to Four Lanes between Rosedale and Cleveland

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the consultant team conducted this special meeting in the West Bolivar County Courthouse at Rosedale.

Purpose of Special Rosedale Meeting

SIU 11 of I-69 will interchange with SR 8 either near the eastern or the western limits of the City of Cleveland. The Rosedale – Bolivar County Port is a Mississippi River Port located to the west of SR 1 near the southern limits of Rosedale. SR 8 intersects with SR 1 in the south part of Rosedale, and SR 8 will serve as an intermodal connector between the Port and I-69 at Cleveland. There is also an industrial park near Rosedale and the Port. This industrial park has access to SR 1 opposite the port and access to SR 8 east of SR 1.

SR 8 is a two-lane, two-lane highway over the approximately 18 miles from SR 1 at Rosedale to the western limits of Cleveland. The portion of SR 8 through Cleveland is a five-lane section, and the MDOT has location and environmental approval to widen SR 8 to four lanes from the eastern limits of Cleveland east to Ruleville in Sunflower County.

Regardless of the side of Cleveland on which I-69 has its interchange with SR 8, the MDOT decided SR 8 needed widening to four lanes between SR 1 at Rosedale and Cleveland. The reason the MDOT made this decision was to satisfy the expected intermodal connectivity needs that SR 8 would have associated with freight traffic between Rosedale and Cleveland. At the request of the MDOT, the I-69 SIU 11 study team agreed to conduct the necessary environmental and engineering studies to obtain the environmental clearance for widening this section of SR 8 to four lanes as part of the SIU 11 Study.

The alternatives recommended for further study to accomplish the widening of SR 8 were to be presented to the public at the meeting in Cleveland during the evening of April 30, 2003. The purpose of this meeting at Rosedale was to provide the community leaders, Cleveland Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce officials, local elected officials, and concerned citizens advance

notice of the alternatives that would be presented for further study at the meeting that evening in Cleveland. Invitations to the Rosedale meeting were provided by the Chamber.

Attendees at Special Rosedale Meeting

There were 22 people who were registered as attendees at this meeting. Of the 22 people, 10 were representatives of the SIU 11 project team, MDOT, or FHWA. The remaining 12 people were City of Rosedale officials, Chamber officials, City of Cleveland officials, Bolivar County officials, and concerned citizens.

Welcome at Special Rosedale Meeting

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, the MDOT Environmental and Location Division Engineer, provided a welcoming statement and briefly discussed the purpose of the meeting. He then turned the program over to Mr. Jimmy Shirley of the consultant team.

Presentation at Special Rosedale Meeting

Mr. Shirley advised the group that aerial photography mapping displays of alternatives for widening SR 8 to four lanes were available for the group to view, ask questions, and make comments. He also advised the attendees the same mapping displays would be presented to the public at the meetings scheduled for later that day in Cleveland and the following day in Clarksdale. Before asking the attendees at the Rosedale meeting to view the alternatives, which were placed flat on tables, Mr. Shirley provided the attendees the following overview of the alternatives beginning at SR 1 and proceeding east to the western limits of Cleveland.

- There are two alternatives for the intersection at SR 1. Both of the alternatives would widen SR 8 to five lanes with the center lane functioning as a shared lane for left turning traffic. The only difference in the two alternatives is one alternative keeps the SR 1 intersection in its current location and the other alternative relocates the SR 1 intersection to the south so that SR 8 and the State Park access are directly opposite each other. Since the driveway to the convenience store/restaurant is located directly opposite SR 8, the alternative that maintains the current location of the SR 1 intersection would not require relocating the business. However, the offset in the state park access, which is south of the convenience store/restaurant and on the same side of SR 1, would have to be shifted south outside of the limits of the new SR 8 intersection with SR 1. The alternative for relocating the SR 1 intersection to the south would probably require relocating the convenience store/restaurant.

- From the eastern limits of the SR 1 intersection to slightly east of the access to the industrial park, the only alternative is widening SR 8 to five lanes with the center lane functioning as a shared lane for left turning traffic. The widening would be centered on the existing centerline of SR 8.

- From slightly east of the access to the industrial park to the slightly west of Riverside Fertilizer Association, the only alternative is widening SR 8 to five lanes. East of the industrial park intersection, the widening would transition from being placed equal distance on each side of the current centerline to where all the widening would be placed on the north side.

- At Riverside Fertilizer Association, the five-lane section would transition to a four-lane divided section with the new lanes being added on the north side of the existing lanes. The new lanes would continue on the north side of the existing lanes to curve near the electric substation.

- Using the curve near the electric substation to make the transition, the new lanes would be added on the south side of the existing lanes after exiting the curve. The new lanes would continue to be added on the south side of the existing lanes to the crossing of the Bogue Phalia located west of Pace. This will avoid the abandoned landfill, and it is the only alternative recommended for study in this segment.

- From the crossing of the Bogue Phalia to natural gas pipeline substation just west of the Bolivar County Correctional Facility the following three alternatives were presented.

    - Immediately after crossing the Bogue Phalia, one alternative is for the four lane divided type section to transition to a five lane section along the existing alignment of SR 8. After completing the transition to the five lane section, all the widening necessary to provide the five lane would be added to the south of the existing lanes between the fire tower west of Pace and the apartment complexes that border SR 8 to the south in the middle portion of Pace. This will avoid impacting the Herbie's Transportation Complex that is presently under construction to the north of SR 8 and east of the fire tower. West of the apartment complexes a transition of the widening, from all the widening being placed to the south of SR 8 to all the widening being placed to the north of SR 8, would occur. This transition of the widening is necessary to minimize the impacts to the apartment complex and most of the built-up area of Pace that is located to the south of SR 8. Near the eastern limits of Pace, another transition of the widening would occur that when completed would result in all the widening being placed to the south of SR 8. This will avoid impacting the two natural gas pipeline substations that are located to the north of SR 8 between Pace and the correctional facility.

    - The second alternative for accomplishing the widening of SR 8 from west of Pace to the Bolivar County Correctional Facility is a four-lane divided facility. The concept for the transitioning necessary to provide a four-lane divided section is the same as the concept described above the five-lane.

- The third alternative for accomplishing the widening at Pace is a four-lane divided alternative on new location to the north of SR 8. This alternative would rejoin SR 8 east of Pace where the new lanes would be added to the south of SR 8. A four-lane divided section would continue to the natural gas pipeline substation located just west of the correctional facility.

- Between the natural gas pipeline substation just west of the correctional facility and the correctional facility, the following two alternatives were presented.

  - The first alternative is to transition the four-lane divided section to a five-lane section. When the transition is completed, the resulting five-lane section would have all the widening added to the south of the existing lanes.

  - The second alternative is to maintain the five-lane section will all the widening being added to the south of the existing lanes.

- From just west of the correctional facility to the western limits of Cleveland, the only recommended alternative is a five-lane concept with all the widening being added to the south of the existing lanes. Near the western limits of Cleveland a transition would occur to connect to the existing five-lane section.

Informal Question and Answer Period

After Mr. Shirley completed his description of the proposed alternatives, Mr. Barnwell and Mr. Shirley addressed some general questions. The attendees were invited to view the mapping of the alternatives that were placed on the tables, and to discuss any questions, comments, or concerns they had about the project with members of the project team. The attendees were also encouraged to submit any comments they have about the project in writing using the comment form that was provided at the meeting.

Comment Forms or Letters Received on Special Rosedale Meeting

The following summarizes the three comment forms submitted by this meeting's attendees.

- One comment advised the widening of SR 8 to four lanes is a great idea and much needed. However, the cost of this project should not be a part of the I-69 feasibility study since it is not essential to the route determination of I-69.

- Another comment was from the Port Director. He advised the need to widen this section of SR 8 to four lanes increases every year. He stated there are substantial cargo movements to and from the Port. Based on statistics from the MDOT and the Corps of Engineers, he advised in 1991 there were 467,000 short tons transported through the Port, while in 1999 there were

582,000 short tons transported. He stated the 712,000 short tons transported in 1995 was the largest amount moved between 1991 and 1999. He believes this project should be carried forward for the need that will be present in future years.

- The final comment received from this meeting's attendees expressed complete support for widening SR 8 to four lanes from Cleveland to Rosedale. This comment also expressed support for the northern bypass at Pace.

The following summarizes the comment forms submitted by people who were not registered as attendees at the meeting in Rosedale on April 30, 2003.

- Fifteen comments were mailed to the project team in the same Cives Steel Company envelope. This company is located in Rosedale. The comments were slightly different; but generally their comments supported the project to address the increased traffic that makes passing slower vehicles and farm equipment difficult, the narrow shoulders on SR 8, what some considered a contributing cause to a high number of traffic accidents, and the increased traffic that I-69 should generate on this section of SR 8.

- Twenty-four (24) comments were mailed in the same envelope from employees of the State Penal Farm located in Sunflower County at Parchman. Eighteen (18) of the 24 comments concerned the I-69 alternatives. These 18 comments expressed support for the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section, which passes just west of the State Penal Farm. Three (3) of the remaining six comments expressed support for four-laning this section of SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland. The remaining three comments expressed support for widening SR 8 to four lanes from Cleveland to Ruleville and/or widening US 49W to four lanes from Ruleville to Parchman.

This concludes the minutes for this special meeting at Rosedale.

Third Series of Public Meetings at Cleveland and Clarksdale on April 30-May 1, 2003

Subjects: I-69 SIU 11 Alternatives & Connecting Roads for Study in Draft EIS, and
Alternatives for Widening SR 8 to Four Lanes between Rosedale and Cleveland

Scheduling of Meetings and Invitations

The third set of citizen's information workshops was held April 30 through May 1, 2003 between 5:00 and 7:30 p.m. at the following locations:

- Wednesday, April 30, Bolivar County Expo Center Auditorium, Cleveland

- Thursday, May 1, Clarksdale High School Cafeteria, Clarksdale

54

Using the project contact list, approximately 650 post card invitations were mailed to the public and agency contacts that had expressed interest in the project. A Press Release was also placed in the area newspapers as another means of inviting the local and area citizenry to the meetings.

Planning Approach Used for the Meetings

Information on the refined 450 feet wide alternative corridors recommended for study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement was presented at these meetings using the same format as the previous two citizen's information workshops. In addition, information on the alternatives recommended for further study to widen SR 8 in Bolivar County to four lanes between SR 1 at Rosedale and Cleveland was presented at these meetings. Large aerial photography mapping displays on the alternative corridors recommended for detail study were placed on tables and other displays were placed on easels for the public to view, ask questions, and make comments. At each meeting brief presentations were made by the MDOT Environmental Division and the consultant team.

Steps were taken an these meetings to assist the public in understanding that the selection of a Preferred Alternative must also address connecting road needs, in at least one direction, from every I-69 interchange location to the existing highway system. This is necessary to address the probable eventual construction of I-69 in short segments between interchange locations, and the necessity of providing a route capable of accommodating truck traffic access needs. In some instances the connecting road is already built to accommodate the posted maximum allowable truck weight limit of 80,000 pounds. In other instances, the connecting road would need improving or upgrading. In others, a connecting road does not exist, and a new road, which the project team identifies as a spur, needs to be provided.

Project Approach of Studying Alternatives in Three Separate Sections

To present the alternatives recommended for further study in the Draft EIS at these meetings, the project was divided into a Southern, Central, and Northern Section.

In the Southern Section, three alternatives were presented for further study. Those three alternatives in the Southern Section were a Western Alternative, a Central Alternative, and the Eastern Alternative. The shared southern terminus for the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternative Corridors in the Southern Section is a point in Bolivar County on the adjacent SIU 12 study east of the proposed Great River Bridge near Eutaw Landing. This shared southern terminus is southwest of Benoit, and west of Lake Bolivar and SR 1. The shared northern terminus for the three alternative corridors is the New Africa Road Interchange on the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County. The Western Alternative and the Eastern Alternative are entirely on new location, and the Central Alternative uses as much of US 61 as possible between the Town of Merigold and the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line.

In the Central Section, only one alternative was presented for further study and that alternative was referred to as the Central Alternative. The Central Alternative is located from the New Africa Road Interchange on the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County to a point on US 61 in Coahoma County approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line.

In the Northern Section, three alternatives were presented for further study. Those three alternatives were a Western Alternative, a Central Alternative, and the Eastern Alternative. The Northern Section is bounded by the northern termini of the Central Section in Coahoma County and the southern portion of a spur, currently under construction, which will connect existing SR 304 with new SR 304 in Tunica County.

Because there are several points in the Southern Section and the Northern Section where alternatives either overlap or where alternatives can be connected, there are more than three possible alternatives in the Southern and Northern Sections. However, for presentation purposes at the meeting, displays were developed for only the three general corridors previously mentioned for those two sections. The alternative(s) contained in the Northern, Central and Southern Sections are described below.

Western Alternative in the Southern Section

From Eutaw Landing to west of Lake Bolivar and SR 1, the Western Alternative uses a shared tangent with the Central Alternative. The Western and Central Alternatives separate near Lake Bolivar and the Western Alternative's turn to the southeast results in a crossing of SR 1 just north of Ray Brooks School. The Western Alternative then continues southeast before turning to the northeast to cross SR 448 closer to Benoit than the shared crossing used by the Central and Eastern Alternatives. After crossing SR 448, the Western Alternative uses a northern tangent that parallels Litton Road and SR 448 between Benoit and the Bogue Phalia. The northern tangent is closer to Litton Road, while the shared southern tangent used by the Central and Eastern Alternatives is closer to SR 448. Between the Bogue Phalia and the northwestern limits of Cleveland, the Western Alternative turns north to pass east of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, joins the Central Alternative south of the SR 446 crossing and the two alternatives continue north remaining concurrent in their crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland. The Western Alternative separates from the Central Alternative just north of SR 8, remains to the west on new location between US 61 and SR 1 from west of Cleveland to southwest of Clarksdale, turns to the east to join the Central Alternative near the south part of Clarksdale, and these two alternatives then cross US 61 to join the Clarksdale Bypass.

Central Alternative in Southern Section

From Eutaw Landing to west of Lake Bolivar and SR 1, the Central Alternative uses a shared tangent with the Western Alternative. The Central and Western Alternatives then separate in a manner that allows the Central Alternative to cross SR 1 in the first curve south of the school. The Central Alternative joins the Eastern Alternative before crossing SR 448 just north of where the SR 448 alignment changes from north-south to east-west. After crossing SR 448, the Central and Eastern Alternatives use a shared southern tangent that parallels Litton Road and SR 448 between Benoit and the Bogue Phalia. The northern tangent is closer to Litton Road while the southern tangent is closer to SR 448. Between the Bogue Phalia and the northwestern limits of Cleveland, the Central Alternative turns north to leave the Eastern Alternative and join the Western Alternative south of the crossing of SR 446. The Central Alternative separates from the Western Alternative just north of SR 8, joins US 61 near Merigold, uses as much of US 61 as possible to near the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line, proceeds northeast to join the Western

Alternative near the south part of Clarksdale and remains concurrent with the Western Alternative to cross US 61 and connect with the Clarksdale Bypass.

Eastern Alternative in Southern Section

From Eutaw Landing across Lake Bolivar and SR 1, the Eastern Alternative uses the crossing of SR 1 that is the greatest distance from Benoit near Lake Vista. The Eastern Alternative then joins the Central Alternative prior to the crossing of SR 448. After crossing SR 448, the Eastern and Central Alternatives use the southern tangent to parallel Litton Road and SR 448 between Benoit and the Bogue Phalia. After crossing the Bogue Phalia, the Eastern Alternative leaves the Central Alternative and proceeds east to cross US 61 just north of Shaw and turns north to cross SR 8 east of Cleveland. The Eastern Alternative remains on new location to the east of US 61 from Cleveland until joining the Clarksdale Bypass.

Central Alternative in Central Section

The alternative uses the Clarksdale Bypass to north of SR 6 near Lyon where the alternative then proceeds northeast on new location to avoid the build-up along the concurrent section of US 49 and US 61 between Lyon and Eagles Nest Road. The alternative rejoins the concurrent section of US 49 and US 61 north of Eagles Nest Road near the Clarksdale Airport and Swan Lake, and the alternative continues to use concurrent section of US 49-US 61 to the northern terminus of the Central Section.

Western Alternative in Northern Section

The Western Alternative proceeds north along the concurrent US 49-US 61 section and then along US 61 beyond the US 49 intersection into Tunica County to a point just south of the Crenshaw Road intersection. The alternative then proceeds to the northeast on new location to near Dubbs Road where the alternative turns to the north and then to the northeast to cross Dubbs Road and roughly parallel US 61. The alternative continues north paralleling US 61 across SR 4, Prichard Road, and Arkabutla Dam Road before turning to the east just south of SR 304. The alternative crosses Kirby Road in a manner that roughly parallels SR 304, and the alternative

continues to the east paralleling SR 304 across SR 3 and the railroad before turning north to cross SR 304 and join the Spur.

Central Alternative in Northern Section

Approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line, the Central Alternative in the Northern Section proceeds northeast on new location. The alternative turns north to join the Western Alternative south of Dubbs Road, and the alternative remains concurrent with the Western Alternative to just north of Prichard Road where the alternative turns to east. After crossing SR 3 and the railroad, the alternative turns to the north crossing Arkabutla Dam Road and SR 304 before joining the Spur.

Eastern Alternative in Northern Section

The Eastern Alternative in the Northern Section is concurrent with the Central Alternative from four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line to south of Dubbs Road where the alternative turns to the northeast. After proceeding northeast to cross Dubbs Road and Sarah Road, the alternative turns to the north to cross SR 4 at Little Texas and then Beatline Road. After crossing Beatline Road, the alternative turns to the northeast crossing Prichard Road, SR 3, and the railroad before turning north to join the Central Alternative south of Arkabutla Dam Road. From south of Arkabutla Dam Road to the Spur, the Eastern Alternative is concurrent with the Central Alternative.

Viewing Displays and Project Handouts Provided at Meetings

Aerial photography mappings displays, which could be placed flat on tables for viewing at these meetings, were prepared for the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives in the Southern Section; the Central Alternative in the Central Section; and, the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives in the Northern Section. This resulted in seven viewing locations for the I-69 alternatives. It was expected that at some locations along the corridor there would be considerable public interest. Therefore, two mapping displays of the same alternative were provided at several of the displays areas. The aerial photography mapping identified property

ownership, potential frontage road locations, interchange locations, connector roads to the existing highway system at the interchange locations, and other natural and human environmental information. This information was provided on the mapping displays to enable the public to identify the location of an alternative relative to their questions, comments, or concerns. At each of the seven viewing locations, a map was placed on an easel to identify the alternative displayed on the table.

The environmental and location study for the widening of SR 8 to four lanes in Bolivar County from Rosedale to Cleveland is included in this study. Two identical aerial photography mapping displays of the alternatives for accomplishing this widening were also available for public viewing and comments. The Press Release for the meetings stated information on the widening alternatives of SR 8 to four-lanes would be available for viewing and discussion.

Other displays on easels included a project schedule, typical roadway section with frontage roads, and a list of the evaluation criteria for this Environmental Impact Statement under the headings of engineering issues, impact on the natural environment, impact on the human environment, and public opinion.

Each attendee was provided a packet containing the project brochure, a color coded map of the seven I-69 alternative corridors and connecting road needs that were presented at the meetings, and a comment form.

Cleveland Meeting Registration, Discussion Items, and Comments

A total of 78 people registered their attendance at the meeting in Cleveland, and 13 comment forms were received from 12 of the attendees (one attendee submitted two comment forms). The following were the primary topics discussed at the Cleveland meeting.

- The history that led to the three alternative locations for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit.
- The probable elimination from further serious study of the alternative crossing of SR 1 just north of Benoit. The elimination is probable because the crossing is out of direction for connecting to the study alternatives east of SR 1 that pass south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge.

- The probable elimination from further serious study of the far-west alternative between Benoit and the crossing of SR 444 in Bolivar County. The elimination is probable because it bisects the planned westward expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge to Mississippi River.

- The information provided at the seven aerial photography mapping display areas for the I-69 alternatives and the one aerial photography mapping display area for the alternatives to accomplish the widening of SR 8 to four lanes.

- Environmental constraints, engineering constraints, drainage ditches, and locations of changes in property ownership contributed to alternatives bisecting some farmland. When bisecting of farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave extremely large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative. The property retained by the owner after the I-69 right of way was acquired could then hopefully be large enough to farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would be an uneconomical remnant.

- To lessen the impacts on farmland access, grade separation bridges or interchanges are proposed on a maximum spacing of approximately two miles. In addition, frontage roads are proposed where economically feasible and practical.

There continued to be widespread support for the I-69 project at the meeting in Cleveland, and the initial response expressed by the attendees on the widening of SR 8 to four lanes was also very favorable. Opinions continue to differ as to whether it is best for I-69 to cross SR 8 west or east of Cleveland. The people supporting the SR 8 crossing east of Cleveland generally have Sunflower County interests or they have interests in farmland that is divided by the Western and Central Alternatives, which cross SR 8 at the same location west of Cleveland. Most people with Bolivar County interests continue to support the crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland.

The following summarizes the information contained on the 13 written comments received from attendees of the meeting in Cleveland.

- Six comments, from people that are residents of Sunflower County, supported the Eastern Alternative because it crossed SR 8 east of Cleveland. Two of these people are currently mayors of cities in northern or central Sunflower County and one is a former mayor of one of these two cities. One person is a Sunflower County supervisor in the north portion of the county. The other two people are actively involved in Sunflower County economic development, Delta Council, and area highway issues or concerns. All six of their comments stated a opinion that I-69 in the Mississippi Delta needs to be as far east as possible to provide the greatest economic potential for the most people.

- One comment, from a resident of Cleveland, thought I-69 should be on the east side of Cleveland. He advised some of the reasons were: it will serve both Bolivar County and Sunflower County; acquiring right of ways would be more costly on the west side; it would

not disturb as much wildlife and conservation land; based on the land he has on the east side and the west side, the land on the west side is more fertile and prime farmland.

- One comment, from the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors, supported the Western Alternative for the location of I-69 crossing the Mississippi River. That comment advised the East Alternative was their least favorite alternative.

- One comment expressed support for the Western Alternative in the Northern Section and the Central Alternative in the Southern Section. That comment also contained suggestions for possible future connectors or connector improvements to I-69.

- One comment was from a landowner whose family owned property adjoining US 61 to the east where the Eastern Alternative crosses and interchanges with US 61. If at all possible, he asked that the East Alternative, east of US 61, be moved to his family's south property line.

- One comment supported the East Alternative because it had the least noise impacts on the Benoit Outing Club.

- The remaining two comments were from the same individual. He opposes the West Alternative because it impacts duck hunting leases on his family's property. He questioned the need for I-69, but if it must be done he believes as much of US 61 as possible should be used to save money and lessen the impact on the natural environment.

Clarksdale Meeting Registration, Discussion Items, and Comments

In Clarksdale, a total of 64 registered their attendance at the meeting, and seven comment forms were received from attendees or agencies represented at the meeting. The following were the primary topics discussed at the Clarksdale meeting.

- The history that led to the three alternative locations for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit.

- The probable elimination from further serious study of the alternative crossing of SR 1 just north of Benoit.

- The probable elimination from further serious study of the far-west alternative near the Mississippi River between Benoit and SR 444 in Bolivar County.

- The information provided at the seven aerial photography mapping display areas for the I-69 alternatives and the one aerial photography mapping display area for the alternatives to accomplish the widening of SR 8 to four lanes.

- Environmental constraints, engineering constraints, drainage ditches, and locations of changes in property ownership contributed to alternatives bisecting some farmland. When bisecting of individual farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave extremely large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative. The property retained by the owner after the I-69 right

of way was acquired could then hopefully be large enough to farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would become an uneconomical remnant.

- To lessen the impacts on farmland access, grade separation bridges or interchanges are proposed on a maximum spacing of approximately two miles. In addition, frontage roads are proposed where economically feasible and practical.

There continued to be widespread overall support for the I-69 project at the meeting in Clarksdale. Because of the distance from Clarksdale to Cleveland and Rosedale, most of the attendees were not that interested in the widening of SR 8 to four lanes between Cleveland and Rosedale. However, they appeared to recognize the benefits the Mississippi Delta could achieve from widening that segment of SR 8 and they did not express any opposition to the project. Most of the people attending the meeting had either Coahoma or Tunica County interests, and they generally supported the alternatives in those two counties that are recommended for detail study in the Draft EIS.

The following summarizes the information contained on the seven written comments received from attendees of the meeting in Clarksdale.

- The Coahoma County Board of Supervisors and the Clarksdale Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce furnished duplicate comments. Their two comments supported using the Clarksdale Bypass for I-69 around Clarksdale. South of Clarksdale, they favor the East Alternative because the new connector proposed for that alternative to Tutwiler would open up another section of Coahoma County to economic development opportunities. North of Clarksdale at Lula, they prefer the West Alternative because they believe it provides better access and visibility to the Welcome Center that is presently under construction.

- One comment supported I-69 using the US 61 and the US 49-US 61 corridors, when possible, and the Clarksdale Bypass.

- One comment supported the Western Alternative crossing of SR 1 because it is the closest crossing to Benoit. Between Cleveland and Clarksdale, the comment supported the Central and Eastern Alternatives. The person believed an interchange should be added to the Central Alternative near Duncan, and that the Merigold – Drew Road should be upgraded to the east to Drew for the Eastern Alternative. This person supported the Western Alternative in the Northern Section because it provides an interchange close to Robinsonville for casino traffic.

- One comment supported the manner in which the I-69 alternatives cross existing SR 304 and connect to the spur presently under construction that will connect existing SR 304 with new SR 304.

- The remaining two comments were from members of the same family whose farmland is located in the Southern Section between Litton Road and SR 448. They asked that consideration be given to moving the north tangent, used by the Western Alternative, farther south to a property line. This move would prevent bisecting their farmland. They also stated their belief that the south tangent between Litton Road and SR 448, used by the Central and Eastern Alternatives, provides better soil conditions for constructing a highway than the north tangent.

Non-Attendee Comments on Cleveland and Clarksdale Meetings

There were 33 written comments received from people who did not register as attendees at either of the public meetings held April 30-May 1, 2003. The following summarizes the information contained on the 33 comments.

- Twenty-four (24) comments were mailed in the same envelope from employees of the State Penal Farm located in Sunflower County at Parchman. Eighteen (18) of the 24 comments concerned the I-69 alternatives. These 18 comments expressed support for the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section, which passes just west of the State Penal Farm. Three (3) of the remaining six comments expressed support for four-laning the section of SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland. The remaining three comments expressed support for widening SR 8 to four lanes from Cleveland to Ruleville and/or widening US 49W to four lanes from Ruleville to Parchman.

- One of the comments was from the Mayor of the City of Greenwood. He expressed support for bringing the route of I-69 as far to the east and south as possible to give the most convenient access to the greatest number of people.

- Another comment form supported the eastern route for the same reasons as the Mayor of Greenwood.

- Four comments were from the Aguzzi family, and their comments supported a crossing of SR 8 east of Cleveland. Another member of the Aguzzi family registered his attendance at the meeting in Cleveland, and his comments supporting the crossing of SR 8 east of Cleveland were previously provided in these minutes. The following were the reasons these four members of the Aguzzi family provided for also supporting a crossing of SR 8 east of Cleveland. The most productive farmland is on the west side; this is an agricultural community and it does not make sense to dissect the best yielding land. The crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland would traverse a large part of our property and require us to double our equipment headquarters, etc., and to have both sides of the interstate set up adequately for farm production; this would add a financial burden that would not be covered by land payments alone. There are more businesses on the east side of Cleveland to accommodate the interstate motorist. In terms of soil fertility, the land being utilized by the eastern route is much less rich. The routes, other than the eastern route, pass through key resting and feeding points for ducks. In Bolivar County, the Central/West Corridor passes through areas that are the most active in wildlife habitat management. The economic impact of all routes will be equally beneficial. Travelers will be enticed to the local communities equally no matter which route is

selected. My family has been farming in the regions noted for the Central/West Corridor for many years, and I-69 will completely divide a lifetime of work.

- One comment was from Mr. G.R. Harden and a map was attached to his letter. He wants the Western and Central Alternative moved west another couple of miles. Mr. Harden owns land north of the shared crossing of SR 8 used by the Western and Central Alternatives. After separating from the Western Alternative, the Central Alternative makes a turn to the northeast towards Merigold. After completing the turn, the Central Alternative goes through a portion of a new subdivision that Mr. Harden is developing. He advises the subdivision contains 19 lots and 9 two-acre lots that remain available. He also advises these lots sell for $30,000.00 (thirty thousand dollars), and that since the meeting in Cleveland on May 1, 2003, he has lost two sales. Mr. Harden does not anticipate being able to sell any of the remainder of the lots unless this can be resolved. The shared alignment, used by the Western and Central Alternatives between their crossing of SR 8 and their separation point north of SR 8, travels through farm acreage that is either owned by Mr. Harden or farmed by him, and takes out two of his houses. There are several other houses that do not belong to Mr. Harden that would be impacted. He expressed his opposition to the location of the Western and Central Alternatives in this area, and he advised that if the route could go west another couple of miles there would be much lesser negative impact on this portion of the county.

- One comment supported an alternative in the Southern Section that would proceed north from Benoit and pass west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge before turning northeast to connect with US 61 just south of Winstonville. (This suggested alternative would pass through land that the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge is considering acquiring for a westward expansion of the refuge to the Mississippi River.)

- One comment was from the County Engineer for Washington, Sharkey, and Issaquena Counties. His comment expressed opposition to the Great River Bridge being used for I-69. If the Great River Bridge is not built and if the US 82 Mississippi River Bridge is used for I-69, he believes the people of the Delta would be better served and the construction costs would be less.

This concludes the minutes for the third set of citizens' information workshops held on April 30-May 1, 2003.

Special Robinsonville Meeting at Sam's Town Casino, Noon to 1:30 PM, May 2, 2003
Subject: I-69 SIU 11 Access to Casinos at Robinsonville in Tunica County

This luncheon meeting was requested by the Tunica County Chamber of Commerce on behalf of several of the casinos located in the Robinsonville area. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed interchange locations in the Robinsonville area for the alternatives

recommended for further study in the Draft EIS, and the manner in which the connecting roads at the proposed interchange locations would provide access to the casinos at Robinsonville.

The attendees at this meeting included:

- Mr. John Phillipp, Vice President/General Manager, Sam's Town
- Mr. Domenic Mezzetta, Vice President/General Manager, Fitzgeralds
- Mr. Pete Bonner, Sr. Vice President & General Manager, Harrah's Tunica/Vicksburg
- Mr. Hank Thomas, Security/Public Area Director, Hollywood Casino
- Mr. C. Penn Owen, Jr., Bowdre Plantation, Inc.
- Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT Environmental and Location Engineer
- Ms. Jocelyn Pritchett, Asst. MDOT Environmental and Location Engineer
- Mr. Jimmy Shirley, I-69 SIU 11 Project Team

Mr. Penn Owen, Jr., opened the meeting by asking everyone to introduce themselves, and Mr. Owen led the discussions on the following items.

- The casinos represented at the meeting want to make sure their traffic, especially from the Memphis area, is provided good access from I-69.
- The casinos representatives support the proposed Arkabutla Dam Road Interchange on the Western Alternative.
- The casinos representatives favor the Western Alternative over the Central and Eastern Alternative.
- The casinos representatives are concerned about the manner in which the Western Alternative joins the spur, which connects existing SR 304 with the new section of SR 304 that is under construction.
- The casinos representatives are concerned that the proposed Western Alternative will either require their customers from the north to travel west on existing SR 304 through an at-grade railroad crossing or their customers will be required to continue on I-69 south to the Kirby Road interchange to exit. After exiting to the north at the Kirby Road interchange, this traffic from the north would then have to turn left at existing SR 304 to proceed west. The casino representatives believe the existing at-grade railroad crossing on SR 304 would require them to direct their traffic to the Kirby Road Interchange. However, they believe the left turn required for their casino traffic at SR 304 after proceeding north from the Kirby Road Interchange is a

substantial change in the existing traffic pattern, and this would make directional signing for their customers more difficult.

- Mr. Owen asked why the alternative originally proposed by the county, which crossed existing SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3, was eliminated. He wanted to know if this alternative could be reconsidered or what other options were available to address these concerns.

During the course of Mr. Barnwell's and Mr. Shirley's discussion of the above mentioned items, the following noteworthy items were either discussed or decided.

- The county's original alternative crossed SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3 on a very severe angle. The angle of the crossing was unacceptable for providing an interchange at SR 304. Changing the angle of the crossing was also unacceptable because of the curves in the I-69 alignment that would be required to connect with the spur to the north and the Western Alternative to the south.

- The proposed Eastern and Central Alternatives would relocate existing SR 304 west of the SR 304 interchange location shared by these two alternatives. The new section of SR 304 west of the interchange would be located to the north of SR 304, bridge over the railroad, possibly interchange with SR 3 and then rejoin the existing five-lane section of SR 304.

- The proposed interchange locations for the Western Alternative would remain at Arkabutla Dam Road, Kirby Road, and existing SR 304. However, SR 304 would be improved west of that interchange in a similar manner to that proposed for the Eastern and Central Alternatives.

The casino representatives were satisfied that implementing the changes in the Western Alternative will adequately address their concerns.

This concludes the minutes for the meeting in Robinsonville at Sam's Town on May 2, 2003.

State Senator Delma Furniss Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on May 2, 2003
Subject: Copy of Western Alternative Mapping in Alligator and Duncan Areas

At the request of Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT Environmental Division Engineer, this Southern Section information was provided to Mr. Barnwell for him to mail to Senator Furniss.

Mr. Joe Tannenill Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on May 8, 2003
Subject: Copy of Handout Presented to Attendees at Third Series of Public Meetings

The handout requested by Mr. Tannehill was mailed to him by Neel-Schaffer.

Mr. Abbott Myers Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on May 13, 2003
Subject: Copy of Mapping for Alternatives near Dundee at the Myers Family's Property

In accordance with a request Mr. Myers made at the meeting in Clarksdale on May 2, 2003, Neel-Schaffer mailed him this information.

Ms. Lyn C. Arnold Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on May 13, 2003
Subject: Copy of Tunica County Information Presented at Third Series of Public Meetings

Ms. Arnold, who is the Executive Director/Economic Developer for the Tunica County Chamber of Commerce, requested Neel-Schaffer to mail her copies of two information items presented at the Third Series of Public Meetings. Neel-Schaffer mailed her a copy of the attendee provided to the attendees and a copy of the mapping for the Northern Section alternatives.

Special MDOT/Aguzzi Family Meeting Held During the Week of May 19, 2003
Subject: The Western and Central Alternatives Crossings of Property Owned by the Aguzzis

After the pubic meeting at Cleveland held on April 30, 2003, which was attended by Mr. Joe Aguzzi, the Aguzzi Family requested a Special Meeting with the MDOT. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Aguzzi Family's concerns about how the Western and Central Alternatives divide their farmland. The Aguzzi Family's main concern is their land located south of the Western and Central alternatives' shared crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland.

The only MDOT representatives attending the meeting were the Third District Engineer, Mr. Walter Lyons, and MDOT Central District Commissioner Dick Hall. There were not any members of the consultant team or the FHWA in attendance at the meeting. Prior to the meeting, the consultant team provided Mr. Lyons a copy of the alternative mapping presented at the recent public meetings in Cleveland and Clarksdale.

After the Third Series of Public Meetings and after this Special Meeting, members of the Aguzzi Family submitted the comments forms that were previously discussed in the Minutes for the Third Series of Public Meetings. Their comments, opposing the Western and Central Alternatives crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland and supporting the Eastern Alternative crossing of SR 8 east of Cleveland, are summarized in the minutes for the Third Series of Public Meeting. The summarized comments are listed under comments received from attendees at the Cleveland Meeting and under comments received by non-attendees of the Third Series of Public Meetings

This concludes the minutes for this special meeting.

State Senator Delma Furniss Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on May 27, 2003
Subject: Copy of Alternative Mapping in Rena Lara Area and Lula Area

At the request of Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT Environmental Division Engineer, this Southern Section and Central Section information was provided to Mr. Barnwell for him to mail to Senator Furniss.

Special Cleveland – Bolivar County Meeting, MDOT Third District Office, June 20, 2003
Subject: The Western and Central Alternatives between Litton Road and SR 8 west of Cleveland

The City of Cleveland and Bolivar County requested this meeting to better understand how to address the complaints they were receiving from landowners about the impacts these two alternatives have on their property.

The people representing the City of Cleveland and/or Bolivar County that attended this meeting included:

- Ms. Dean Morganti and Mr. Scott Luth, who are with the Cleveland Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce;
- Mr. Ancil Cox, who is a resident of Cleveland and active in transportation related committees with the Chamber, and Reverend J.Y. Trice, who is a resident of Rosedale, Rosedale's former Mayor, and also active in transportation related committees with the Chamber;

- Mr. David Work, who is an Alderman for the City of Cleveland and the Port Director for the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port;
- Mr. Bob Eley, who is a resident of Cleveland and the Bolivar County Engineer; and,
- Mr. Wayne Cole, who is the Administrator for the City of Cleveland

The people representing the MDOT and the consultant team at this meeting included:

- Mr. Walter Lyons, who is the MDOT Third District Engineer, and Mr. Carl Middleton, who is the MDOT Assistant Third District Engineer;
- Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, who is the MDOT Environmental Division Engineer;
- Mr. Robert Walker, who is the Project Manager for the consultant team; and,
- Mr. Jimmy Shirley, who is a member of the consultant team

Welcome and Opening Comments

Mr. Walter Lyons welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited the Cleveland Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce representatives for their comments.

Mr. Scot Luth advised their group is routinely being asked why the Western and Central Alternatives divides so much farmland between Litton Road and the SR 8 interchange location west of Cleveland, which these two alternatives share. He stated they do not know how to answer this question and that he hoped they could obtain some information today to assist them in better answering the question.

Explanation for Location of Western and Central Alternative in Question

The MDOT and the consultant team decided that Mr. Jimmy Shirley should address the question. There were tables in front of the chairs where the attendees were sitting. This sitting arrangement allowed the mapping displays of the Western and Central Alternatives between Benoit and Clarksdale to be placed flat on the tables in front of the attendees. By placing two sets of mapping on the tables, all the attendees were able to view the mapping as Mr. Shirley discussed the environmental and engineering factors that led to the recommended locations for

the Western and Central Alternatives between Litton Road and the proposed SR 8 interchange location west of Cleveland.

The following explanations were provided by Mr. Shirley for the location of these two alternatives from Benoit to Cleveland.

- Because of the possible southern expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) to Litton Road, the alternatives for crossing the Bogue Phalia must be south of Litton Road. Two locations for crossing the Bogue Phalia south of Litton Road were determined. Both of the crossing locations are between Litton Road and SR 448. The distances between Litton Road and the north crossing of the Bogue, the north crossing of the Bogue and the south crossing of the Bogue, and the south crossing of the Bogue and SR 448 are approximately equal. The West Alternative uses the north crossing of the Bogue and the Central and Eastern alternatives use the south crossing of the Bogue.

- After both crossings of the Bogue, a gradual curve to the north was required in order for the Western and Central Alternatives to interchange with Litton Road east of the Litton Chapel Methodist Church and cemetery and west of the Poplar Grove Church. The crossing of Litton Road between these two churches and the selected corridor for these two alternatives to proceed north was chosen for the following reasons.

    - There is a natural gas pipeline crossing of Litton Road just east of Poplar Grove Church. East of the pipeline crossing the Shaw-Skene Road intersects Litton Road. The Shaw-Skene Road is a major north-south county road with some built-up of homes and farm headquarters located along both sides.

    - Although Litton Road would be relocated slightly at this interchange to provide a new connector to US 61, this is a good interchange location for the US 61 connector.

    - Continuing north of Litton Road on the gradual curve to the north allows the Western and Central alternatives to join their shared tangent prior to crossing Evans Road.

    - Yeager Road intersects Evans Road west of the point where the two alternatives join and continue north paralleling Yeager Road through the interchange location at SR 446. The Yeager Road intersection with SR 446 would be just west of the western limits of this interchange.

    - Between the crossings of Litton Road and Yeager Road, it was noted how the major streams were kept to the outside of the corridors as much as possible, how county roads were crossed an good angles as much as possible, how grade separation bridges would be provided at some of the county road crossings, and how frontage roads were provided at some locations and existing parallel county roads could be utilized at other locations to address bisected farmland.

- There is a crop dusting general aviation airport located in the southwest quadrant of Yeager Road intersection with Laughlin Road, which is one mile road north of SR 446.

- The SR 446 interchange location needed to be east of Yeager Road, near the western limits of Skene, and west of the Shaw-Skene Road to align with a crossing of Litton Road between Litton Methodist Chapel Church and Poplar Grove Church.

- With the Litton Road crossing and the SR 446 crossings as controls, the interchange crossing of SR 8 became the next control. The following items were taken into account in determining the recommended interchange location for SR 8 slightly east of the SR 8 intersection with the Shaw-Skene Road.

    - It needed to cross at a location near the western limits of Cleveland that would allow the Central and Western Alternatives to separate from their shared alignment north of the SR 8 interchange. The Central Alternative could then proceed northeast to join the new section of US 61 near Merigold, while the Western Alternative would proceed north on new location.

    - The county correctional facility, two natural gas pipeline substations, and some major drainage ditch crossings are located along SR 8 west of the Shaw-Skene Road intersection with SR 8.

    - The new water well and water tank for the Boyle-Skene Water Association, which is located to the west of the Shaw-Skene Road just south of the SR 8 intersection.

Questions, Comments, and Closing

After providing the explanation for the location of the Western and Central Alternatives between Litton Road and SR 8, Mr. Walker and Mr. Shirley addressed some general questions concerning the impacts on the natural and human environment that could be caused by making changes in the alternatives between the existing controls on Litton Road, SR 446, and SR 8. Several attendees, representing Bolivar County interests, advised they understood these constraints. However, they were not sure how well they could relay this information and address future questions on this issue. The possibility of having a meeting in the future with people impacted by the current alternatives was discussed. The Bolivar County representatives expressed their appreciation for having the meeting, and advised they better understood the constraints that existed for the Western and Central Alternatives between Litton Road and SR 8 west of Cleveland.

This concludes the minutes for this meeting.

Mr. Terry Smith Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on July 29, 2003
Subject: Copy of Mapping for Eastern Alternative in Coahoma County south of Clarksdale

Mr. Smith made this request on behalf of Ms. Katherine Young, who is a landowner that this alternative crosses. Mr. Smith is an engineer, and he is assisting Ms. Young in some estate planning. The requested copy of the alternative mapping crossing Ms. Young's property was mailed to Mr. Smith by Neel-Schaffer.

State Senator Delma Furniss Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on August 1, 2003
Subject: Copies of Alternative Mapping in Rena Lara Area

At the request of Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, MDOT Environmental Division Engineer, a copy of the mapping, with and without the aerial photography, for the Western and Central Alternatives in the Southern Section was provided to Mr. Barnwell for him to mail to Senator Furniss.

Mr. Bill Griffith Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on August 1, 2003
Subject: East Alternative in Southern Section at Crossing of US 61 north of Shaw

Mr. Griffith attended the meeting at Cleveland on April 30, 2003. His comment form was postmarked July 21, 2003. On the comment form that Mr. Griffith submitted, he stated his family owns property on the east side of US 61 where the East Alternative crosses US 61. If at all possible, he asked for the right of way of the East Alternative, east of US 61, to be moved to the south property line.

After a telephone conversation with Mr. Griffith, Mr. Jimmy Shirley mailed Mr. Griffith a copy of the mapping information for the Eastern Alternative at the interchange crossing with US 61. The mapping was of sufficient coverage that Mr. Griffith could observe the possible consequences to others that complying with his request might have.

In the transmittal mailing to Mr. Griffith on August 1, Mr. Shirley advised Mr. Griffith that he thought it would be best for Mr. Griffith to first review the mapping. Then if he wanted to discuss his request further of if he had any questions, he could contact Mr. Shirley by e-mail or phone call. Mr. Shirley advised Mr. Griffith that the two of them could then discuss the location of the alternative relative to the Griffith Family's property, the possible impacts the alternative would have in its present location on the Griffith Family's property and the access to the property, and the possible impacts that moving the alternative south could have on the US 61 interchange, adjacent property owners, and the environment.

Mr. Daniel Vassel Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on August 25, 2003
Subject: Compact Disc of Alternatives for Delta Council Power Point Presentation

Mr. Vassel works for Delta Council, and Neel-Schaffer provided him the information he requested for preparing a Delta Council Power Point Presentation on I-69.

Mr. H.D. Brewer Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on August 25, 2003
Subject: Copy of Alternative Mapping at His Property near Robinsonville

Neel-Schaffer provided Mr. Brewer the information he requested on the alternatives in the Northern Section that share the crossing of Arkabutla Dam Road approximately two miles east of US 61.

Consultant Team Request Addressed by MDOT on September 24, 2003
Subject: Eastern Alternative Interchange and Connection to US 61 near Merigold

The Western and Central alternatives, in the Southern Section slightly north of Shaw, include a new four-lane connector from US 61 to the Litton Road Interchange. North of Cleveland, the Central Alternative has an interchange near Merigold and the four-lane crossroad at that interchange provides a Central Alternative connection to the four-lane section of US 61 between Cleveland and Merigold. The Central Alternative therefore provides a four-lane bypass of Cleveland.

Between Merigold in Bolivar County and Clarksdale in Coahoma County, the Western Alternative is located from approximately two to five miles west of US 61. Over this approximate length of 26 miles between Merigold and Clarksdale, the Western Alternative bypasses to the west the municipalities of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, and Duncan in Bolivar County. Each of these municipalities are located along the US 61 corridor, and interchanges are proposed on the Western Alternative to provide direct access to Merigold, Mound Bayou, Shelby, and Duncan.

Between Merigold and Clarksdale, the Central Alternative uses the US 61 corridor and interchanges are proposed for Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, Duncan, and Alligator.

Between Merigold and Clarksdale, the Eastern Alternative is located from approximately four to seven miles east of US 61. Interchanges are proposed east of Merigold, east of Shelby, west of the Roundaway community in Coahoma County, and east of Bobo in Coahoma County.

It is important for the north Bolivar County municipalities of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, and Alligator to have good access to all I-69 alternatives. The Western and Central alternatives provide these municipalities good access. For the Eastern Alternative to address these municipalities' access needs in a comparable manner to the other two alternatives, it was decided the Eastern Alternative should include the cost of a new four-lane connector from the Merigold-Drew Road Interchange west to US 61 south of Merigold, and the cost of an interchange at US 61. The northbound traffic on the Eastern Alternative desiring to access these US 61 municipalities would then have a four-lane route from the Merigold-Drew Interchange to Clarksdale. The Eastern Alternative would then also provide southbound traffic US 61 traffic an eastern bypass of Cleveland in a similar manner to the way the Western and Central alternatives provide northbound US 61 traffic a western bypass of Cleveland.

To fairly compare the costs of the three alternatives, for the Eastern Alternative the consultant team will consider the cost of providing the additional interchange on US 61 near Merigold and

the cost of providing a four-lane connector from the added US 61 interchange to the interchange at Merigold-Drew Road.

Mr. G.R. Harden Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on October 17, 2003
Subject: Relocate the Central and Western Alternatives at SR 8 a Couple of Miles to the West

Mr. Harden submitted this typed request in response to the Third Series of Public Meetings that were conducted in Cleveland and Clarksdale on April 30-May 1, 2003. The request is documented in the minutes for the Third Series of Public Meetings under comments received by non-attendees of the meetings.

The letter Mr. Harden furnished in response to the Third Series of Public Meetings was mailed to the I-69 Project Manger and dated August 15, 2003. In conjunction with his letter to the I-69 Project Manger, Mr. Harden mailed a request to the Central District Transportation Commissioner dated August 15, 2003. The correspondence Mr. Harden mailed to the Commissioner was basically a cover letter attached to a copy of the correspondence that Mr. Harden mailed to the I-69 Project Manager.

On September 16, 2003, the I-69 Project Manager received a copy of correspondence the Central District Transportation Commissioner mailed to Mr. Harden dated September 10, 2003. The Commissioner also provided the I-69 Project Manager a copy of the correspondence that Mr. Harden had mailed to the Commissioner. The Commissioner's response to Mr. Harden advised Mr. Harden that the Commissioner appreciated the concern Mr. Harden had regarding the impacts the route could have on his property, and the Commissioner informed Mr. Harden that a member of the I-69 Study Team would contact him to discuss the situation. The Commissioner did not promise Mr. Harden that his property would not be affected by the project, but Commissioner's letter did advise Mr. Harden that the MDOT would cooperate with Mr. Harden to minimize the impact.

After the I-69 Project Manager received the correspondence from the Central District Commissioner, the project team reviewed the locations of the Western and Central alternatives where the alternatives impacted Mr. Harden's property and subdivision.

Moving the Western and Central alternatives to the west would require moving the location of the SR 8 Interchange farther west. The following items were taken into account in determining the recommended interchange location for SR 8 slightly east of the SR 8 intersection with the Shaw-Skene Road.

- It needed to be at a location near the western limits of Cleveland that would allow the Central and Western Alternatives to separate from their shared alignment north of the SR 8 interchange. The Central Alternative could then proceed northeast to join the new section of US 61 near Merigold, while the Western Alternative would proceed north on new location.

- The county correctional facility, two natural gas pipeline substations, and some major drainage ditch crossings are located along SR 8 slightly west of the Shaw-Skene Road intersection with SR 8.

- The new water well and water tank for the Boyle-Skene Water Association, which is located to the west of the Shaw-Skene Road just south of the SR 8 intersection.

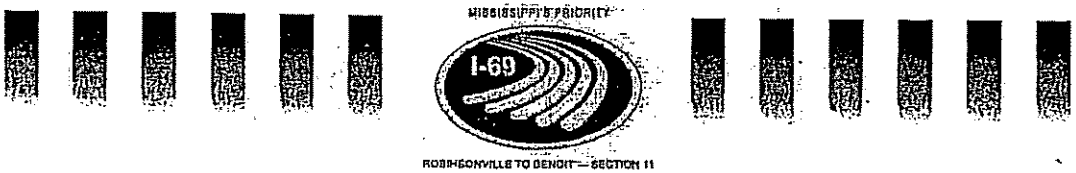
The Bolivar County Correctional Facility, the natural gas pipeline stations, additional crossings of major drainage ditches, and adding unnecessary mileage to both the Central and Western alternatives prevent moving the SR 8 Interchange location farther west of its current location.

Using the current SR 8 Interchange location, the consultant team determined slight adjustments in the alignments for the Western and Central alternatives north of SR 8 could be made to substantially lessen the impacts on the property of Mr. Harden and others. The largest adjustment in the proposed new alignment of the Western Alternative is approximately 800 feet from the current alignment, while the largest adjustment proposed for the new alignment of the Central Alternative is 2,200 feet from the current alignment. Implementation of the improved alignment would not add any new potential relocatees to the Western Alternative, and there are three residences on the current alignment of the Western Alternative that would not have to be relocated if the improved alignment was implemented. Implementation of the improved alignment for the Central Alternative would require the relocation of one residence that does not require relocation with the current alignment; however, there are seven residences and one metal building on the current alignment of the Central Alternative that would not have to be relocated if the improved alignment was implemented. In addition, the current Central Alternative passed through a corner of Mr. Harden's subdivision, which is currently under development and contains several residences. The improved alignment for the Central Alternative would not pass

through the subdivision, and the distance from the centerline of the improved alignment to the closest property line of the subdivision is 550 feet.

The improved alignments for the Western and Central alternatives were discussed with the MDOT Environmental Division Engineer at a meeting on September 24, 2003, and it was agreed the necessary studies should be conducted to implement the changes in these two alternatives.

In a telephone conversation with Mr. Harden on October 17, 2003, Mr. Jimmy Shirley advised Mr. Harden of the alignment adjustments that would be made in the Western and Central alternatives, and Mr. Harden expressed his appreciation.



OPEN HOUSE – Identical Public Information Meetings

- Wednesday * April 30, 2003 * 5:00 - 7:30 p.m., Bolivar County Expo Center Auditorium * Cleveland, Mississippi. (The Expo Center is located off US 61 one block north of the SR 8 intersection behind KC's restaurant)
- Thursday * May 1, 2003 * 5:00 - 7:30 p.m., Clarksdale High School * 1101 Wildcat Drive, Clarksdale, Mississippi.

Come and go as you please – short presentations at 6:00 and 7:00

Further Refined Alternative segments are in the final stages of environmental and engineering studies. The Preferred Alternative will most likely be chosen from one of these combinations of alternative segments.

The meetings provide you an opportunity to view and make comments on the alternative segments selected for final study. We hope your schedule allows you to attend at least one of these meetings. If you are a disabled person and need reasonable accommodation to participate, please call 601-948-3071.

Jimmy Shirley

From: Jimmy Shirley [jshirley@neel-schaffer.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2003 8:05 AM
To: 'rwalker@neel-schaffer.com'
Cc: 'cbarnwell@mdot.state.ms.us'
Subject: I-69 Meeting with Casino Interests on March 11, 2003

Robert,

This will confirm the actions taken during the morning of Monday, March 10, 2003, to assist Claiborne in his presentation at this meeting. The two of us prepared twenty project folders for use as handouts at the meeting. The following items were contained in the project folders: the project brochure; a copy of the newsletter that is intended to be distributed within the next two weeks to all project contacts; and a map of the alternatives that are recommended for further study. After Claiborne returned to Jackson from this meeting, he faxed us the a copy of the business cards for four individuals and requested that we verify the contact information for those individuals is included in our project data base for future updates. I provided the information to Valarie Gaston and she took the necessary steps to comply with Claiborne's request. If additional information or action is needed, please advise.

Jimmy

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: 4/30/2003

NAME: JAMES E HUTCHERSON RFM

ADDRESS: 27 SUNSET DRIVE
INDIANOLA, MS. 38751

COMMENTS: PREFER EASTERN ROUTE IF CENTRAL IS USED. USE CENTRAL ROUTE TO SOUTH OF MERIGOLD THEN COME EAST OF CLEVELAND ON EAST SIDE OF 61 FOLLOW EAST ALTERNATE AROUND MERIGOLD FOLLOW EAST EDGE OF CENTRAL AROUND NORTH SIDE SUNFLOWER TO NEW SUNFLOWER RIVER BRIDGE THIS WILL GIVE ALL ADVANTAGES OF USING EXISTING ROAD AND STILL GIVE MORE ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO MORE PEOPLE

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

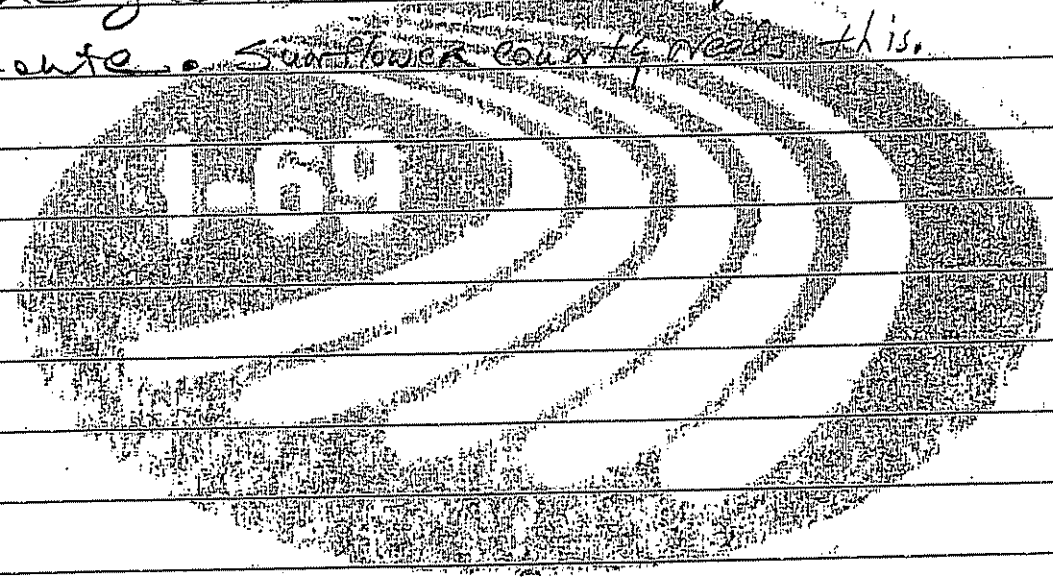
I-69 SECTION 11 - ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
~~HWY 8 FOUR LANING~~
~~ROSEDALE TO CLEVELAND~~
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: 04 30 03

NAME: BARRY BRYANT RFM

ADDRESS: PO Box 61
Rome, MS 38768

COMMENTS: I favor the eastern Route because of the greater economic ~~IMPACT~~ of the Route. Sunflower County needs this.



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PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: 4-30-03

NAME: Arthur Marble, Mayor RFM

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 269
Indianola, Ms, 38751

COMMENTS: Of Course I favor the Eastern corridor as the route for I-69. Mainly the eastern route will come farther into the heart of the Mississippi Delta - thereby benefiting the most residents that it can. It is realized MDOT cannot satisfy everyone of the options only one can be chosen. To maximize the economic impact of I-69, I feel MDOT should consider a separately funded loop throughout the Delta to enhance interconnectivity with a maximum number of desperately in need communities.

Arthur Marble, Mayor
Indianola

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PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: 4/30/03

NAME: Jim Pettigrew RFM

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 311
DREW, MS. 38737

COMMENTS:

As Mayor of DREW, I would like to have I-69 To Come on the EAST Side of (Green Route) 61 Hwy. but IF it has To go Down 61 Hwy From AT Merigold Let it Come on the EAST Side of 61 Hwy.

James A. Pettigrew

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: 4/30/03

NAME: Will Tierce RFM

ADDRESS: 206 South Bolivar Avenue
Cleveland MS 38732

COMMENTS: I am concerned about noise & environmental impact for the exchanges and alternate routes for the Benoit Outing Club at Bolivar Landing. There are approximately 100 Landowners and their heirs who own lake property and do not want the spring peepers and hoot owls drowned out by Dennis-Pleasant [illegible] impact that the 3 routes will have on noise in the area. I prefer the eastern-most route because it's the furthest away from Benoit Outing Club

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11
~~HWY 8 FOUR-LANING~~
~~ROSEDALE TO CLEVELAND~~
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: 4/30/03

NAME: W.H. (Bill) ~~HARDIN~~ RFM

ADDRESS: 479 MANOLIA HILL
P.O. BOX 285
DUNCAN, MS. 38740

COMMENTS: THIS NATION ALREADY HAS AN INTERSTATE System that will get you to MEXICO! We ARE IN the PROCESS of getting A wonderful 4 LANE HWY ALONG the general Route of the proposed I 69. I personally don't think we need I 69. If you MUST build it, "SAVE" the TAXPAYER some MONEY AND USE ALL of 4 LANE 61 YOU CAN. (I understand it is up to INTERSTATE Specifications & needs ONLY the TRIMMINGS) Why open A NEW CAN of WORMS with the ENVIRONMENT ETC? I hope I'm NOT Stepping on toes, but This Whole PROJECT SMELLS POLITICAL.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

P.S. Why help BENOIT & ROSEDALE

FROM the heart - Bill HARDIN

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL ROSEDALE-PACE-CLEVELAND MEETING

HWY 8 FOUR-LANING
ROSEDALE TO CLEVELAND
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 1:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Courthouse
Rosedale, Mississippi

DATE: 4/30/03

NAME: Bob Ehey - county Engr. - Bolivar Co.

ADDRESS: 306 Third st.
Cleveland MS 38732

COMMENTS: I completely support 4-laning of MS. Hwy. 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale — I also support the Northern By-Pass of Pace, MS.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 -- ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: 5/1/03

NAME: W.H. (Bill) Hardin · RFM

ADDRESS: 479 MAGNOLIA Hill
P.O. Box 285
DUNCAN, MS. 38740

COMMENTS: THE WEST ROUTE THRU NORTHERN BOLIVAR COUNTY CUTS APPROXIMATELY 700 [redacted] ACERS DIAGONALLY "ALL IRRIGATED" IT ALSO CROSSES WETLANDS & WILL AFFECT DUCK HUNTING LEASES ON OUR PROPERTY (Deeded W.T. & W.H. Hardin Undivided Interest) To me the CENTRAL ROUTE will do the least to IMPACT the ENVIRONMENT SINCE its already There If you come my way you'll be CROSSING PROPERTY THAT'S PART of 42 YRS of MY Life into. I will NOT be Receptive!!

P.S. Why don't you 4 LANE Some Key ROADS & Build A 4 LANE BRIDGE CLOSE to GREENVILLE?!!

THANKS for LISTENING.
W.H. Hardin

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL ROSEDALE-PACE-CLEVELAND MEETING

HWY 8 FOUR-LANING
ROSEDALE TO CLEVELAND
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 1:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Courthouse
Rosedale, Mississippi

DATE: 5-1-03

NAME: DAVID WORK

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 460
ROSEDALE, MS 38769

COMMENTS: The need to improve transportation (highway) from Cleveland to Rosedale increase every year. The cargo movement to/from the Port of Rosedale continues to grow which can be shown by both MDOT statistics and Corps of Engineers tonnage figures published yearly. Example: 1991 @ 467,000 short tons, high in 1995 of 713,000 tons and 1999 582,000 short tons. This project should be carried forward for the needed improvements present in future years.

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PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

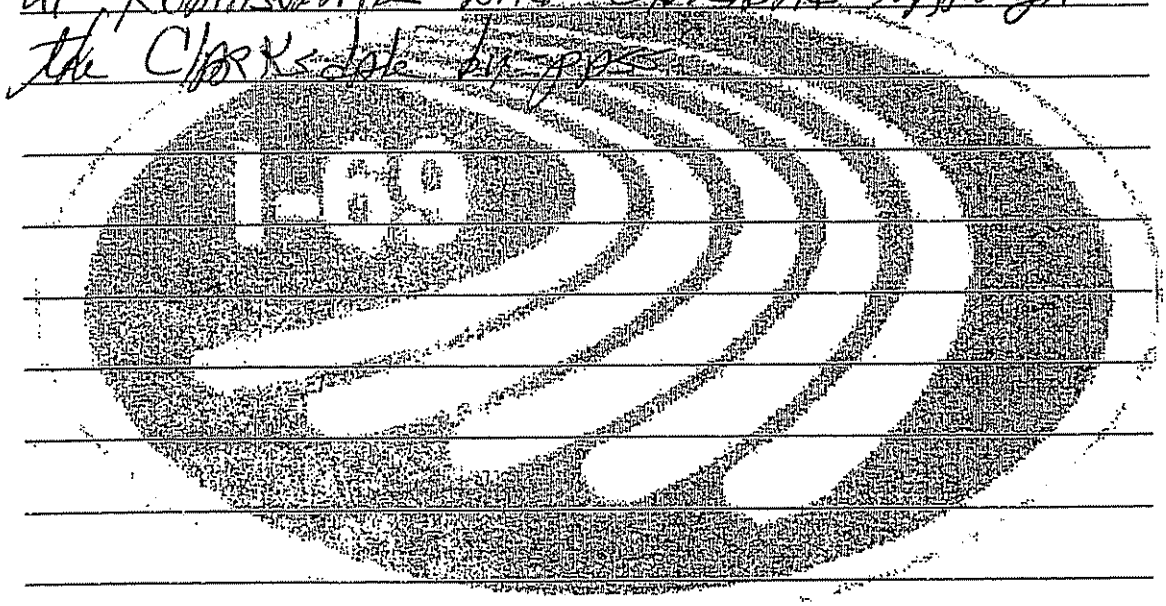
I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Thursday ♦ May 1, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Clarksdale High School Cafeteria
Clarksdale, Mississippi

DATE: 5/1/03

NAME: Larry Liddell RFM

ADDRESS: 919 Carr Ave
Clarksdale, MS 38614

COMMENTS: I-69 should stay on U.S. 61 whenever possible, especially between 304 at Robinsonville and Cleveland through the Clarksdale bypass.



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PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Thursday ♦ May 1, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Clarksdale High School Cafeteria
Clarksdale, Mississippi

DATE: Thursday, May 1, 2003

NAME: Aubrey L. Hall, Jr. RFM

ADDRESS: 1034 Hallie Beth Lane.
Clarksdale, MS 38614

COMMENTS: Coming out of Benoit, MS, I prefer the West Alternate Route because it's more direct and closer to the town. Coming out of Hernando, MS, I prefer the West Alternate Route because it provides an interchange for casino traffic between Clarksdale, MS and the interchange for Shaw, MS. I prefer either the Central Alternate Route because it is closer to several towns, it provides direct access to those towns (add an interchange south of Duncan, MS) and uses parts of US Hwy 61, or I prefer the East Alternate Route because it would provide access to Jonestown, MS, Drew, MS (upgrade Drew Memorial Rd eastbound to Drew), and Ruleville, MS, helping those communities and Sunflower County, and it would be closer to the State Penetentiary. Besides, Bolivar County towns should benefit from the four-laning of US Hwy 61.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Thursday ♦ May 1, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Clarksdale High School Cafeteria
Clarksdale, Mississippi

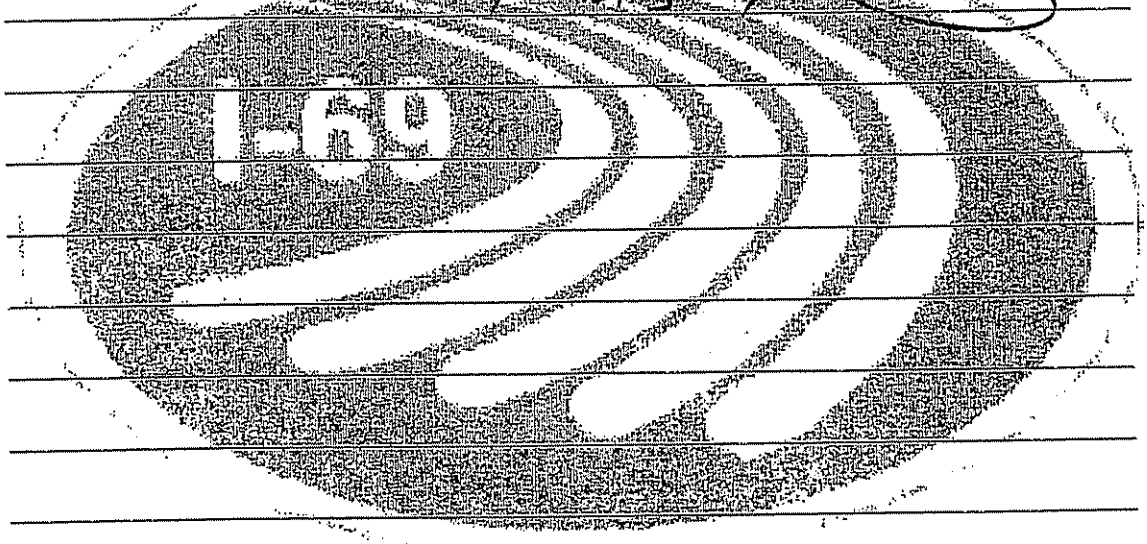
DATE: 5/1/03

NAME: ~~Hank~~ Hank Thomas RFM

ADDRESS: 2370 Hwy 4 East
Holly Springs MS. 38635

COMMENTS: I would like I-69 to tie in to Hwy 304 as proposed

Hank Thomas



After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

MAY -7 2003

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: May 2, 2003

NAME: Chris Lawrence RFM

ADDRESS: 818 Deerfield Dr
Oxford MS 38655-6127

COMMENTS: I generally support the western (orange) alternative, except between Hwy 8 and Clarksdale, where I favor the use of existing U.S. 61 (the central (red) alternative).

Consideration should be given in future studies for the need for a connection to relocated U.S. 82 near Greenville, the potential for an upgraded Hwy 448 route from I-69 southeast to U.S. 49W at the Indianola (for a more direct route from Jackson to Little Rock), and a spur from I-69 to the Commerce Landing resorts. Current traffic would not justify it, but continued development and increased accessibility to the area due to I-69 may lead to a need for a direct freeway spur to the Commerce Landing area.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Thursday ♦ May 1, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Clarksdale High School Cafeteria
Clarksdale, Mississippi

DATE: 5/3/03

NAME: Rodney Mills RFM

ADDRESS: 604 LITTON RD
BENOIT, MS. 38725

COMMENTS: AFTER REVIEWING MAPS AT THE MAY 1ST MEETING IN CLARKSDALE I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE 2 COMMENTS. MY FARMING OPERATION IS LOCATED 3 MILES EAST OF BENOIT ON LITTON RD. THE WEST ALTERNATE WILL SPLIT MY FARM IN HALF. AFTER YEARS OF [illegible] I HAVE RECENTLY GRADED MY WHOLE FARM. I HAVE CURRENTLY [illegible] ON THIS ENTIRE FARM. THIS ROUTE WILL TOTALLY DISRUPT MY FARMING OPERATION. THE VERY LEAST THAT THIS ROUTE SHOULD BE MOVED ½ MILE SOUTH & BE PLACED ON THE ROBERTS LINE AS TO NOT DISRUPT MY FARM AS WELL AS MANY OTHERS ALONG THIS ROUTE. SECONDLY I'D LIKE TO POINT OUT THE SOIL TYPES YOU WILL BE DEALING WITH ALONG THE WEST ALTERNATE. SHARKEY CLAY "BUCKSHOT TYPE SOIL ALONG THE WEST ALTERNATE FOR SEVERAL MILES IN MY AREA. YOU WILL FIND THE SOIL TYPE TO BE MUCH BETTER SUITED FOR CONSTRUCTION ALONG THE EAST ALTERNATIVE JUST TO THE NORTH OF HWY 448. THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING MY COMMENTS.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL FOLLOW-UP BENOIT MEETING
SR1 AND SR448 CROSSING ALTERNATIVES

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

Page 1

DATE: 5-4-03

NAME: Tom Crespino

ADDRESS: 336 S. Cromwyn DR

Phone 662 332 1829 Greenville Miss 38701

MOB 662 379 0688 Farm IN Benoit Scott Miss Area

COMMENTS:

MDOT or Neal Schaffer or HNTB should not just appeare The Cleveland miss concerns expressed during recent meeting in Benoit 4-30-03. NO Hurry should be commitment of all of you to get best possible route of road from East of Benoit to Bridge Locatin

It appears that many have decided that with road crossing Litin Road that the 1st preferred North of Benoit route is to be eliminated. That's been my positin from 1st set go of road meetings but since you still list it, cautin & concern come to mind until That North of Benoit to Bridge route is so eliminated That it is not even shown.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PAGE 2

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL FOLLOW-UP BENOIT MEETING
SR1 AND SR448 CROSSING ALTERNATIVES

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

DATE:

NAME: Some Page 2

ADDRESS:

PAGE 2 COMMENTS:

The new alignment under consideration would be my preferred alignment. This route would take road outside Benoit miss eliminating most noise concerns. The Lake Vista alignment would take the schools concerns about traffic into consideration

It would also put nearly all of road on 1 major Land Owner from miss Hwy 1 to Bridge, a man who has experience in Land dealings with Hiways & Interstates and has concerns and Thoughts & ideas that you seek deeply consider & work with him to your fullest effort.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

25

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL FOLLOW-UP BENOIT MEETING
SR1 AND SR448 CROSSING ALTERNATIVES

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

DATE:

NAME: Some

ADDRESS:

PAGE 3

COMMENTS:

Your earlier publications dont even list the men, MR Boylan Lawrence in your documents so I must ask why cant you have current Landowners on your next release of papers.

Why is it That in every set of meetings January APRIL of 03 included That no meetings are involved with the City That will have the most TRAFF on North route TO Memphis or South Route TO Bous This, of Course relates TO Greenville Miss TRAFFIC Their concerns for Thruways TO road TO bridge the are not even ever yet mentioned at meetings I ATTE

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL FOLLOW-UP BENOIT MEETING
SR1 AND SR448 CROSSING ALTERNATIVES

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

DATE: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

_____

PAGE 4

COMMENTS: The closer the Route can get to Greenville the easier their concerns for Access will be.

This new route would not cause any Cleveland Miss or Rosedale Miss problems because Bridge Remains in same location and Their Access to I-69 North bound should be and is 4 Laning of Miss Hwy 8 and Hwy 1 will remain as well as Hwy 8 as Rosedales double Access to South Bound I-69

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

Page 5

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL FOLLOW-UP BENOIT MEETING
SR1 AND SR448 CROSSING ALTERNATIVES

I-69 SECTION 11 -- ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

DATE:

NAME: ~~Jane~~

ADDRESS:

Page 5

COMMENTS:

Further study and consideration should be a major consideration regardless of time it takes as has it was brought out at previous Benoit meeting by some wanting immediate choices of oldways and expediency only concerned.

On 4-30-03 it has been told to me that there Brochures or packets presented at Cleveland Miss meeting Those brochures or packets should have been available at Benoit meeting.

Possible Hwy 448 new & extra interchange though just now brought out should also be considered

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PAGE 6

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL FOLLOW-UP BENOIT MEETING
SR1 AND SR448 CROSSING ALTERNATIVES

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

PAGE 6

DATE: 5-3-03

NAME: Sam Crespino

ADDRESS: 336 S. Cornwyn Dr.

Phone Home 662 332 1829 Greenville Miss 38701

mob 662 379 0688

COMMENTS:

Even The new Routing including the lake Vista Crossing should also bear like the north & South Routing of Benoit school the concerns of Landowners and Farmers Concerning Land Land Boundaries, sections or property lines

Routing & or Coupling of several Thru Fares on these maps should also follow previous concerns for property owners and Farmers

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET
SPECIAL FOLLOW-UP BENOIT MEETING
SR1 AND SR448 CROSSING ALTERNATIVES

NEEL-SCHAFFER
MAY - 8
JACKSON, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 10:00 a.m.
Ray Brooks School
Benoit, Mississippi

DATE: 5/7/03

NAME: Gary Gainspoletti, CPA

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 1259
Cleveland, MS 38732

COMMENTS: The new Southern Route from Hwy 1 to the Great River Bridge is absurd. This Route was Ruled out by earlier studies some time ago.

2nd The only routes that would be economically feasible for the ultimate economic success of the MS Delta is either the Orange or Red routes.

3rd This was a public meeting. Therefore all comments or questions should have been welcomed. On the other hand, the spokesperson was rude and obnoxious when we asked questions about change.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

NEEL-SCHAFFER
MAY - 8
JACKSON, MS

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

HWY 8 FOUR-LANING
ROSEDALE TO CLEVELAND
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: 5/7/03

NAME: Gary Gainspoletti

ADDRESS: P. O. Box 1259
Cleveland, MS 38732

COMMENTS: 4laning Hwy 8 is a great idea and certainly much needed. However, the cost of this project should not be a part of the I69 feasibility Study since it is not essential to the route determination of I69

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: May 8, 2003

NAME: W. W. Gresham, Jr. RFM

ADDRESS: P. O. Box 690
Indianola, MS 38751
~~Phone: 662-887-2160~~
Fax: 662-887-6873

Representing: Indianola Chamber of Commerce, Sunflower County Development Dept., AHEAD, Delta Council

COMMENTS:

The plans, thus far on I-69 through the Delta has been very thorough and comprehensive. We have carefully studied and considered the environmental considerations such as wetlands, historic areas, etc. The three suggested routes from Clarksdale to the Great River Bridge crossing are well presented. Now we must consider the costs and economic development aspects of the project. The proposed three 450 foot lanes need more study. I-69 should serve as many areas of Mississippi as possible for future economic development of the Delta area. The east route moves it closer to all areas of the Delta, which can benefit from the location. Tutwiler, Drew, Ruleville, Sunflower, Moorhead, Itta Bena, Greenwood, & Grenada will be much more easily accessible. The eastern route will have room for frontage roads, which are needed for future expansion & development along interstate highways. They are also vital to allow crossing for farm machinery where the interstate splits a person's farm. Also, they allow residents & business owner's access to get to an interstate. We need to examine costs very closely. I believe the modifications needed for the center route will be very expensive to build interchanges & frontage roads. The center route is already four-lane and meets the needs of the areas through which it passes. The western route has areas only on one side of it since the Mississippi River is on the west, and we have enough ports already serving more than our needs there. The eastern route is by far the best route to use. We realize there are a number of people who have personal problems with various routes, but we need to consider the best overall aspects to all people in the Delta. It is important to all of us. We look forward to working with you on this project. We sincerely appreciate your hard work and interest in doing the best we can.

Bill Gresham

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
✓Thursday ♦ May 1, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Clarksdale High School Cafeteria
Clarksdale, Mississippi

DATE: 5/8/2003

NAME: RONALD G. MILLS RFM

ADDRESS: 711 LITTON ROAD
BENOIT MS 38725

COMMENTS: Thank you for the excellent presentation.
Your task force is making the most of a difficult assignment.
Since I am not a landowner or farmer, my comments are
those of a casual observer.
First keep in mind this unusual soil we have in the
Benoit area. We affectionately called it buckshot soil. It's dry
and powdery when it's wet. It is a real issue when
it comes to road construction.
The South Section East Alternative would prevent
less of these problems.
Also, splitting up farms that have been leveled, farmers have spent
years and money leveling land and installing irrigation
systems. Splitting these farms is unfair to them.

Thanks!
Ron Mills

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: May 14, 2003

NAME: John W. McPherson RFM

ADDRESS: P. O. Box 690, Indianola, MS 38751

Phone: 662-887-2160 - Fax: 662-887-6873

COMMENTS: I-69 is being built to improve economic development. I-69 and economic development are synonymous. The entire Miss. Delta is in distress.

I attended the DOT meeting in Cleveland and the presentations were very good. However, on none of the charts were the socioeconomic benefits listed. This is the most important reason for building the road - the greatest good for the most people - Greenwood, Moorhead, Indianola, Leland, Sunflower, Rolleville, Drew, Tutwiler, Sena and Grenada.

Cleveland and Greenville will profit the most on any route chosen. I believe the route should be all inclusive - the most easterly route.

I think of myself representing the whole Delta area.

John McPherson

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PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: May 14, 2003

NAME: Wanda Ray, Bolivar County Administrator RFM

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 698, Cleveland, MS 38732

COMMENTS: The Bolivar County Board of Supervisors appreciate the opportunity for public comment at the recent Public Hearings held in Bolivar County.

We support the West Alternate for the location of I-69 crossing the Mississippi River. The benefits for the crossing at this alternate far outweighs any other alternate.

Our ~~least~~ least favorite alternate is the East Alternate.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: 5-19-03

NAME: Joe Aguzzi RFM

ADDRESS: 1500 Yale Cleveland MS 38732

COMMENTS: I think I-69 should be on the East Side of Cleveland: Some of the reasons being.

1) It will serve both Bolivar County and Sunflower County.
2) Acquiring right of ways would be more costly on the West Side.
3) It would not disturb as much wildlife and conservation land.
4) I have land on the Eastside and the Westside. The land on the East side is more fertile and prime farm land.

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PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Wednesday ♦ April 30, 2003 ♦ 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Bolivar County Expo
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: 7/19/03

NAME: BILL GRIFFITH RFM

ADDRESS: 1330 Hwy 446
Boyle, MS 38730

COMMENTS:

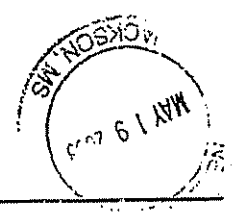
My family owns the property where the east alternate will cross US 61 on the east side of the highway. It would be most appreciated to move the right of way to the south property line if at all possible. Please feel free to call me and discuss this proposal.

Thanks, Bill Griffith

662 - 582 - 5491 - CELL
662 - 843 - 7058 - Home
662 - 843 - 8031 - FAX
rice@tecinco.com - EMAIL

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

CLARKSDALE
COAHOMA
COUNTY



May 13, 2003

Ron Huson
RFM

Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Dear Mr. Walker:

This letter is in response to the Public Meeting held in Clarksdale, May 1, 2003 regarding the I-69 Section 11 - Robinsonville to Benoit, Environmental Impact Statement.

As you are aware the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce and Industrial Foundation, has gone on record previously recommending that you use existing highway routes to the maximum extent possible. The U.S. 61 Bypass at Clarksdale is nearing completion this Fall and is already built to interstate standards in this 7-8 mile segment. Use of this existing section will facilitate the least disturbance of the Clarksdale community yet afford vital points of access for retail commerce and industrial/warehousing/distribution access to the nearby Sunbelt Industrial Park. Use of the existing route will have the least adverse environmental impact and from a construction standpoint have the quickest possible impact on economic development in the Delta.

Regarding the routing of I-69 both north and south of the U.S. 61 Bypass in Coahoma County, we have the following comments:

- South of Clarksdale, we prefer the East Alternative (Green) because it will offer greater opportunity for connector road development between I-69 and U.S. 49 south of Clarksdale in the vicinity of Tutwiler. The East Alternative would also come closer to the vicinity of Cleveland than the other alternatives. It would also come closer to the Sunflower County area which would open up viable options to develop a connector highway back to U.S. 82. We feel the East Alternative would have a greater economic impact on the overall Delta.

Chamber of Commerce & Industrial Foundation
P. O. Box 160 • Clarksdale, MS 38614 • 662-627-7337 • 662-627-1313 fax
www.clarksdale-ms.com • ccoc@clarksdale.com

- North of Clarksdale, at Lula, we prefer the West Alternative (Orange) because it will provide better access and visibility to the State Welcome Center presently under construction at the southwest corner of the intersection of U.S. 49 and U.S. 61.

Please let me know if we can provide additional information in this regard.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Walker by REH

Jimmy Walker, Sr., Chairman
Transportation Committee/
Board Member, I-69 Coalition

COAHOMA COUNTY
Board of Supervisors

Eddie C. Smith, Beat 4
President
Katherine Y. Furr, Beat 5
Vice President
Paul Pearson, Beat 1
Chris Overton, Beat 2
Timothy Burrel, Beat 3

P. O. Box 579
Clarksdale, MS 38614
Ph(662)624-3028
Fax(662)624-3029

Hugh Jack Stubbs
Administrator
Tom T. Ross, Jr.
Board Attorney

Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

May 15, 2003

Dear Mr. Walker,

This letter is in response to the Public Meeting held in Clarksdale, May 1, 2003 regarding the I-69 Section 11 – Robinson to Benoit, Environmental Impact Statement.

The U.S. 61 Bypass at Clarksdale is nearing completion this Fall and is already built to interstate standards in this 7-8 mile segment. Use of this existing section will facilitate the least disturbance of the Clarksdale Community yet afford vital points of access for retail commerce and industrial/warehousing/ distribution access to the nearby Sunbelt Industrial Park. Use of the existing route will have the least adverse environmental impact and from a construction standpoint have the quickest possible impact on economic development in the Delta.

South of Clarksdale, I prefer the East Alternative (Green) because it will offer greater opportunity for connector road development between I-69 and U.S. 49 south of Clarksdale in the vicinity of Tutwiler. The East Alternative would also come closer to the vicinity of Cleveland that the other alternatives. It would also come closer to the Sunflower County area, which would open up viable options to develop a connector highway back to U.S. 82. I feel the East Alternative would have a greater economic impact on Coahoma County and the overall Delta.

North of Clarksdale, at Lula, I prefer the West Alternative (Orange) because it will provide better access and visibility to the State Welcome Center presently under construction at the southwest corner of the intersection of U.S. 49 and U.S. 61.

Please let me know if I can provide additional information in this regard.

Sincerely,

R FM

Hugh Jack Stubbs
County Administrator

Cc: Board of Supervisors

Appendix D
Public Involvement

December 13-16, 2004 public hearings

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT/ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT
FROM NOVEMBER OF 2003 TO MARCH OF 2005

ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

INCLUDES

COORDINATION REQUIRED TO PREPARE THE DRAFT EIS

MINUTES FOR SPECIAL MEETINGS HELD PRIOR TO PUBLIC HEARINGS

MINUTES FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS HELD ON DECEMBER 13-16, 2004

MINUTES FOR SPECIAL MEETINGS HELD AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARINGS

Prepared By: Jimmy Shirley

Month/Year Prepared:

March/2005 3-21-05 Action Update.doc

Public Involvement

Mailout to Mr. David Bowen on November 26, 2003

Subject: Central Alternative Connector to US 61 near Merigold in Bolivar County

Mr. Bowen owns farmland that would be directly impacted by this connector. In response to his request, Neel-Schaffer mailed Mr. Bowen a copy of mapping on aerial photography showing the location of this connector relative to his family's farmland.

Public Involvement Action

Drew Newsletter publishes article in mid-December of 2003

Subject: Comments Received in Support of Eastern Alternative in Bolivar County

The project team received five comments of support for the Eastern Alternative in Bolivar County between January 29, 2003, and February 3, 2004.

On February 23, 2004, the comments were compiled by Neel-Schaffer and forwarded by e-mail to Kimley-Horn.

Public Involvement Action

Received Benoit School Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Hawley's Letter dated February 11, 2004.

Subject: Endorsement Letter for Crossing SR 1 in Curve South of Ray Brooks School

Dr. Hawley's letter referenced the endorsed location as being the location north of Lake Bolivar that would cross the School District's 16th Section Land. Her letter advised the School District endorses this crossing point in the close proximity of Benoit because they feel it would be the most beneficial crossing for developing the Town of Benoit and the School District.

The letter from Dr. Hawley is addressed in the Draft EIS.

Public Involvement Action

Correspondence to Mr. Ken Murphree dated February 20, 2004

Subject: Status Report on Study for Mr. Ken Murphree

In his capacity as Tunica County Administrator and President of Delta Council, Mr. Murphree asked Mr. Robert Walker of Neel-Schaffer to provide him a study report on the study. In response to Mr. Murphree's request, Mr. Walker mailed the status report to Mr. Murphree in correspondence dated February 20, 2004.

Public Involvement

Mr. Early Ewing Request Addressed on March 16, 2004

Subject: Copy of Alternative Mapping near Benoit from the Great River Bridge and SR 448

At the request of the MDOT Environmental Division, the project team mailed the requested information to Mr. Ewing.

Public Involvement

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Brahan Request Addressed on March 18, 2004

Subject: Discuss Impacts Alternatives Could Have on Their Property at the US 49 North Interchange near Lula in Coahoma County

Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley met with Mr. and Mrs. Brahan in the Transportation Section Conference Room of Neel-Schaffer. The Brahans live in the Hattiesburg area, and the meeting in Jackson was requested by Mr. Brahan to view the possible impacts that the two alternative corridors could have on property the Brahans own between the US 49/US 61 intersection and Rich.

To aid in the discussion with the Brahans, the Neel-Schaffer representatives used a small print of the interchange concept for the Western Alternative, which uses the US 61

corridor, and a small print of the interchange concept for the shared Central and Eastern alternative, which is on new location slightly to the east of the US 61 corridor. Access that would be allowed to nearby properties was discussed with the Brahans for each interchange concept. The Neel-Schaffer representatives emphasized to the Brahans that the alternatives were still preliminary and subject to change.

The Brahans were provided a history of the study and briefed on the remaining items that must be addressed by the study before scheduling the Public Hearing. At their request, the Brahans were given a copy of the interchange concepts currently under consideration for the two alternative corridors. The Brahans expressed their appreciation for the update and their mailing address was verified to make sure they received an invitation to the public hearings.

Public Involvement

Mr. Robert Walker's E-Mail to Supervisor Bryant on May 24, 2004
Subject: Sunflower County Supervisor Barry Bryant's Request for Update on the Study's Status

In this e-mail, Mr. Walker of Neel-Schaffer advised Supervisor Bryant that the pre-draft EIS was pulled together in November and went through reviews within the MDOT and the FHWA. Based on the reviews by the MDOT and the FHWA, Mr. Walker informed Supervisor Bryant the revised pre-draft EIS will be sent to the Cooperating Agencies, such as the Corps of Engineers and the EPA, for their review. To provide the Cooperating Agencies ample time to review the pre-draft EIS, Mr. Walker advised late summer or early fall would be an estimated time for the public hearings. Mr. Walker went on to state the estimated time for the public hearing is always subject to change depending on the Cooperating Agencies comments and how long it takes to address their comments. Mr. Walker concluded the status report by inviting Mr. Bryant to notify the Neel-Schaffer representatives anytime Supervisor Bryant had questions about the study.

Alternative Development

Neel-Schaffer correspondence to Coastal Environments dated July 12, 2004
Subject: Archaeological studies on Shared Eastern and Central Revision Options in Lula area

Coastal Environments had previously studied the entire portion of this shared alternative in the Northern Section near Lula and recommended adjusting the alternative's stream crossing near the Coahoma-Tunica County Line. This correspondence provided Coastal two options for checking in the field and Coastal subsequently reported that both options crossing Flea Harbor Road appeared acceptable.

Public Involvement

Meeting with Mr. Scott Luth of the Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce on August 17, 2004
Subject: Update Mr. Luth on the Status of the Study

Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley met with Mr. Luth in the Jackson Office of Neel-Schaffer and provided Mr. Luth his requested status report, and addressed his questions. In response to a request that Mr. Luth had previously made of the MDOT, he was hand-delivered a copy of the mapping on aerial photography for the alternatives in Bolivar County taken forward for detail study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Public Involvement

Meeting with Sunflower County Citizens on August 18, 2004
Subject: Update Messrs. John McPherson and Walton Gresham on Status of Study

Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley met with Messrs. McPherson and Gresham in the Jackson Office of Neel-Schaffer and provided them their requested status report on the alternatives in Bolivar County that were being taken forward for detail study in the DEIS. Questions that Messrs. McPherson and Gresham asked were addressed. At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Gresham requested a copy of the mapping for the

alternatives undergoing further study, and that information was provided to Mr. Gresham by correspondence dated August 23, 2004.

Public Involvement

Layout of Levi Boone's Planned Development Received August 25, 2004
Subject: Locating and Addressing the Residential and Golf Course on the Alternative Mapping for the Eastern Alternative at the Crossing of SR 8 east at Cleveland

The MDOT Environmental Division provided Neel-Schaffer an electronic copy of a file containing the layout of the 58 lot subdivision and golf course located on the south side of SR 8. If the subdivision is constructed and the Eastern Alternative is not adjusted, the development would be severely impacted and over half the area would be needed for the interchange right of way. The Eastern Alternative could be adjusted to the west and drastically lessen the amount of this development that would be needed for interchange right of way. However, if the Eastern Alternative is adjusted to the west, SR 8 would also need relocating to the north and all the interchange access would need to be placed on the north side of SR 8. This relocation of SR 8 would be necessary to minimize the number of residences requiring relocation for the interchange. Since no work has started on the development, it was agreed the subdivision's impact on the Eastern Alternative would be referenced in the DEIS, but not considered directly in the summary of relocation impacts identified in the DEIS for the Eastern Alternative.

Public Involvement

U.S. Congressman Bennie G. Thompson Letter to Bolivar County Administrator Adrian L. Brown dated September 17, 2004
Subject: Endorsement for Bolivar County's Preferred I-69 Route

The MDOT Environmental Division received a copy of Congressman Thompson's letter expressing his reasons for supporting the route preferred by Bolivar County. The Congressman referenced the Red-Central Alternative as appearing to have the greatest impact on community and economic development, and he advised the incorporated

communities along U.S. Highway 61 in Bolivar County would benefit from the development of the Red-Central Alternative.

Public Involvement

Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce Executive Vice-President Scott Luth's Letter to MDOT Executive Director Butch Brown dated October 6, 2004
Subject: Documentation of Meeting

As a follow-up to a meeting Director Brown had with a group of community leaders from Bolivar County, the MDOT Environmental Division received a copy of Mr. Luth's letter. The letter expressed Mr. Luth's appreciation for the Director meeting with the Bolivar County group, the desire of Bolivar County to have the Central Route selected as the preferred location, and a copy of Congressman Thompson's Letter to County Administrator Brown was attached to Mr. Luth's correspondence. In the letter, Mr. Luth also stated they had begun the process of gathering support from all of the municipalities throughout Bolivar County, and that they were awaiting the public hearing process.

Public Involvement

Bolivar County Port Director David Work Request Addressed by Neel-Schaffer on November 11, 2004
Subject: List of Resource Agency Contacts Invited to Provide Input on the Project

Mr. Work was provided his requested information.

Public Involvement

Delta Council Transportation Committee Meeting at Stoneville on November 17, 2004
Subject: Provide Status Report to the Committee on the Study of this Section of I-69

The I-69 Status Report was one of items on this meeting's agenda. There were approximately 30 people in attendance at the meeting. The opening and welcoming remarks were made by Mr. Al Rankins, the Presiding Chairman of the Committee. The

overview of road construction and maintenance projects in the Delta was addressed by MDOT Central District Commissioner Dick Hall, MDOT Second District Engineer Jimmy Dickerson and MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons. As part of the overview of MDOT projects, Mr. Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer provided the requested report on this I-69 study. As part of his remarks, Mr. Shirley made the attendees aware of the dates and locations for the upcoming public hearings and encouraged the attendees to attend one or more of the hearings. Commissioner Hall concluded the meeting by making remarks on the impact of state budget problems on road construction.

Public Involvement

Mailout of 769 Post Cards to Project Contacts on November 22, 2004
Subject: Invitation to Attend the Identical Series of Public Hearings Scheduled for December 13-16, 2004

Coinciding with the MDOT's Advertisement of the Public Hearings and based on the project contact list of agency and general public contacts for this project, the consultant team mailed 769 post card invitations to the hearings. The locations and times for the hearings were identified on the post card. The post card also made the invitees aware that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement would be on display for their review at public libraries in the study area before and after the hearing through December 31, 2004. The post card stated a Preferred Alternative for this section of I-69, including improvements to SR 8, would be selected after all comments have been received from these series of public hearings.

Public Involvement

Early C. Ewing, Jr. Letter to I-69 SIU 11 Project Manager Robert Walker and Bolivar County Engineer Bob Eley dated December 2, 2004
Subject: Reconsider an Option to Cross SR 1 north of Benoit

This request by Mr. Ewing had been previously addressed and eliminated because such an option adds unnecessary length to I-69 and creates unnecessary adverse environmental impacts because it is out of direction.

Public Involvement

MDOT Environmental Division Engineer E. Claiborne Barnwell letter to Mayor Robert Patton of Shelby dated December 5, 2004
Subject: Response to the Letter of Support for the Central Alternative Mayor Patton
Mailed to MDOT Executive Director Butch Brown

Mr. Barnwell thanked Mayor Patton for his letter stating the City of Shelby and the City of Rosedale support the central alignment for the location of this section of I-69 in Bolivar County as being the most economically feasible of the routes being studied. Mr. Barnwell assured the Mayor that the information he provided would be forwarded to the appropriate individuals handling the study for documentation, and that the Mayor's input will be given due consideration as MDOT strives to select the best route. The letter from Mr. Barnwell concluded by referencing the dates and municipalities where the public hearings would be held later that month, and by Mr. Barnwell providing a late summer of 2005 estimated date for making a final determination on this important facility's location.

Public Involvement

MDOT Environmental Division Engineer E. Claiborne Barnwell Letter to Mayor Carey Estes of Rosedale dated December 5, 2004
Subject: Response to the Letter of Support for the Central Alternative Mayor Estes
Mailed to MDOT Executive Director Butch Brown

Mr. Barnwell thanked Mayor Estes for his letter stating the City of Rosedale supports the central alignment for the location of this section of I-69 in Bolivar County. Mr. Barnwell assured the Mayor that the information provided by the Mayor would be forwarded to the appropriate individuals handling the study for documentation, and that the Mayor's input will be given due consideration as MDOT strives to select the best route. The letter from

Mr. Barnwell concluded by referencing the dates and municipalities where the public hearings would be held later that month, and by Mr. Barnwell providing a late summer of 2005 estimated date for making a final determination on this important facility's location.

Public Involvement

MDOT Environmental Division Engineer E. Claiborne Barnwell Letter to Retired State Senator William B. Alexander Dated December 9, 2004
Subject: Response to Letter of Support for the Central Alternative Senator Alexander
Mailed to MDOT Executive Director Butch Brown

Mr. Barnwell thanked Senator Alexander for the list of reasons the Senator provided for supporting the central alignment in the Cleveland area. Mr. Barnwell assured the Senator that the information provided by the Senator would be forwarded to the appropriate individuals handling the study for inclusion in the documentation, and that the Senator's input will be given due consideration as MDOT strives to select the best route. The letter from Mr. Barnwell concluded by referencing the dates and municipalities where the public hearings would be held later that month, and by Mr. Barnwell providing a late summer of 2005 estimated date for making a final determination on this important facility's location.

Public Involvement

MDOT Environmental Division Engineer E. Claiborne Barnwell Letter to Mr. Terry S. Latour Dated December 9, 2004
Subject: Response to Letter of Support for the Central Alternative Mr. Latour Mailed to MDOT Executive Director Butch Brown

Mr. Barnwell thanked Mr. Latour for the reasons Mr. Latour provided for supporting the central alignment between Benoit and Clarksdale. Mr. Barnwell assured Mr. Latour that the information provided by Mr. Latour would be forwarded to the appropriate individuals handling the study for inclusion in the documentation, and that Mr. Latour's input will be given due consideration as MDOT strives to select the best route. The letter

from Mr. Barnwell concluded by referencing the dates and municipalities where the public hearings would be held later that month, and by Mr. Barnwell providing a late summer of 2005 estimated date for making a final determination on this important facility's location.

Public Involvement

MDOT Environmental Division Engineer E. Claiborne Barnwell Letter to Ms. Lynn Pace Dated December 9, 2004
Subject: Response to Letter of Support for the Central Alternative Ms. Pace Mailed to FHWA Division Administrator Andy Hughes and copied MDOT Executive Director Butch Brown

Mr. Barnwell thanked Ms. Pace for the reasons Ms. Pace provided for supporting the central alignment in Bolivar County. Mr. Barnwell assured Ms. Pace that the information provided by Ms. Pace would be forwarded to the appropriate individuals handling the study for inclusion in the documentation, and that Ms. Pace's input will be given due consideration as MDOT strives to select the best route. The letter from Mr. Barnwell concluded by referencing the dates and municipalities where the public hearings would be held later that month, and by Mr. Barnwell providing a late summer of 2005 estimated date for making a final determination on this important facility's location.

Public Involvement

MDOT Environmental Division Engineer E. Claiborne Barnwell Letter to Ms. Marcie M. Moore Dated December 9, 2004
Subject: Response to Letter of Support for the Central Alternative Ms. Pace Mailed to FHWA Division Administrator Andy Hughes and copied MDOT Executive Director Butch Brown

Mr. Barnwell thanked Ms. Moore for her letter of support for the central alignment in Bolivar County. Mr. Barnwell assured Ms. Moore that the information provided by Ms. Moore would be forwarded to the appropriate individuals handling the study for inclusion

in the documentation, and that Ms. Moore's input will be given due consideration as MDOT strives to select the best route. The letter from Mr. Barnwell concluded by referencing the dates and municipalities where the public hearings would be held later that month, and by Mr. Barnwell providing a late summer of 2005 estimated date for making a final determination on this important facility's location.

Public Involvement

Meeting with the Aguzzi Family on December 13th and Open House Public Hearings on December 13-16, 2005

Subject: Minutes for the Identical Series of Public Hearings and Meeting with the Aguzzi Family

The public hearings were held on successive evenings between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. at the following locations:

- Ray Brooks School near Benoit on December 13;
- Bolivar County Expo Center Annex in Cleveland on December 14;
- Clarksdale High School in Clarksdale on December 15; and,
- G.W. Henderson Center near Tunica on December 16.

Planning Approach Used for the Public Hearings

Information on the refined 450 feet wide alternatives studied in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement was presented at these hearings using the same format as that used for previous public meetings. In addition, information on the alternatives studied for widening SR 8 in Bolivar County to four lanes between SR 1 at Rosedale and Cleveland was presented at these hearings. Large aerial photography mapping displays on the alternative corridors recommended for detail study were placed on tables and other displays were placed on easels for the public to view, ask questions, and make comments. At each hearing brief presentations were made by the MDOT Environmental Division and the consultant team.

Approach of Studying Alternatives in Three Separate Sections

To present the alternatives studied in the Draft EIS at these hearings, the project was divided into a Southern, Middle, and Northern Section.

The three alternatives studied in the Southern Section were a Western Alternative, a Central Alternative, and the Eastern Alternative. The shared southern terminus for the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternative Corridors is a point in Bolivar County on the adjacent SIU 12 study east of the proposed Great River Bridge near Eutaw Landing. This shared southern terminus is southwest of Benoit, and west of Lake Bolivar and SR 1. The shared northern terminus for the three alternative corridors is the New Africa Road Interchange on the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County. The Western Alternative and the Eastern Alternative are entirely on new location, and the Central Alternative uses as much of US 61 as possible between the Town of Merigold and the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line.

In the Middle Section, only one alternative was studied and that alternative was referred to as the Central Alternative. The Central Alternative is located from the New Africa Road Interchange on the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County to a point on US 61 in Coahoma County approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line.

The alternatives studied in the Northern Section were a Western Alternative, a Central Alternative, and the Eastern Alternative. The Northern Section is bounded by the northern termini of the Middle Section in Coahoma County and the southern portion of a spur, currently under construction, which will connect existing SR 304 with new SR 304 in Tunica County.

Because there are several points in the Southern Section and the Northern Section where alternatives either overlap or where alternatives can be connected, there are more than three possible alternatives in the Southern and Northern Sections. The studies for the DEIS determined there was only one overlap that warranted changing the description of

an alternative and that was an overlap of the Central and Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section near Benoit. It was recommended that the Central Alternative be changed so that the Eastern and Central Alternatives in the Southern Section share the same alignment from the connecting point to the adjacent study on SIU 12 across SR 1 near Lake Vista, across SR 448 to the crossing of the Bogue Phalia. That one exception should be noted when reviewing the description of the alternatives described below.

Western Alternative in the Southern Section

From Eutaw Landing to west of Lake Bolivar and SR 1, the Western Alternative uses a shared tangent with the Central Alternative. The Western and Central Alternatives separate near Lake Bolivar and the Western Alternative's turn to the southeast results in a crossing of SR 1 just north of Ray Brooks School. The Western Alternative then continues southeast before turning to the northeast to cross SR 448 closer to Benoit than the shared crossing used by the Central and Eastern Alternatives. After crossing SR 448, the Western Alternative uses a northern tangent that parallels Litton Road and SR 448 between Benoit and the Bogue Phalia. The northern tangent is closer to Litton Road, while the shared southern tangent used by the Central and Eastern Alternatives is closer to SR 448. Between the Bogue Phalia and the northwestern limits of Cleveland, the Western Alternative turns north to pass east of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, joins the Central Alternative south of the SR 446 crossing and the two alternatives continue north remaining concurrent in their crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland. The Western Alternative separates from the Central Alternative just north of SR 8, remains to the west on new location between US 61 and SR 1 from west of Cleveland to southwest of Clarksdale, turns to the east to join the Central Alternative near the south part of Clarksdale, and these two alternatives then cross US 61 to join the Clarksdale Bypass.

Central Alternative in Southern Section

From Eutaw Landing to west of Lake Bolivar and SR 1, the Central Alternative uses a shared tangent with the Western Alternative. The Central and Western Alternatives then

separate in a manner that allows the Central Alternative to cross SR 1 in the first curve south of the school. The Central Alternative joins the Eastern Alternative before crossing SR 448 just north of where the SR 448 alignment changes from north-south to east-west. After crossing SR 448, the Central and Eastern Alternatives use a shared southern tangent that parallels Litton Road and SR 448 between Benoit and the Bogue Phalia. The northern tangent is closer to Litton Road while the southern tangent is closer to SR 448. Between the Bogue Phalia and the northwestern limits of Cleveland, the Central Alternative turns north to leave the Eastern Alternative and join the Western Alternative south of the crossing of SR 446. The Central Alternative separates from the Western Alternative just north of SR 8, joins US 61 near Merigold, uses as much of US 61 as possible to near the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line, proceeds northeast to join the Western Alternative near the south part of Clarksdale and remains concurrent with the Western Alternative to cross US 61 and connect with the Clarksdale Bypass.

Eastern Alternative in Southern Section

From Eutaw Landing across Lake Bolivar and SR 1, the Eastern Alternative uses the crossing of SR 1 that is the greatest distance from Benoit near Lake Vista. The Eastern Alternative then joins the Central Alternative prior to the crossing of SR 448. After crossing SR 448, the Eastern and Central Alternatives use the southern tangent to parallel Litton Road and SR 448 between Benoit and the Bogue Phalia. After crossing the Bogue Phalia, the Eastern Alternative leaves the Central Alternative and proceeds east to cross US 61 just north of Shaw and turns north to cross SR 8 east of Cleveland. The Eastern Alternative remains on new location to the east of US 61 from Cleveland until joining the Clarksdale Bypass.

Central Alternative in Middle Section

The alternative uses the Clarksdale Bypass to north of SR 6 near Lyon where the alternative then proceeds northeast on new location to avoid the build-up along the concurrent section of US 49 and US 61 between Lyon and Eagles Nest Road. The

alternative rejoins the concurrent section of US 49 and US 61 north of Eagles Nest Road near the Clarksdale Airport and Swan Lake, and the alternative continues to use concurrent section of US 49-US 61 to the northern terminus of the Central Section.

Western Alternative in Northern Section

The Western Alternative proceeds north along the concurrent US 49-US 61 section and then along US 61 beyond the US 49 intersection into Tunica County to a point just south of the Crenshaw Road intersection. The alternative then proceeds to the northeast on new location to near Dubbs Road where the alternative turns to the north and then to the northeast to cross Dubbs Road and roughly parallel US 61. The alternative continues north paralleling US 61 across SR 4, Prichard Road, and Arkabutla Dam Road before turning to the east just south of SR 304. The alternative crosses Kirby Road in a manner that roughly parallels SR 304, and the alternative continues to the east paralleling SR 304 across SR 3 and the railroad before turning north to cross SR 304 and join the Spur.

Central Alternative in Northern Section

Approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line, the Central Alternative in the Northern Section proceeds northeast on new location. The alternative turns north to join the Western Alternative south of Dubbs Road, and the alternative remains concurrent with the Western Alternative to just north of Prichard Road where the alternative turns to east. After crossing SR 3 and the railroad, the alternative turns to the north crossing Arkabutla Dam Road and SR 304 before joining the Spur.

Eastern Alternative in Northern Section

The Eastern Alternative in the Northern Section is concurrent with the Central Alternative from four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line to south of Dubbs Road where the alternative turns to the northeast. After proceeding northeast to cross Dubbs Road and Sarah Road, the alternative turns to the north to cross SR 4 at Little

Texas and then Beatline Road. After crossing Beatline Road, the alternative turns to the northeast crossing Prichard Road, SR 3, and the railroad before turning north to join the Central Alternative south of Arkabutla Dam Road. From south of Arkabutla Dam Road to the Spur, the Eastern Alternative is concurrent with the Central Alternative.

Viewing Displays and Project Handouts Provided at Meetings

Aerial photography mappings displays, which could be placed flat on tables for viewing at these meetings, were prepared for the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives in the Southern Section; the Central Alternative in the Central Section; and, the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives in the Northern Section. The mapping displays showed the Central Alternative in the Southern Section using a crossing of SR 1 in the curve south of Ray Brooks School, but a chart summarizing impacts referred to the Central Alternative using the same crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista as the Eastern Alternative. The aerial photography mapping for the I-69 alternatives identified property ownership, potential frontage road locations, interchange locations, connector roads to the existing highway system at the interchange locations, and other natural and human environmental information. Aerial photography mapping displays of the alternatives for the SR 8 widening were also provided. The mapping displays were used to enable the public to identify the location of an alternative relative to their questions, comments, or concerns. At each of the viewing locations, a map was placed on an easel to identify the alternative displayed on the table.

Other displays placed on easels included: a map of the study area; a map of some of the known natural and human environmental features in the study area; a map of alternatives corridors studied and eliminated from further study; a map showing the alternatives studied in detail in the DEIS; a chart summarizing impacts of the alternatives in the Southern, Middle, and Northern sections, including the SR 8 widening; a chart summarizing impacts of the combining the alternatives in the Southern, Middle, and Northern sections, including the SR 8 widening; and, typical roadway sections.

Attendees were provided a packet containing the project brochure, a color coded map showing the alternatives studied in the DEIS; a chart summarizing alternative impacts in each of the three sections, including the SR-8 widening, a chart summarizing impacts by combining alternatives between sections, including the SR 8 widening; and, a comment form.

Benoit Public Hearing Registration and Primary Discussion Items

A total of 85 people registered their attendance at the hearing in Benoit, and the following were the primary topics discussed.

- The history that led to the three alternative locations for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit.
- The elimination of the alternative crossing of SR 1 just north of Benoit. The elimination was necessary because the crossing is out of direction for connecting to the study alternatives east of SR 1 that pass south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge.
- The elimination of the far-west alternative between Benoit and the crossing of SR 444 in Bolivar County. The elimination was necessary because it bisected the planned westward expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge to Mississippi River.
- The three locations studied for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit are just north of the Ray Brooks School for the Western Alternative, either in the curve south of Ray Brooks School or at Lake Vista for the Central Alternative, and at Lake Vista for the Eastern Alternative.
- The information provided at the aerial photography mapping display areas for the I-69 alternatives and the alternatives to accomplish the widening of SR 8 to four lanes.
- The location of an alternative relative to a person's residence or property.
- Landowners concerns about their farmland being divided and their access to divided farmland.
- Environmental constraints, engineering constraints, drainage ditches, and locations of changes in property ownership contributed to alternatives bisecting some farmland. When bisecting of farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave extremely large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative. The property retained by the owner after the I-69 right of way was acquired could then hopefully be large enough to

farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would be an uneconomical remnant.

- To lessen the impacts on farmland access, grade separation bridges or interchanges are proposed on a maximum spacing of approximately two miles. In addition, frontage roads are proposed where economically feasible and practical.

There continued to be widespread support for the I-69 project at the meeting in Benoit, and some discussions occurred on the widening of SR 8 to four lanes. The detailed discussions on the SR 8 widening were primarily focused on the two options for connecting to SR 1 at Rosedale. There were also some discussions on whether it is best for I-69 to cross SR 8 west or east of Cleveland. The people supporting the SR 8 crossing east of Cleveland generally have Sunflower County interests or they have interests in farmland that is divided by the Western and Central Alternatives, which cross SR 8 at the same location west of Cleveland. Most people with Bolivar County interests continue to support the crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland.

Meeting with Members of the Aguzzi Family at Cleveland

This meeting was held at the request of the Aguzzi Family at the Bolivar County Expo Center Annex during the afternoon prior to the Public Hearing on December 14, 2004. The Aguzzi Family owns and farms a large amount of land that would be directly impacted by the Central and Western alternatives in the Southern Section from near these shared alternatives' crossing of the Bogue Phalia to SR 8. The Aguzzi Family presented the project team with a sketch on aerial photography identifying an alternative alignment they wanted the project team to consider. The Aguzzis advised their modified alignment would impact other landowners not impacted by the current alignment, but the Aguzzis advised some of their land would still be impacted. The Aguzzis believe their suggested modified alignment would better balance the impacts among landowners and be a better alternative. The project team discussed possible advantages and disadvantages of the modified alignment with the Aguzzi, and the project team agreed to study the suggested medication to the degree necessary to provide the Aguzzis a response to their request.

Cleveland Public Hearing Registration and Primary Discussion Items

A total of 467 people registered their attendance at the hearing in Cleveland, and the following were the primary topics discussed.

- The history that led to the three alternative locations for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit.
- The elimination of the alternative crossing of SR 1 just north of Benoit. The elimination was necessary because the crossing is out of direction for connecting to the study alternatives east of SR 1 that pass south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge.
- The elimination of the far-west alternative between Benoit and the crossing of SR 444 in Bolivar County. The elimination was necessary because it bisected the planned westward expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge to Mississippi River.
- The three locations studied for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit are just north of the Ray Brooks School for the Western Alternative, either in the curve south of Ray Brooks School or at Lake Vista for the Central Alternative, and at Lake Vista for the Eastern Alternative.
- The information provided on the aerial photography mapping display areas for the I-69 alternatives and the alternatives to accomplish the widening of SR 8 to four lanes.
- The location of an alternative relative to a person's residence or property
- Residents concern about being relocated.
- Residents that would not be relocated concerns about having the interstate near their residences.
- Landowners concerns about their farmland being divided and their access to divided farmland.
- Environmental constraints, engineering constraints, drainage ditches, and locations of changes in property ownership contributed to alternatives bisecting some farmland. When bisecting of farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave extremely large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative. The property retained by the owner after the I-69 right of way was acquired could then hopefully be large enough to farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would be an uneconomical remnant.
- To lessen the impacts on farmland access, grade separation bridges or interchanges are proposed on a maximum spacing of approximately two miles. In addition, frontage roads are proposed where economically feasible and practical.

- No one expressed support for the Pace Bypass alternative for widening SR 8 and everyone commenting on the widening through Pace wanted the widening accomplished along existing alignment.

- Reconsideration of a previously dropped alternative that would use the Eastern Alternative from Benoit to SR 8 east of Cleveland, and then connect the Eastern Alternative to the Central Alternative at Merigold by following a routing east of the Steam Plant.

As evidenced by the 467 people who registered their attendance at the meeting, the Cleveland area is very interested in this project. Opinions continue to differ as to whether it is best for I-69 to cross SR 8 west or east of Cleveland. However, based on the Comment Forms, letters, and resolutions submitted in response to the hearings, the Central Alternative in the Southern Section was supported by approximately 80% of the respondents, the Eastern Alternative or the modified Eastern Alternative by most of the remaining 20% of the respondents, and the Western Alternative had very little support.

Clarksdale Public Hearing Registration and Primary Discussion Items

A total of 56 people registered their attendance at the hearing in Clarksdale, and the following were the primary topics discussed.

- The history that led to the three alternative locations for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit.

- The elimination from further serious study of the alternative crossing of SR 1 just north of Benoit.

- The elimination from further serious study of the far-west alternative near the Mississippi River between Benoit and SR 444 in Bolivar County.

- The three locations studied for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit are just north of the Ray Brooks School for the Western Alternative, either in the curve south of Ray Brooks School or at Lake Vista for the Central Alternative, and at Lake Vista for the Eastern Alternative.

- The information provided at the aerial photography mapping display areas for the I-69 alternatives and the alternatives to accomplish the widening of SR 8 to four lanes.

- The location of an alternative relative to a person's residence or property

- Environmental constraints, engineering constraints, drainage ditches, and locations of changes in property ownership contributed to alternatives bisecting some farmland. When bisecting of individual farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave extremely large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative. The property retained by the owner after the I-69 right of way was acquired could then hopefully be large enough to farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would become an uneconomical remnant.

- To lessen the impacts on farmland access, grade separation bridges or interchanges are proposed on a maximum spacing of approximately two miles. In addition, frontage roads are proposed where economically feasible and practical.

- The archaeological findings are major constraints for using the Western Alternative for I-69 in the Lula area near the Welcome Center

- The archaeological findings for the shared Central and Eastern alternative near the crossing of Flea Harbor Road in Tunica County have required this crossing point to be adjusted to two other options. One of the options is west of the current location near the natural gas pipeline crossing, and the other option for crossing Flea Harbor Road is farther east of the current crossing point.

There continued to be widespread overall support for the I-69 project at the hearing in Clarksdale. Because of the distance from Clarksdale to Cleveland and Rosedale, there were only brief discussions on the widening of SR 8 to four lanes between Cleveland and Rosedale. Most of the people attending the hearing appeared to have either Coahoma or Tunica County interests, and these people generally supported the alternatives in those two counties that were taken forward for detail study in the Draft EIS. During the brief presentation time when Messrs. Barnwell, Vick, and Walker made their comments, Former State Senator Delma Furniss and others in support of Senator Furniss stated their preference for using the Western Alternative along US 61 near Lula in spite of the archaeological findings in this area.

Tunica Public Hearing Registration and Primary Discussion Items

A total of 71 people registered their attendance at the hearing in Tunica, and the following were the primary topics discussed.

- The history that led to the three alternative locations for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit.

- The elimination from further serious study of the alternative crossing of SR 1 just north of Benoit.

- The elimination from further serious study of the far-west alternative near the Mississippi River between Benoit and SR 444 in Bolivar County.

- The three locations studied for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit are just north of the Ray Brooks School for the Western Alternative, either in the curve south of Ray Brooks School or at Lake Vista for the Central Alternative, and at Lake Vista for the Eastern Alternative.

- The information provided at the aerial photography mapping display areas for the I-69 alternatives and the alternatives to accomplish the widening of SR 8 to four lanes.

- The location of an alternative relative to a person's residence or property.

- Environmental constraints, engineering constraints, drainage ditches, and locations of changes in property ownership contributed to alternatives bisecting some farmland. When bisecting of individual farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave extremely large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative. The property retained by the owner after the I-69 right of way was acquired could then hopefully be large enough to farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would become an uneconomical remnant.

- To lessen the impacts on farmland access, grade separation bridges or interchanges are proposed on a maximum spacing of approximately two miles. In addition, frontage roads are proposed where economically feasible and practical.

- The archaeological findings are major constraints for using the Western Alternative for I-69 in the Lula area near the Welcome Center

- The archaeological findings for the shared Central and Eastern alternative near the crossing of Flea Harbor Road in Tunica County have required this crossing point to be adjusted to two other options. One of the options is west of the current location near the natural gas pipeline crossing, and the other option for crossing Flea Harbor Road is farther east of the current crossing point.

- The negative impacts the Western Alternative has on farmland at the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange and the Crenshaw Road-US 61 Interchange.

- The negative impacts the Central and Western alternatives have on Mr. Ray Smith's farmland.

There continued to be widespread overall support for the I-69 project at the hearing in Tunica. Because of the distance from Tunica to Cleveland and Rosedale, there were only

brief discussions on the widening of SR 8 to four lanes between Cleveland and Rosedale. Most of the people attending the hearing appeared to have either Coahoma or Tunica County interests, and these people generally supported the alternatives in those two counties taken forward for detail study in the Draft EIS.

Summary of Comment Forms' and Letters' Content Submitted in Response to Public Hearings on the Southern Section between Benoit and Clarksdale

Reasons provided for supporting Western Alternative in Southern Section included:

- Is the straightest and stays on section lines better than the other two alternatives

Reasons provided for not supporting Western Alternative in Southern Section included:

- Too far away from existing population centers
- Extremely disruptive to farmland and wetlands
- It doesn't make sense to spend federal dollars to support wetland development in this area only to then use federal dollars to build an interstate through them
- Thinks it is imperative that I-69 be as far south of the Ray Brooks School campus as possible. Believes air pollution and noise will severely impact the campus and outdoor activities at the school if this alternative is used.
- Is a complete detriment to the long-range business interests of the City of Cleveland. Cleveland has an industrial park not being fully utilized, along with excellent medical care access on the east side of Cleveland. Most of the services provided in Cleveland for travelers are located along Highway 61. Why make potential customers come through Cleveland for services? Enhance business on the east side and leave the west side for residential growth.
- Would stop housing growth to the west of Cleveland
- Too far from emergency medical services offered by hospital at Cleveland
- Crosses through environmentally sensitive lands
- Would adversely affect wildlife

Reasons provided for supporting Central Alternative in Southern Section included:

- By being approximately sixty million dollars cheaper, is most cost effective route and that is important to taxpayers.
- Could be completed quicker
- More central to the geographic layout of the Delta
- Would enhance transportation to and from both ports in Greenville and Rosedale together with the industries in Cleveland
- More centrally located to Delta State University
- Would provide safer and quicker access for non-local traffic generated by Delta State University
- Least environmentally disruptive
- Creates more positive impression than a route by Parchman
- Avoids more Wetland Reserve Program land than the other alternatives.
- Serves more economically disadvantaged and minority residents.
- Borders the country's oldest Black Municipality of Mound Bayou, which was established in 1887 and has a lot of historical value
- Provides more potential for multi-modal transportation by being closer to the Ports at Rosedale and Greenville and airports at Cleveland and Greenville.
- Does more to develop tourism and heritage efforts of the Blues Corridor by following US 61
- Creates additional four-lane miles of highway in the Delta with use of the connector routes and improvements to existing highways.
- Is the shortest route
- Has least maintenance associated costs
- Is closer to more communities in Bolivar County and will benefit the existing population centers along US 61 between Clarksdale and Cleveland
- Does not create unnecessary additional highways that chop the Delta into smaller pieces creating unnecessary damage to the human and natural environments
- US 61 is an established four-lane and provides better opportunities for interchange access.

- By being located closer to the municipalities along US 61, the cost to municipalities of providing utility services to businesses at interchange locations would be less
- Has more proposed interchange locations; therefore, provides more access opportunities
- Provides best potential for reviving and developing local economies.
- Will expedite access to the Port of Rosedale and Delta State University
- Probability of capturing economic development potential is much greater than the other alternatives
- This area does not need two four-lane parallel highway facilities within a few miles of each other
- Would be closer to more industrial parks
- By following US 61, there would be less right of way needed and fewer environmental issues
- Least disruptive
- Least damaging from an ecological standpoint
- Provides good access to Great River Road State Park at Rosedale
- By following US 61, it offers the shortest and least expensive route for manufactures located between Cleveland and Clarksdale.
- Least disruptive to farmland
- Involves fewer wetlands.
- Least stream and floodplain impacts
- Shows good financial planning to select estimated cheapest route and the ecosystem would not be affected as much as the other alternatives because those other alternatives do not use US 61
- The industrial site on the east of Cleveland has limited expansion area and the Bolivar County believes this alternative has the best long-term economic growth potential for Cleveland and Bolivar County as a whole.
- The study determined this is a most defendable alternative
- Has most support from the public

- By passing closest to the minority communities along US 61, this alternative best meets Environmental Justice guidelines.
- Only alternative within the Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone
- Least disruptive to wild game and the natural habitat
- Shares with the Eastern Alternative the use of the southern crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista; thus placing an alternative as far south of Ray Brooks School as possible
- Shares with the Eastern Alternative the use of the southern crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista; thus placing an alternative as far away as possible from the Benoit Outing Club and the Bolivar community
- Least expensive, most feasible, and straightest path
- Common sense says to build the route along the already developed portion of Highway 61

Reasons provided for not supporting Central Alternative in Southern Section included:

- Questions that it is cheaper than other alternatives
- Is located too far away from Cleveland
- Is growing more residentially of the west side of Cleveland than the east
- Do not need to replace an easy access Hwy 61 with a facility only allowing access at interchange locations. Our communities are well served with Hwy 61. We need more, not less, 4-lane highways.
- Crosses more county roads and drainage ditches at severe angles, which makes bridge construction most costly
- This is some of the best agricultural production ground in the state with some of these family farms going back three generations
- Slices, or divides, too much prime farmland
- Some of the impacted farmland has been is families for generations, has been precision leveled, and has a tremendous agriculture base.
- Some of the impacted farmland fields are square, irrigable, and the land has high productivity for this area.

- Several years ago when the West bypass of Highway 61 was built, the MDOT acquired 40 acres of farmland from a family. This family advises the land on either side of the 40 acres that they retained became virtually worthless from a productive agriculture state. They advised the productivity dropped about 30% on the remainder of the property because of the manner in which the highway crossed their property. The Central Alternative will take over 150 acres of additional farmland from this family and leave cut up and odd shapes in the remainder of their impacted fields.
- Is a complete detriment to the long-range business interests of the City of Cleveland. Cleveland has an industrial park not being fully utilized, along with excellent medical care access on the east side of Cleveland. Most of the services provided in Cleveland for travelers are located along Highway 61. Why make potential customers come through Cleveland for services? Enhance business on the east side and leave the west side for residential growth.
- Would stop housing growth to the west of Cleveland
- Too far from emergency medical services offered by hospital at Cleveland
- As a member of a family who has farmed land in Bolivar County for several generations, I certainly understand the importance of I-69 and the promises of economic development that come along with it. These concerns are not meant to stand in the way of progress, but merely to present the other side of the coin. It is amazing how so much public opinion has been generated in favor of the Central Route by our elected officials and others who rely on farmers to sustain their own businesses. Private landowners were never reached out to by the community and thus stand to lose a great deal. The I-69 comment process has allowed public opinion to dictate the route at the expense of the private landowners without giving those impacted landowners much consideration.

Reasons provided for supporting Eastern Alternative in Southern Section included:

- Could be constructed quicker
- Shared crossing of SR 1 at Lake Vista with Central Alternative is the greatest distance away from Benoit
- Passes closer to Cleveland

- By looping around Cleveland to the south and east, this alternative has a greater length closer to Cleveland than the other two alternatives which pass west of Cleveland.
- Shares with the Eastern Alternative the use of the southern crossing of SR 1 near Lake Vista; thus placing an alternative as far away as possible from the Benoit Outing Club and the Bolivar community
- Is in the Central portion of the Delta
- Will furnish the best route to serve more of the Delta to be an economic benefit to more Delta people
- Will positively impact a greater portion of the whole Mississippi Delta and all of its residents than the other two alternatives.
- Will give the Whole Delta a second four-lane highway running parallel with Highway 61, which is already in the middle of Bolivar County, and would greatly increase the economic development for the entire Mississippi Delta.
- Will benefit Drew, Ruleville, Sunflower, Indianola, Itta Bena, Greenwood, and Grenada with an interstate highway
- Will bring education facilities closer to all Deltans
- Will be a more direct route from Clarksdale to Jackson
- The State of Mississippi owns an extremely large tract of land nearly adjacent to this alternative, and that tract of land is presently utilized for the State Penitentiary on a limited basis. The majority of such lands would be available for use for a major economic development project on the same scale as the previously State supported Nissan project near Canton, Mississippi. It is further believed that using this alternative adjacent to such State owned land would give a great advantage to the State of Mississippi in seeking economic development projects of such magnitude.
- Construction costs should be less
- There are no hazards to hinder the construction
- Impacts less prime farmland
- Impacts less existing roads

- Crosses intersecting county roads at better angles for bridge overpass construction
- Impacts less drainage
- Impacts fewer rural water associations
- Closer to Cleveland Industrial Park (which has empty buildings), hospital, and historic Downtown
- Closer to motels located along US 61 near Cleveland
- Does not interfere with residential expansion of Cleveland to the west
- More north-south and can go along property lines better
- Closer to Blues Heritage sites like Dockery Plantation and the burial site of Fannie Lou Hammer at Ruleville
- Destroys fewer homes
- Has lower land values
- East Cleveland, Ruleville, and Drew need more development than West Cleveland

Reasons provided for not supporting Eastern Alternative in Southern Section included:

- Too far east of existing population centers
- Would limit the economic growth east of Cleveland
- Would require industrial traffic to the Port of Rosedale to travel through Cleveland to access the interstate.
- Adds unnecessary length to the interstate.
- Runs through rural Sunflower County
- Has a number of wetland impacts in Sunflower County
- It doesn't make sense to spend federal dollars to support wetland development in this area only to then use federal dollars to build an interstate through them
- Has no municipal growth opportunities in Sunflower County portion
- Creates safety threat and detriment to tourism by passing so close to the State Penal Farm at Parchman
- Disruptions to duck hunting areas
- Extremely disruptive to farmlands and wetlands

- Crosses through environmentally sensitive lands
- Adversely affects wildlife
- Uses too much farmland, and we will not see positive effect

Comments on SR 8 Widening in Bolivar County from Rosedale to Cleveland

- Do not need a bypass at Pace
- Do widening through Pace along existing alignment
- Bypass at Pace would cause too much negative impacts on farming operations; therefore, do widening along existing alignment

Summary of Comment Forms' and Letters' Content
Submitted in Response to the Public Hearings on the One Alternative in the Middle Section between Clarksdale and the Coahoma-Rich area

Reasons provided for supporting the one alternative in the Middle Section included:

- Seems to be ideal route because of its use of the existing roadway
- Makes good economic sense

Reasons provided for not supporting the one alternative in the Middle Section included:

- Impact to a family farm at the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange

Summary of Comment Forms' and Letters' Content
Submitted in Response to Public Hearings on the Alternatives in the Northern Section between the Coahoma-Rich area and the SR 304 Spur east of Robinsonville

Reasons provided for supporting the Western Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- For visitors and tourists traveling on I-69 that would use the Welcome Center located on US 49 North near the US 61 intersection, it is the closest alternative to the Welcome Center

- For visitors and tourists traveling on I-69 that would use the Welcome Center, they would only have to exit at the US 49 North-SR 315 Interchange, proceed north on US 49 until slightly outside the limits of the interchange, and then turn left into the Welcome Center.
- Less costly and safer because it requires only one interchange at the junction of US 49 North and SR 315
- Believes there would be less chance of encountering Native American archaeological sites along US 61 than on new alignment
- Less costly because of its use of US 61

Reasons provided for not supporting the Western Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- Farmland impacts at the US 61 interchange near Dundee

Reasons provided for supporting the Central Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- A resident living on Verner Road in Tunica County advised they were willing to be relocated
- Seems to be the best route

Reasons provided for not supporting the Central Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- The concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives pass too far east of the Welcome Center
- For visitors and tourists traveling on the concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives that would use the Welcome Center, they would have to exit at the US 49 North-SR 315 Interchange, proceed north on a US 49 connector across the US 61 Interchange until slightly outside the limits of the interchange, and then turn left into the Welcome Center.

- The concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives require an interchange at the junction of SR 315 and the US 49 North Connector, a short US 49 North connector, and another partial interchange at US 61.
- More costly and not as safe because the concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives require two interchanges at the junction of SR 315 and the US 49 North
- Fears Welcome Center might be closed due to lack of use
- Believes there would more chance of encountering Native American archaeological sites on new alignment than along US 61
- Farmland impacts at the Crenshaw Road interchange

Reasons provided for supporting the Eastern Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- The shared Western and Central alternative in north Tunica County would divide a farm of concern to me; therefore, I support the Eastern Alternative
- North of Tunica in the vicinity of the Hollywood community, there is not a need to have so many highways (Old US 61, US 61, and I-69) so close together because not enough space is available for economic development opportunities without adversely impacting residents and residential development opportunities. The Eastern Alternative is farther away from existing population centers better suited for opening new economic development opportunities in the eastern portion of Tunica County along the SR 3 corridor.
- It would place I-69 at least four miles from their property

Reasons provided for not supporting the Eastern Alternative in the Northern Section included:

- The concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives pass too far east of the Welcome Center
- For visitors and tourists traveling on the concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives that would use the Welcome Center, they would have to exit at the

US 49 North-SR 315 Interchange, proceed north on a US 49 connector across the US 61 Interchange until slightly outside the limits of the interchange, and then turn left into the Welcome Center.

- The concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives require an interchange at the junction of SR 315 and the US 49 North Connector, a short US 49 North connector, and another partial interchange at US 61.
- More costly and not as safe because the concurrent Central and Eastern alternatives require two interchanges at the junction of SR 315 and the US 49 North
- Fears Welcome Center might be closed due to lack of use
- Believes there would more chance of encountering Native American archaeological sites on new alignment than along US 61
- Will reduce prime farmland that produces high value cotton and soybeans (Class I)
- Perennial streams and wetlands will be destroyed along Buck Island Bayou and the Coldwater River
- Wildlife habitat will be destroyed that provides food and cover for deer, turkey, rabbits, quail, and small animals
- Floodplain impacts
- Indian mounds yielding valuable pottery, artifacts, and arrowheads are found along the Buck Island corridor
- Conservation tillage is being practiced on farmland along these stream corridors
- Has more residential relocations than other alternatives
- Archaeological sites impacted
- Crosses and splits a three generation family farm
- Farmland impacts at the Crenshaw Road Interchange

Summary of the General Public and Local Officials Alternative Preferences by Section

The summary is based on comment forms, letters, and resolutions received in response to the public hearings.

Southern Section Preference for the Western Alternative – 1

Southern Section Preference for the Central Alternative – 370

Southern Section Preference for the Eastern Alternative – 54

Southern Section Preference for the Central Alternative with Lake Vista crossing of SR 1 – 8

Southern Section Preference for using Lake Vista crossing of SR 1 near Benoit – 4

Southern Section Preference for the Eastern to Central Loop Alternative around Cleveland – 20

Southern Section Preference for either the Eastern Alt. or the Eastern to Central Loop Alt. – 6

SR 8 Widening between Rosedale and Cleveland Support of Project – 3

SR 8 Widening between Rosedale and Cleveland Opposing Pace Bypass Alternative – 3

Middle Section Preference for Central Alternative – 4

Northern Section Preference for Western Alternative – 12

Northern Section Preference for Central Alternative – 3

Northern Section Preference for Eastern Alternative – 5

Northern Section Preference for either the Western or Central alternative – 1

Miscellaneous Comments Not Stating an Alt Preference, but Needing an MDOT Response – 26

Miscellaneous Comments Stating Support for the Project, but not an Alt. Preference – 12

Comment Forms Submitted Containing Contact Information and no Comments – 10

Resolutions or Letters of Support Received from Local Officials

In Response to the Public Hearings

Resolutions or Letters of Support for the Central Alternative in the Southern Section were received from the following.

- The Town of Merigold
- The City of Rosedale
- The Town of Duncan
- The Town of Beulah
- The Cleveland Airport Commission
- The City of Greenville
- Delta State University
- The Town of Boyle
- Bolivar County Economic Development District
- Port of Rosedale
- Bolivar County Council on Aging, Inc./Mississippi Public Transit
- The City of Mound Bayou
- The City of Cleveland
- The Town of Renova
- The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce
- The Town of Pace
- The City of Shaw
- The Bolivar County Board of Supervisors
- The City of Shelby

These resolutions or letters of support for the Central Alternative in the Southern Section were included in the totals previously listed under Summary of the General Public and Local Officials Alternative Preferences by Section.

Resolutions or Letters of Support for the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section were received from the following.

- The City of Indianola
- The Ruleville Chamber of Commerce
- The Drew Chamber of Commerce
- The City of Drew
- The North Sunflower Community Council of Sunflower County Drew-Ruleville, MS
- The Sunflower County Board of Supervisors
- The Economic Development District of Sunflower County

These resolutions or letters of support for the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section were included in the totals previously listed under Summary of the General Public and Local Officials Alternative Preferences by Section.

The resolution from the Sunflower County Board of Supervisors only referenced their support of the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section. The resolution from the City of Indianola referenced their support of the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section and their support of an interstate connector road or highway between Shaw and Indianola and that Highway 448 be four-laned in its entirety. The letter of support from the City of Indianola for the Eastern Alternative referenced that the four-laning of SR 448 between Indianola and Shaw is needed to provide interconnectivity between I-69 and the recently completed four-lane section of US 49 West (four-laned Indianola to Jackson and the Gulf Coast).

The resolutions of support for the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section from the Drew Chamber of Commerce, the City of Drew, and the North Sunflower Community Council of Sunflower County Drew-Ruleville, Mississippi also expressed support for the following initiatives associated with the construction of Highway I-69.

- High priority to for four-lane Highway 8 from Ruleville to Rosedale
- High priority to four-lane Highway 49 from Clarksdale to Indianola
- Improvements to the Drew-Merigold Road
- Improvements to Highway 32 between Shelby and Parchman

The resolution from the Ruleville Chamber of Commerce expressed support for the same initiatives associated with the construction of Highway I-69 items identified above in the resolutions from entities in Drew and the Ruleville Chamber of Commerce Resolution also included the following additional initiatives.

- To four-lane SR 448 between Shaw and Indianola
- Improve Highway 1 from Rosedale to Benoit

The resolution from the Economic Development District of Sunflower County expressed support for the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section and the following related issues associated with the construction of I-69, including the following.

- An interstate-designated four-lane connector route from Shaw to Indianola (old State Highway 448)
- Higher priority for the improvement to four lanes for State Highway 8 from Cleveland to Ruleville
- Resumption of the decades old plan to four-lane U.S. Highway 49W between Drew and Ruleville
- Improvement of the two-lane connector road from Merigold to Drew
- Improvement of the two-lane connector road between Shelby and Parchman

Public Involvement

Follow-up Action in Response to the Identical Series of Public Hearings
Subject: Modifications of Alternatives West of Cleveland

The project team considered the modification in the shared portion of the Central and Western alternative between the Bogue Phalia and SR 8 which was suggested by the Aguzzi Family at the project team meeting with the Aguzzi Family on December 14, 2004. In addition to the Aguzzi Family's request, the Davis and Hiter families had expressed concern at the public hearings about the manner in which the Central Alternative divided their farmland between SR 8 and Merigold.

In response to the review of the modified alternative recommended by the Aguzzi Family and the concerns expressed at the public hearings by the Davis and Hiter families, the shared Central and Western between the Bogue Phalia and SR 8 and the Central Alternative between SR 8 and Merigold were modified by the project team. The modifications made by the project team used the general corridor recommended by the Aguzzi family south of SR 8, and north of SR 8 the modifications resulted in the Central Alternative following more of a north-south and east-west alignment adjacent to parallel county roads, which could become frontage roads.

The modifications made in the alternatives by the project team between the Bogue Phalia and Merigold resulted in improved alternatives because less farmland was divided, more parallel county roads were incorporated into the right of way as frontage roads, the number of residents being relocated were reduced, the impacts to farmland was shared better between landowners, the farmland was generally crossed at the outer property edges or adjacent to a county road, there was less disruption to drainage, and there were less disruptions to county roads as crossing locations where bridges would be required.

The modified alternatives kept the same crossing at the Bogue Phalia, a slightly adjusted crossing of Litton Road, a slightly adjusted crossing at SR 446, the same crossing at SR 8, and slightly adjusted the interchange where the Central Alternative connects to US 61.

Public Involvement

Neel-Schaffer mailing to Ms. Amy Vance and Mr. Greg Mangialardi dated December 27, 2004
Subject: Copy of the Handout Provided at the Cleveland Public Hearing

Due to the large attendance at the pubic hearing in Cleveland, the project team did not have enough handout packets for everyone in attendance. As their request, Ms. Amy Vance and Mr. Greg Mangialardi were both mailed a copy of the handout after the hearing.

Public Involvement

Neel-Schaffer mailing to Mr. Charles Antici dated December 27, 2004
Subject: Alternative Mapping on Aerial Photography for the One Alternative in the Middle Section at the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange

Mr. Antici is a landowner impacted by this interchange, and he was mailed this information in response to a request made at the Public Hearing in Tunica.

Public Involvement

Neel-Schaffer mailing to Ms. Marilyn Williams dated December 30, 2004
Subject: Alternative Mapping on Aerial Photography for Alternatives in the Northern Section

Ms. Williams is a landowner between SR 4 and Prichard Road. At the Public Hearing in Tunica she asked to be provided this mapping information on the alternatives so that she could better understand the location of the alternatives relative to her property.

Public Involvement

Request by Bolivar County Administrator Mr. Adrian L. Brown Addressed by FedEx on December 30, 2004
Subject: Display of Southern Section Alternatives for the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors

In response to his request for a display that could be placed on an easel in the Office of the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors, Mr. Brown was provided a 30 inch by 40 inch color plot which was laminated and placed on foam core. The display depicted the alternatives presented at the recent public hearings for the Southern Section between Benoit and Clarksdale.

Public Involvement

Project Team-Landowners Meeting on January 4, 2005

Subject: Modifications of Alternatives West of Cleveland Made After the Public Hearings

As the request of most of the major landowners between the Bogue Phalia and Merigold, a meeting was held at the Neel-Schaffer Office in Jackson to discuss the project team's modified alternatives. In attendance at the meeting were landowners Henry Hiter Jr., Randy Howarth, Ronnie Aguzzi, Judge Jefcoat, and Pemble Davis, and project team representatives Claiborne Barnwell of the MDOT and Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer. The MDOT Third District was invited to send representation to the meeting, but no one was able to attend. At this meeting, the project team showed the landowners the modified alternatives, answered their questions, and listened to their comments.

Messrs. Hiter and Davis suggested a slight change in the modification in the Central Alternative Interchange at US 61 near Merigold. The landowners at the meeting still do not want alternatives to cross their property; but they accepted that if alternatives must cross their property, the modified alternatives were better for them than the ones presented at the public hearings.

After this meeting, the interchange at Merigold was modified and a cultural resource survey was conducted on the modified Central Alternative between the Bogue Phalia and Merigold. The cultural resource survey did not find anything that justified further modification of the Central Alternative in this area.

Public Involvement

Neel-Schaffer Correspondence to Mr. Scott Luth of the Cleveland-Bolivar Co Chamber of Commerce dated January 10, 2005

Subject: Modified Central Alternative Presented to Bolivar Co Landowners on January 4, 2005

At the request of the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Scott Luth was provided copies of the alternative mapping for the modified Central Alternative, which was discussed at the meeting with the Bolivar County landowners on January 4, 2005.

It was hoped the Chamber would receive the information on the modified Central Alternative and have time to review the information prior to the Chamber's next scheduled meeting with the project team. However, the Chamber did not receive the information before meeting with the project team on January 12th.

Public Involvement

Project Team/Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce Meeting on January 12, 2005

Subject: Modifications of Alternatives West of Cleveland Made After the Public Hearings and Reconsideration of the Eastern Loop Alternative at Cleveland

This meeting with representatives of the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce at the Office of Neel-Schaffer in Jackson on January 12, 2005. The purpose of this meeting was to listen to their concerns and comments, and to brief the Chamber Officials on the modifications that were made in the shared portion of the Central and Western alternatives between the Bogue Phalia and SR 8 and in the Central Alternative between SR 8 and Merigold.

Those in attendance at the meeting representing the Chamber were Dean Morganti, Lucy Janoush, Scott Luth, John Aguzzi, Judson Thigpen, J.Y. Trice, Donnie Whitten, David Work, and Bob Eley. The project team was represented at this meeting by Claiborne Barnwell of the MDOT, and Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer. The MDOT Third District was invited to send representation to the meeting, but no one was able to attend.

The Chamber representatives were satisfied with the modifications the project team had made to lessen farmland impacts in the alternatives between the Bogue Phalia and Merigold. After that briefing, the Chamber representatives advised they wanted to discuss the possibility of reconsidering the previously dropped alternative that would loop around Cleveland to the east and join US 61 at Merigold. This was a request that several people had made at the public hearing in Cleveland, as documented in the minutes of the hearings, and the Chamber representatives advised a number of people had contacted them after the hearing asking for reconsideration of the eastern loop alternative.

As a result of this meeting, it was agreed the project team would study the Chamber's request to the degree necessary to determine if the loop alternative warranted further consideration. If the Chamber did not receive a response to their request in a time frame meeting their expectations, it was agreed the Chamber could write a letter requesting a response to reconsidering the eastern loop alternative around Cleveland as a viable alternative.

Public Involvement

Project Team Meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Antici on January 14, 2005
Subject: Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange Concept for Central Alternative in Middle Section

This meeting was held in the MDOT Environmental Division Conference Room with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Antici and project team representatives Claiborne Barnwell of the MDOT and Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Antici Family's concerns about the design presented at the public hearing for the Coahoma-Jonestown Interchange in the Middle Section for the Central Alternative.

The Anticis were advised the design, which placed the interchange north of the crossroad, was necessary to avoid several archaeological sites along the crossroad at the current intersection with US 61. After weighing the importance of avoiding known

archaeological sites against the additional farmland impacts that offsetting the interchange causes and against the out of direction travel for crossroad traffic and exiting interstate traffic that offsetting the interchange causes, it was agreed the project team would develop a new concept for presentation to Archives and History and their approval that would minimize the impacts to archaeological sites and align the crossroad at this interchange location.

The project team made no promises to the Anticis that Archives and History would approve of the modified interchange, but they advised the Anticis the modification request justified consideration.

Public Involvement

Meeting with Mr. Lawrence Murphy on January 17, 2005
Subject: Alternatives for Widening SR 8 at Pace and Elimination of Pace Bypass Alternative

Mr. Lawrence Murphy met with Jimmy Shirley in Mr. Shirley's office at Neel-Schaffer in Jackson. The purpose of the meeting was to assure Mr. Murphy that the Pace Bypass alternative for widening SR 8 to four-lanes was no longer an option and that the widening would be accomplished through Pace along existing alignment using a four-lane divided section to the west of Pace, a five-lane section through the built-up area of Pace to the eastern edge of Pace, and a four-lane divided section east of Pace. At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Pace was provided a copy of an aerial photography map depicting the one alternative for widening SR 8 through Pace on existing alignment.

Public Involvement

MDOT Letter to Former State Senator Delma Furniss dated January 27, 2005
Subject: The Two Alternative Corridors in Northern Section near the Welcome Center

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell of the MDOT provided a response to Former State Senator Delma Furniss concerning the alternatives in the Northern Section of the study in the

vicinity of the Welcome Center, located in Coahoma County on US 49 North near the intersection with US 61.

The letter acknowledged receipt of a recent letter and public hearing comments from Senator Furniss expressing his support for the Western Alternative in the vicinity of the Welcome Center named in his honor. The MDOT advised Senator Furniss that it might be determined that the archaeology along the Western Alternative cannot be mitigated to the satisfaction of the agencies, the Native Americans, and the MDOT. If that is the case, the MDOT letter advised the MDOT would likely have to consider the shared Eastern and Central alternative in this area because the shared alternative is an acceptable alternative from an archaeological perspective.

Public Involvement

Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce Letter dated January 27, 2005
Subject: Eastern Alternative Loop in Southern Section around Cleveland

In response to the meeting with the Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce at Neel-Schaffer on January 12, 2005, the following Chamber of Commerce representatives signed this letter which was mailed to the MDOT Environmental Division and Neel-Schaffer.

- Mr. Lucy Janoush, in her capacity as a Board Member of the I-69 Mid-Continent Highway Coalition, Inc.
- Mr. Ancil Cox, in his capacity as the Co-Chair of the Great River Bridge Compact Authority
- Honorable Martin King, in his capacity as the Mayor of Cleveland
- Honorable Richard Coleman, in his capacity as the President of the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors

Given the choices presented at the public hearings, their letter advised the City of Cleveland, Bolivar County, other municipalities, and many businesses continue to support and recommend the Central Alternative. The letter expressed appreciation for the

follow-up meetings after the public hearings with member of the Bolivar County farming community and the modifications that were made in the Central Alternative to lessen the farmland impacts. Encouragement was offered in the letter to make the changes in the Central Alternative a permanent part of that alternative.

After the public hearings, the letter stated there had been many discussions with the farming community. Based on those discussions, the Chamber letter requested that further study be given to the possibility of an Eastern Loop alternative around Cleveland that would branch off the Central Alternative at Merigold and go east of Cleveland to join the Eastern Alternative. As part of the Eastern Loop alternative study, the Chamber requested that a Western Highway 8 Connector from Merigold be included for the Port of Rosedale. The Chamber requested a sufficient study be conducted to determine if the Eastern Loop alternative is a viable option, and whether the additional study would cause a substantial delay, or add considerable expense to the EIS process.

The project team was in the process of addressing this request based on the discussions which occurred at the previous meeting with the Chamber representatives on January 12, 2004. It was concluded by the project team that this study of the Eastern Loop alternative would be completed and included in the presentation that the project team would make to the MDOT Technical Staff on a Recommended Preferred Alternative. A response to the Chamber would then be provided after the meeting with the MDOT Technical Staff.

Public Involvement

Neel-Schaffer Correspondence to Mr. Charles Speakes dated February 1, 2005
Subject: Mapping on Aerial Photography for Southern Section Alternates near SR 448 at Benoit

Mr. Charles Speakes is a landowner in the Benoit area. In a telephone conversation with Mr. Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer, Mr. Speakes requested this mapping for the alternatives under consideration in the vicinity of his family's property.

Public Involvement

Neel-Schaffer Correspondence to Ms. Lena Dean dated February 2, 2005
Subject: Shared Modified Central and Eastern alternative near Tunica-Coahoma County Line

At the public hearing in Clarksdale, Mr. Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer met with Ms. Dean and advised her there were some archaeological sites discovered after the public hearings were scheduled involving the shared alignment presented at the public hearings for the Eastern and Central alternative in the vicinity of the Tunica-County Line. Mr. Shirley had informed Ms. Dean two slight modifications in this shared alternative had been studied and determined to be acceptable alternatives from an archaeological perspective. At the hearing, Mr. Shirley told Ms. Dean the modification that crossed Flea Harbor Road farther to the west requiring the relocation of her home would be the likely choice of the two possible modifications for the shared Central and Eastern alternative.

After the hearings, Mr. Shirley had a couple of telephone conversations with Ms. Dean. During his last conversation with Ms. Dean, she was informed the western modified Central and Eastern alternative that required the relocation of her home was the better of the two modified alternatives under consideration, and that the western modified alternative had been selected as the alignment that would be used for the shared Central and Eastern alternative in this area. During his last conversation with Ms. Dean, Mr. Shirley discussed the problems with the archaeology along US 61 near Lula for the Western Alternative near the Welcome Center, and that these archaeological problems might require the project team to select the modified Central and Eastern alternative in this area. Ms. Dean was very understanding, and she asked Mr. Shirley to provide her a copy of the alternative mapping on aerial photography in this area.

The alternative mapping requested by Ms. Dean was mailed to her by Mr. Shirley on February 2, 2005.

Public Involvement

MDOT Environmental Division Letter to Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce dated March 10, 2005
Subject: Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce's Letter dated January 27, 2005

MDOT Environmental Division Engineer Claiborne Barnwell provided a response to the previously described letter from the Chamber signed by Ms. Lucy Janoush, Mr. Ancil Cox, Cleveland Mayor Martin King, and Bolivar County Board of Supervisors President Richard Colement and dated January 27, 2005.

Given the choices presented at the public hearings, the Chamber's letter advised the City of Cleveland, Bolivar County, other municipalities, and many businesses continue to support and recommend the Central Alternative. The letter expressed appreciation for the follow-up meetings after the public hearings with member of the Bolivar County farming community and the modifications that were made in the Central Alternative to lessen the farmland impacts. Encouragement was offered in the letter to make the changes in the Central Alternative a permanent part of that alternative.

After the public hearings, the letter stated there had been many discussions with the farming community. Based on those discussions, the Chamber letter requested that further study be given to the possibility of an Eastern Loop alternative around Cleveland that would branch off the Central Alternative at Merigold and go east of Cleveland to join the Eastern Alternative. As part of the Eastern Loop alternative study, the Chamber requested that a Western Highway 8 Connector from Merigold be included for the Port of Rosedale. The Chamber requested a sufficient study be conducted to determine if the Eastern Loop alternative is a viable option, and whether the additional study would cause a substantial delay, or add considerable expense to the EIS process.

In duplicate response letters to Ms. Janoush, Mr. Cox, Mayor King, and Supervisor Coleman, Mr. Barnwell informed the Chamber of the following:

- The project team has adjusted the Central Alternative between Litton Road and Merigold. These adjustments lessened the amount of farmland being divided, reduced the residences requiring relocation, incorporated more county roads as frontage roads, and provided an overall improved alternative.
- The study comparing the Modified Eastern Alternative with the Modified Central Alternative is being conducted by the project's consultant and is under review by the MDOT and FHWA staffs. Upon completion of these reviews, a meeting will be arranged to explain the decision in sufficient detail to the Chamber.

Public Involvement

Meeting with Mr. Ray Smith on March 10, 2005

Subject: The Northern Section Central Alternative's Division of Mr. Ray Smith's Farmland

As a follow-up to Mr. Smith's attendance at the public hearing in Tunica and at his request, Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley traveled to farm headquarters south of Tunica and met with Mr. Smith to discuss his concerns about the Central Alternative's division of his farmland.

Along approximately seven miles of the Central Alternative between Crenshaw Road and SR 4, Mr. Smith owns land on one of both sides of the alternative. The land ownership records identify the property he owns by the designation of Oaklawn Plantation or Ray Smith. His concerns were similar to the concerns expressed by the Bolivar County landowners in the Cleveland area.

Messrs. Walker and Shirley discussed the process used to develop the alternatives based on opportunities and constraints, and that the project team was asked by Tunica County to provide an interchange where the alternatives cross Dubbs Road. Mr. Smith was well aware of the natural gas pipeline corridors in this area, and he accepted that there were only two locations to cross Dubbs Road in the area between his headquarters and

Limerick Road. Those possible crossing locations of Dubbs Road were at the current location presented at the public hearing and a location slightly east of Crosstown Road that would cross Dubbs Road in the vicinity of an old abandoned church. When asked by Messrs. Walker and Shirley about the church, Mr. Smith stated the church was abandoned after the new church was built on Dubbs Road slightly west of Limerick Road, and he advised there were not any burials at the old church site. It is Mr. Smith's belief that the old dilapidated church does not have any historical significance and that it could be torn down if the Dubbs Road Interchange was moved to this location.

Mr. Smith recognizes that the Central Alternative from Crenshaw Road north for approximately two miles to near the crossing of Bill Pegram Road is an acceptable alternative. During most of this distance, the alternative is adjacent to Bill Pegram Road on the west side and Bill Pegram Road is being incorporated into the alternative as an East Frontage Road. It is Mr. Smith's desire to adjust the Central Alternative crossing of Bill Pegram Road slightly to the south in a manner that would cross Dubbs Road at the old abandoned church site and then parallel Limerick Road to the west until turning to interchange with SR 4 at its present location. He believes this would be a better alternative because it would divide farmland less, incorporate more parallel county roads into I-69 as frontage roads, and better balance the farmland impacts between landowners adjacent to the corridor.

Messrs. Walker and Shirley advised Mr. Smith his request appeared to have merit, and they advised him the project team would take the same actions to address his request as those that were taken to address the requests made by the landowners in the Cleveland area. This satisfied Mr. Smith and the meeting adjourned.

After the meeting, Messrs. Walker and Shirley verified there were no obvious burials on the abandoned church grounds. Several weeks after the meeting, a representative from Coastal Environments inspected the abandoned church site and determined the church would not be considered a historical property. The project team developed a modified Central Alternative in this area and processed the modified alignment to Coastal

Environments for them to conduct the required archaeological studies to the same level on the modified alternative as those that have been performed on the current alternative. If the archaeology studies determine the modified alternative to be as good of an alternative as the current Central Alternative, the project team will recommend changing the current alternative to the modified alignment and the modified alternative in this area will become the project team's Recommended Preferred Alternative.

Public Involvement

Submittal of Draft Responses to MDOT Environmental Div. on February 18 and March 14, 2005

Subject: Correspondence Received by the MDOT and FHWA and/or Public Hearing Comments Requiring a Response from the MDOT

In response to the public hearings, a number of local governmental agencies or groups adopted a resolution and mailed the resolution to the MDOT. Letters were also mailed by governmental officials, groups, and citizens to the staff of the MDOT and the FHWA in response to the hearings.

These resolutions of support for a particular alternative or alternative segment are addressed in the minutes on the public hearing. The letters of support the MDOT received for a particular alternative segment or letters the MDOT received concerning other issues requiring a response are also addressed in the minutes on the public hearings.

These resolutions and letters received by the MDOT were processed to Neel-Schaffer to assist Neel-Schaffer in preparing prepare the minutes on the pubic hearings and to assist Neel-Schaffer in developing a Draft Response to the correspondence received by the MDOT. It was decided the MDOT would use the Draft Response in the following ways: to acknowledge receipt of the resolution or letters; and, to respond to needed issues or comments expressed in the resolutions or letters. For example, several people requested reconsideration of the previously eliminated Eastern Loop Alternative around Cleveland,

which would be a combination of the Central and the Eastern Alternative in the Southern Section.

Neel-Schaffer developed 52 Draft responses and processed those responses by e-mail to the MDOT for revising as needed on February 18, 2004. The remaining 147 Draft Responses were processed to the MDOT on March 14, 2005.

JRS:jrs

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 -- ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12-14-04

NAME: Randy Howarth

ADDRESS: 1851 Hwy 446
Boyle Ms. 38730

COMMENTS: First let me say that I am not against the construction of I-69 but I do not think that the entire centeral route is the best route for the region. I support an eastern route that ties into the central route south of Marigold and uses the eastern route around Cleveland and the southern route around Benoit. Because: (1) it is still close to the smaller towns along Hwy 61 North of Cleveland and would be about central to the Delta south of Marigold.
(2) closer to Cleveland on East side and more accessable to the Cleveland Industrial Park and Medical Center.
(3) at this time most of the home building is west of Cleveland
(cont)

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

COMMENTS:

It is my opinion that this will stop because no one will want to build close to the interstate.

(4) It would be located closer to Parchman, a large parcel of land owned by the state of Ms. that could be developed in the future for such things as an airline hub or automobile factory.

If the central route is chosen I would like to see several thing considered:

(1) a crossing on yale st. extended

(2) an interchang on Hwy 4/6

(3) encourage MDOT to follow land lots; section lines as much as possible with frequent crossings.

(4) MDOT be responsible for drainage - where it is interrupted.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12-29-04

NAME: Ronald Aguzzi

ADDRESS: 431 Yale Rd.
Cleveland Ms. 38732

COMMENTS: Attached:

Thanks for allowing some extra time before I have final comments.

Ronald Aguzzi

RECEIVED
JAN 3 2005

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

{After attending the public comment forum in Cleveland, Mississippi, I am in favor of the Eastern Route.}

After attending the public comment forum in Cleveland, Mississippi, I am in favor of the Eastern Route. After studying the maps, I would also favor the Central Route with an alignment alternative change (south of Merigold) which goes East of Cleveland and loops South of Boyle to access the Bridge Alignment at Benoit. This route gives easier access to Sunflower, Washington, and Leflore Counties creating a better economic climate for the entire Mississippi Delta.

By going East of Cleveland, less drainage, county roads, and rural water associations would be impacted. This route also crosses the existing county roads more perpendicular which creates easier overpass construction. Landowners along this route would be less impacted because landlines could be followed more easily. The direct path of this route enables the local infrastructure to remain intact, thus maintaining more roads open for local traffic, including farm equipment, residential traffic, service vehicles, and emergency response vehicles.

A route West of Cleveland would leave a negative impact on many businesses in Cleveland and landowners. The Central Route, once it leaves South Merigold, cuts large tracts of land into small pieces at an angle, thus leaving some small triangular shaped fields useless for farming. This route also crosses more county roads and drainage ditches at an angle, thus creating a greater problem for overpass construction. It is also a limiting factor for the Mississippi River and the Port of Rosedale from Cleveland since the major crossing access will be Highway 8. Most of our port traffic is from farmers and elevators. This may eventually create a bottleneck for local traffic when there is a controlled crossing point.

All in all, the benefits from an Interstate for Cleveland, Bolivar County, and the entire Delta are essential. That is why it is important for each of these concerns to be researched and considered thoroughly. It would be detrimental for a final decision to be made without both sides coming together to compromise on what is best for the Mississippi Delta.

Ronald M. Agers

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12-14-04

NAME: MICHAEL AGUZZI

ADDRESS: 805 CROSBY RD
Cleveland, MS 38732

COMMENTS: - Attached

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

Agriculture is the number one industry in the Mississippi Delta. Many farms that are currently located on the western side of Cleveland are the direct result of decades of work to ensure increased productivity while conserving the land. Sustainable agriculture can only rely on the conservation of our natural resources that are currently in place. This is why farmers have spent millions of dollars in conservation efforts such as precision land leveling to conserve water, building levees around fields to stop soil erosion as well as filter runoff, flooding fields during the wintertime to provide a winter waterfowl habitat, and utilizing tailwater recovery systems to recharge surface irrigation sources. These are just a few examples of the efforts farmers have made to create a better environment to preserve our natural resources and create more profitable farms.

If one were to compare the land of the central alternative to the land in the eastern alternative, I think it would be easy to see why an Interstate Design Engineer has found a route which minimizes the impact of the land. The land west of Cleveland where the central route is proposed has, for the most part, undergone these numerous conservative transformations. There are large tracts of land available which encompass these design characteristics. If one were to go over to the east side of Cleveland, there seems to be smaller tracts of land on which very little, if any, improvements have been made. Low lying areas and numerous elevation changes make it somewhat unsuitable for large-scale production agriculture because very little conservation efforts have been made at this time.

Also, I do not think the correct land value assessment (Central vs. Eastern) has been made. Once the large tracts of land on the Central Route are divided up, it is going to take more money to put those pieces back into production. (For example, a well which services 100 acres that has been split in two by an interstate will only service the piece of land where the well is located. A new well must be put on the other side of the interstate to service the piece of land which is now cut off from the original location. Also, the land elevation will have to be changed so that the new well can properly service the new location. New field boundaries and levees must also be created to both pieces of land. It is also not good conservation to have to put in many additional wells.)

When taking these things into consideration, I don't understand why more effort hasn't been put into the eastern alternative, or a variation thereof. In my opinion, it is possible for the arguments for the central alternative, as well as the arguments for the eastern alternative to be compromised on. This would create a win-win situation for Bolivar County and the entire Delta. The proposal is an alternative which was taken out previously with no explanation. If I remember correctly, the route followed Hwy. 61 South out of Clarksdale as the Central Route does. Around Merigold, it continued to the east of Cleveland and continued towards Boyle. It looped around Boyle and then started turning towards the Bridge Alignment at Benoit.

This alternative addresses many of the concerns of the businesses of Cleveland. The Interstate would run closer to Cleveland's Industrial Park and Hospital. It remains as close to Delta State University as the Central Route does. It will be just as accessible to the City of Cleveland, Cleveland Municipal Airport, and the Rosedale-Bolivar County

Port, (especially when Hwy. 8 is four-laned). The entire city and immediate surrounding areas will remain intact, thus creating a better business climate for Cleveland-Bolivar County.

This alternative also addresses some of the concerns of our neighbors from other parts of the Delta. It would be more accessible to Sunflower County residents and others. I-55 and I-69 would both be able to serve the entire Delta more effectively due to their respective locations. Other Delta towns could easily improve existing routes or build new access roads without going to greater expenses due to the closer location of I-69 to the heart of the Delta. Drainage in this area may be improved when excavation sites allow runoff to channel into the Sunflower River, which has a recent history of low flow levels.

As a fifth generation farmer in Bolivar County, I certainly understand the importance of I-69 and the promises of economic development that come along with it. These concerns are not meant to "stand in the way of progress", but merely to present the "other side of the coin". It is amazing how so much public opinion has been generated in favor of the Central Route; especially the endorsements from our elected officials, the Chamber of Commerce, and other business owners who rely on the success of farmers to sustain their own businesses. Private landowners who are directly affected in this issue were never "reached out to" by the community and thus stand to lose a great deal. The I-69 comment process has allowed public opinion to dictate the route at the expense of private landowners without much consideration.

In closing, it appears to me from the number of endorsements presented that the central route will be chosen as the final route. I sincerely hope that the I-69 Steering Committee hasn't already made nor will not make a final decision until all concerns have been thoroughly researched. The betterment of the entire Delta rests on your final decision.

Sincerely,

Michael Aguzzi

Jimmy Shirley

From: Judson Thigpen [jthig@bellsouth net]

Sent: Thursday, December 30, 2004 5:35 PM

To: I69

Subject: I-69 Comments

Comment Sheet
I-69 Section 11 - Robinsonville to Benoit
Environmental Impact Statement

To: Robert Walker, P.E
Neel-Schaffer, Inc
P O Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

From: Judson Thigpen III
P O Box 1587
Cleveland, MS 38732

NOTE: I PREVIOUSLY MADE MY COMMENTS IN WRITING AT THE CLEVELAND HEARING. THIS IS AN AMENDMENT TO MY PREVIOUS COMMENTS.

I have stated my overwhelming support for the Central Route for I-69 through Bolivar County and I continue with that support However, after listening to some of the concerns of residents In the county, I would like to see the study reopened for the loop to the east side of Cleveland It is my understanding this was actually one of the routes that was in the plan at an earlier stage but was taken out when the current Eastern Route was inserted

The route I refer to would maintain the Central Route that follows U.S. Highway 61 coming south until Merigold At Merigold the route would then move eastward in the vicinity of the Entergy Steam Plant to the east of Cleveland where it would then follow the Eastern Route to Benoit

There are a number of reasons I would like to see this study include the eastern loop. Bolivar County has a good road structure that helps rural residents move easily through rural areas. From Merigold to the Litton area the Central Route moves through the county at an angle that could inhibit the use of many of these roads and drainage ditches. It seems to me the Emergency Services would be impacted in their ability to reach certain areas from Cleveland to the west side of the Interstate Second, the loop to the east of Cleveland would better serve our existing Industrial Park. Third, the eastern loop would provide better access for our neighboring Sunflower County And fourth, I do think the prime agricultural area that would be affected west of Cleveland does need to be taken into consideration as this is some of the best maintained farmland in the country

Once again, I am in support of the Central Route However, because of the reasons stated, I think we may be better served with the loop to the east side of Cleveland. It is my desire to see the eastern loop put back into study.

Sincerely,

Judson Thigpen III

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12-14-04

NAME: John Agazzi

ADDRESS: 227 Yale ST
Cleveland MS 38732

COMMENTS: I would Like For Hwy 61 to be used To Merigold & Turn EAST by The Steam plant & run EAST of Cleveland.

① Closer To our INDUSTRIAL PARK ② Housing growth in Cleveland has been To The west. The I-69 INTERSTATE on The west side would Stop housing growth to The west The noise will be a major CONCERN.

The land on The west side has All been LASER Leveled & would be cut in pie shapes not suitable For Farming. The INTERSTATE will divide county in half making harder ACCESS To either side.

The EAST route would benefit more of The Delta As A Whole.

I do NOT think you need A by PASS Around PLACE on Hwy 8 west.

I prefer going on & Widening EXISTing Hwy 8

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

The proposed Central Route, once it leaves the South side of Merigold, slices acre upon acre of prime farmland into triangles. This route greatly negates the decades of work and millions of dollars spent in conservation efforts to keep this land in production for generations to come. As farmers, we have gone to extensive lengths to ensure that we create a sustainable agricultural system, all while overcoming many obstacles over the years. These efforts have resulted in agriculture being our number one industry in Bolivar County.

It is important to me that we not lose sight of the original goal of I-69. That is to bring economic development to the Mississippi Delta. When one looks at the alternatives, the Eastern Route, or a slight variation of the Eastern Route, clearly emerges as the best alternative to do this.

1. Runs through the heart of the Delta
2. More accessible for Sunflower, Washington, & Leflore Counties
3. Closer to Cleveland's Industrial Park (which has empty buildings)
4. Closer to Cleveland's Historic Downtown
5. Closer to Delta State University
6. Easily accessible to the Cleveland Municipal Airport
7. Easily accessible to the Bolivar County Port at Rosedale
8. Lower land values on the East side of Cleveland
9. Crosses less county roads & ditches
10. Destroys fewer homes

These concerns need to be thoroughly researched before the final route is chosen. There has been strong public support for the Central Route from many Clevelanders. However, I feel that a compromise can be reached if we all work together to create a win-win situation for Cleveland, Bolivar County, and the entire Mississippi Delta. The I-69 Design Team needs to be aware that even though there may be strong support for a certain route, possible tweaking, alignment changes, and alternative loops may be necessary to create the "best" possible route to achieve our common goal.

Sincerely,

Joe Aguzzi

Joe Aguzzi

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COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: DEC. 13, 2004

NAME: JAMES E. HESTER
P.O. BOX 118
BENOIT, MS 38725

ADDRESS:

COMMENTS: Looking at the economic considerations for I-69 , I believe the central route following Hwy 61 makes the best economic sense.

Any and every farmer will be impacted in some way with this highway. My concern is two fold: First, how to get from one side of the highway to another side when property is split.

And at the location on the maps presented in the folders where the three routes merge south of Skeene, I would recommend that you continue with the central or red route until you get to the green route. But instead of going north at the end of Lake Bolivar, I recommend following the green route across Lake Bolivar at the Lake Vista Bridge on Lake Bolivar then go to the Great River Bridge.

I think that this route would impact less premium farm land than either of the other two routes.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

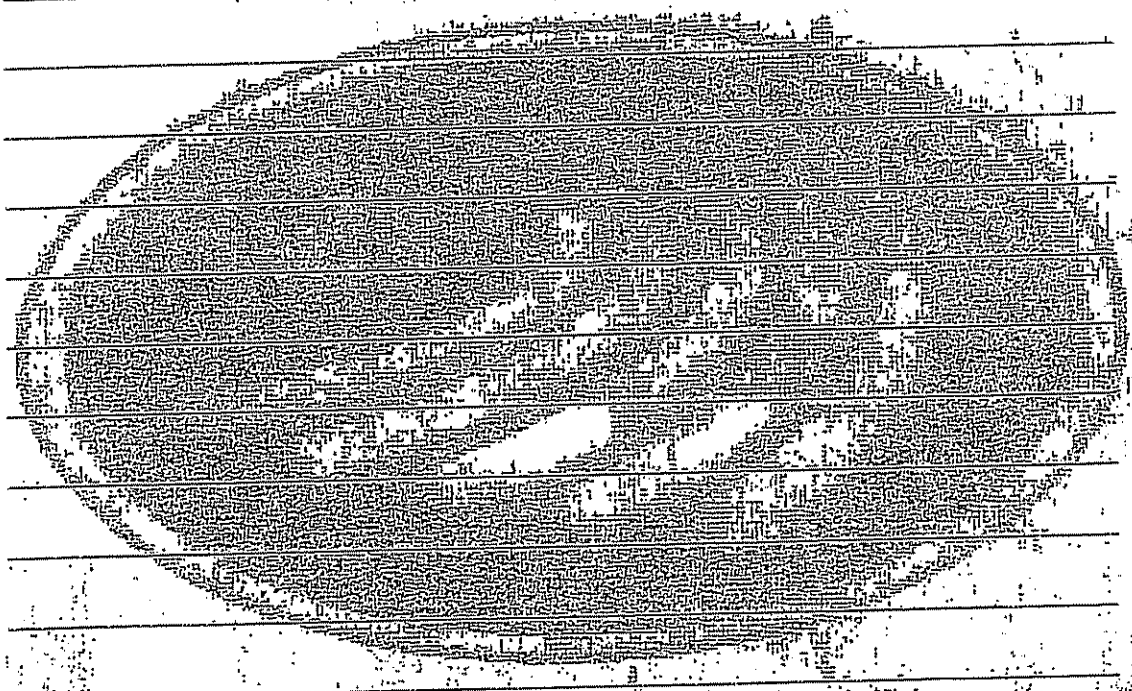
I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12-31-04

NAME: Elizabeth Rowland

ADDRESS: 309 South Leflore Avenue
Cleveland, Ms 38732

COMMENTS: "See attached"



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After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

12-31-04

Cleveland Mississippi became my home almost 16 years ago and it is a place that I am very proud to call my own. Upon graduation from Delta State University, I made a personal to begin my career here because I felt Cleveland was the best place to live. Cleveland is a community rich in quality family life and in my opinion, is the last stronghold in the Delta. We are also a community deeply rooted in agriculture and filled with many generational farmers whose families have produced crops for over 100 years. Our local farmers and landowners take great pride in their life-long careers and livelihood; therefore they have gone to great lengths to ensure that a sustainable agricultural system is created

millions of dollars have been spent on land conservation in order to keep it in production for generations to come. This is a direct result of agriculture leading our industry in Bolivar County.

The #1 goal of Interstate 69 is to bring economic development to the Mississippi Delta and I believe the Eastern Route, or a slight variation of it, is the best alternative to accomplish this. The reasons I feel this route is best are as follows:

1. Closer to Cleveland's Industrial Park
2. Closer to Cleveland's Historic Downtown
3. Closer to Delta State University
4. More accessible for Washington, Sunflower & Leflore Counties
5. Destroys fewer homes.

Although the Central Route has had strong support from the public in Cleveland, I feel that a compromise can be reached if everyone works together to create a situation that benefits the entire Mississippi Delta. I hope the I-69 team would thoroughly research all concerns before

Choosing the final route. After all, I would like to see the Eastern Route or a slight variation chosen because I feel it is so important that Bolivar County and all our neighboring counties reap the benefits from this project. I believe it creates the best alternative for everyone involved in the entire Mississippi Delta.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Rowland

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 1-5-2005

NAME: Donnie D. Dickerson

ADDRESS: 521 Hillcrest Circle
Cleveland, MS 38732

COMMENTS: I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the I-69 Section 11 - Robinsville to Benoit. I have looked at the Central & East Routes Proposed. I would like to make an additional recommendation utilizing a portion of both Routes. Attempting to go west of Cleveland is a complete detriment to the long range business interest of the city. We have an Industrial Park, not being fully utilized, along with excellent medical care access on the East side of Cleveland. We also have new hotels and most of our restaurants are presently located on Hwy 61. Why not enhance the ability for new businesses to want to come to Cleveland by having the new Hwy access next to the Industrial Park with medical care, hotels and restaurants in a close and easily accessible proximity. Why make potential customers (hotels, restaurants, medical care) come through Cleveland, by two schools traffic for service. Enhance business on one section while leaving the West side for subdivision and community growth. Therefore, my suggestion is the Route come down Hwy 61 to Merigold, MS - Then left just East of Cleveland Industrial Park going South connecting the East Route planned.

Donnie Dickerson

After completing the above information, please fold, staple, and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DEC 2 8 2004

DATE: 12-22-04

NAME: Christen Davis

ADDRESS: 1503 Terrace Street
Cleveland, MS 38732

COMMENTS:

I am in favor of the Eastern Route, or a variation thereof, due to closer proximity to our industrial park, hospital and downtown. The Eastern route has a greater overall impact on the entire Delta as a whole. One of the main reasons for a lot is the increased economic impact for the MS Delta. The Central Route, once it leaves Merigold, has a negative impact on our #1 industry, Agriculture.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12/14/04

NAME: Phil Ritzo

ADDRESS: 522 Robinson Dr. Cleveland MS

COMMENTS:

Tieing into US 61 and bypassing Cleveland on the east side seems financially the best route. Updating the existing U.S. 61 to accomodate interstate standards would be cheaper than new construction, and east Cleveland, Rulerville, Dees and those areas need development more than West Cleveland. The land in Sunflower County would also be cheaper to purchase because it is generally less improved.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

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JAN 5 2005

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 1/5/05

NAME: BEN BAILEY, JR

ADDRESS: 1101 AVERY ST.
CLEVELAND, MS 38732

Signed Ben Bailey Jr

COMMENTS: I submitted a comment sheet earlier but wanted to add more reasons for my choice which is the "Central Route to just south of Merigold and then crossing over to the Eastern route just east of Cleveland" Reasons are:

- Cleveland's industrial park is on the east side of town
- The Bolivar Medical Center (hospital) is on the east side also.
- All Cleveland's motels are on Hwy 61 & much closer to the eastern route.
- North of Cleveland's residential section is expanding to the west & the interstate would interfere with future housing.
- ~~Less~~ farm land (fields) would be split. Eastern route is more North & South and could go along property lines.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

- Now that the bridge location is set, I feel most

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COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12-30-04

NAME: Brenda Azzazi

ADDRESS: 431 Yale St. Ext
Cleveland, Ms. 38732

COMMENTS: After first hearing of I-69, I was under the impression that it would never come to reality. Now, after studying the proposed routes, I realize that the design phase is here and construction may be approaching faster than expected. Agriculture is the backbone of our country and nowhere in the world is that more true than here in the Mississippi Delta. Agriculture is our #1 industry here in Bolivar County. Hard work, dedication, and perseverance have created livelihoods which can be passed on for generations. The Centric Route, in its current path, may change some of that. All those acres upon acres of prime farmland that has been cared for so diligently. A price tag cannot be put on someone's love of the land.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

This is why it seems so clear to me that we choose the best route to preserve what has been preserved for us. The Eastern Route, or an alignment that uses the Central Route until Southern Merged with a loop East of Cleveland, seems to solve some of these concerns. This route impacts less land, existing roads, and drainage. It also creates a better location for the city of Cleveland business climate due to closer proximity to our industrial park, hospital, and historic downtown. In my opinion, there needs to be strong consideration to altering the Central Route to answer some of these concerns. In the end, future generations will be benefited from our efforts to work together for a better Mississippi Delta.

Brenda Azzazi

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12/21/2004

NAME: Allen Tinelle

ADDRESS: 616 Frederick Drive
Cleveland MS 38732

COMMENTS: I support Hwy 61 to be used to Merigold then take the east Route to Cleveland. Economic ~~[illegible]~~ growth to the East side of Cleveland This would give commercial to the [illegible] Eastern Bypass Route for the City of Cleveland. It is also closer to the Industrial Park & Hospitals. This Route [illegible] [illegible] Cleveland Longer. Cleveland Would see growth [illegible] using this Route. The [illegible] Route would not Impact property Lines As bad As some of the other Routes because of the North & South Roads Around Cleveland.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
Dec. 13
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: Dec. 13, 2004

NAME: Tim Climer, Exec. Director, Sunflower Co. EDD

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 1508
Indianola, MS 38751
662/887-3737

COMMENTS: As Sunflower County's director of economic development, I heartily endorse the eastern route of I-69. I feel that a larger area of the Delta will be positively impacted with an alternative other than the current path of U.S. Hwy. 61.

In addition, once the routing of I-69 is determined, Sunflower County, along with our neighbors in the Delta, will support an interstate connector from Shaw to Indianola (current State Hwy. 448), priority completion of 4-laning Hwy 8 from Rosedale to Ruleville, and interstate connector 2-lane roads from Merigold to Drew, and from Shelby to Parchman. These would benefit the Delta in a major way.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

MDOT has presented several options to I-69 through Bolivar County I am a resident of this county and have been for 57 years. The land in question where I-69 is proposed to go pertaining to the Central route is directly on the property that is co-owned by my brother and myself Starting at the town of Merigold, our land will continue on the Central route for approximately 3 miles ALL of this land has been in my family for generations and some of it for over 100 years. All of the land has been precisional leveled and has tremendous agriculture base. This land also is considered to have the highest productivity for this area. All fields are square and irrigable None of the above has come cheap or without sacrifices If the Central route is taken, we will have over 150 acres of our farmland taken and leave cut up and odd shapes in the remainder of the fields. Newly constructed highways in the Mississippi Delta should always take the straightest route without any ridiculous crooks and turns to benefit towns and special interest groups of their community instead of the overall Delta. MDOT seems to be missing the point on the actual need for I-69, which is moving goods and services faster and more efficient.

We are no newcomers when it comes to dealing with MDOT The West bypass in Merigold destroyed 40 acres of our land that people with the MDOT were most difficult and Mr Burkes, who was then on the Transportation Board in our area, was a completely unprofessional and overbearing individual playing politics with his position The land, which was left on either side of the 40 areas, was rendered virtually worthless from a productive agricultural state The productivity dropped at least 30% on the remainder of the property because of the angles the highway took.

It seems like the MDOT is up to its same old tricks in dividing highly productive agriculture land, which has been precision leveled and 100% irrigable If the Central route, it not only involve destruction of highly productive agricultural lands, it will involve Pemble Road, Hiter Road, McWimus Road, Crosby Road, Township Road, and the water lines both private and public Where I-69 will enter in Merigold and come out to Highway 8, these county roads will be non-existent as straight accesses to the present Highway 61 and Cleveland therefore creating a major problem. It is my understanding that the MDOT does not really know exactly where the access ramps and crossovers of the interstate will be located. They only will give approximate locations

I personally think that the Eastern route would be more beneficial to economic growth, faster transportation, and divide whatever prosperity I-69 will bring to this area shared with businesses and agriculture in Sunflower and Bolivar County, not just Cleveland, Mississippi.

The State of Mississippi owns 20,000 acres of Parchman, which I-69 should run as close as possible for not only the people that work there but for future development

The Western route is definitely the straightest and stays on section lines far better than the other two routes.

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I hope whoever reads this will take under consideration that Cleveland is not the only motivation for I-69 through the Delta. When a highway of this magnitude is constructed, there are many things that must be considered. People in the Cleveland community only are looking after their interest and not the interest of the Mississippi Delta as a whole. Whichever route is chosen and whenever construction is underway, the project will affect property belonging to Pemble Farms. We are not against I-69 but in the past MDOT has been at the best terrible to deal with. It is very difficult as a landowner to have other interest groups decide the fate of my livelihood with the majority of these people having no economic loss involved. I assure the Highway Commission that no property owner who farms for a living will benefit from this highway one bit.

Pemble Davis – Land owner
Peggy Davis – Land owner 12/20/04

12-28-04
Cleveland, Ms.

Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
Jackson, Ms. 39225

Dear Sirs,

I attended the I-69 meeting in Cleveland, on 12-14-04 and live and farm west of Cleveland.

The route that directly affects the residents & farms west of Cleveland is the central route, so I will limit my views to the 15 mile stretch of I-69 from Merigold to the Hilton Rd. vicinity where I-69 would need to turn back west to reach the Miss River Crossing.

This section of Hwy. needs to be altered to run <u>east</u> of Cleveland. This 15 mile section of proposed road <u>west</u> of Cleveland, could not be located on a worse stretch of land.

This is some of the best agricultural production ground in the state, (some family farms going back 3 generations), and to cover it up with concrete would be an atrocity.

This ground, being located so close to the Miss. River is naturally changed from the Miss River Alluvial strata, something that diminishes rapidly east of Hwy 61.

Also the very farming structure of every farm located in this "west of Clevelawd," region would be cut in two, something not on the same scale as would happen if you located I-69 <u>east</u> of Clevelawd. (I know because I've framed on both sides of Clevelawd.)

NEEL-SCHAFFER
JACKSON, MS

All the industry, including the electrical generating plant is located east of Hwy 61 and on the east side of Cleveland.

I-69 being on the east side of Cleveland would also benefit Rulevile and Sunflower county.

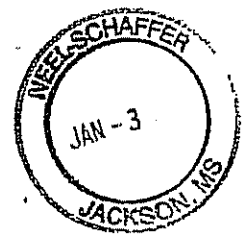
Last point - west of Cleveland is a quet farming and residentual community, remember once you build an interstate high way through the middle of it, "like death" it is destroyed for ever.

Please alter the central route of I-69 to run east of Cleveland and thankyou for considering this.

Yours Truly,

Mike Griffin
3174 Hwy 8 - West
Cleveland, Miss. 38732

COMMENT SHEET



PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: December 28, 2000.

NAME: W. W. Gresham, Jr.

ADDRESS: P.O.Box 690, Indianola, MS 38751
PHONE:662-887-2160 FAX 662-887-6873

COMMENTS: I am writing this as a lifetime resident and businessman in the Delta. I am a past President of Delta Council and a past Chairman of the Highway Committee of Delta Council. I am now a member of Delta Council's Highway Committee and I am a member of Highway & Transportation Committee of the Indianola Chamber of Commerce. I firmly support the eastern route for I-69 thru the Delta because this route will be for the interests of all of the Delta. It is in the Central portion of the Delta and will furnish the best route to serve more of the Delta to be an economic benefit to more Delta people. It will supplement the present U.S. 61 from Clarksdale to U.S. 82. It will benefit Drew, Ruleville, Sunflower, Indianola, Itta Bena, Greenwood, and Grenada with a 4-lane Interstate Highway. It will attract industry and business to this area. It will help bring education facilities closer to all Deltans. It will be a more direct route from Clarksdale to Jackson. There should be a 4-lane Interstate connector from the Shaw area to Indianola so we could have a shorter 4-lane highway from Clarksdale to Jackson connecting with U.S. 49 W. at Indianola along the route of the present highway 448. This would be a great economic help to the central portion of the Delta. It would allow the western portion of Parchman better access to develop the prison sight for a possible industry needing the land area in Parchman. Construction costs should be less since we will not be building bypasses, access roads, and frontage roads on U.S. 61 from Clarksdale to Cleveland. The central route only helps Bolivar County while the eastern route would benefit all counties in the area. There are no hazards or areas to hinder construction on the eastern route. The eastern route will make the colleges and junior colleges in the Delta more accessible. We need economic development in the Delta and the eastern I-69 will accomplish this.

W. W. Gresham Jr.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: December 23, 2004

NAME: Chip Moore, Marketing Director

ADDRESS: Double Quick, Inc.
P. O. Box 690
Indianola, MS 38751

COMMENTS: As a MS Delta resident and president of the Indianola Chamber of Commerce, I feel the eastern route of I-69 would positively effect more people in the MS Delta than the other two routes. The eastern route would provide the Delta with a four-lane north-south route that would enhance economic development and growth for a larger portion of the Delta than the other two routes.

In addition to the I-69 location, I believe that an interstate connector from I-69 at Shaw to Indianola and Hwy 49W would provide the entire Delta four-lane access to Jackson, Gulf Coast, New Orleans, etc. This connector will also provide a connection to Hwy 82 for east/west travel.

I know you have several proposals and many opinions on what is the best route for I-69. My only thought in making this decision, is to base the decision on what route best benefits the entire Delta and not just a portion of the Delta.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

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PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: January 4, 2005

NAME: John W. McPherson

ADDRESS: P. O. Box 690, Indianola, MS 38751

Phone: 662-887-2160 - Fax: 662-887-6873

COMMENTS: Indianola Chamber of Commerce Board, City of Indianola Board of Aldermen, Sunflower County Board of Supervisors, and Sunflower County Economic Development District, City of Greenwood and Leflore County, and Jimmy Walker from Coahoma County all support the Eastern route. I cannot change those requests. It is hard to understand that the less expensive route is the center route -when you consider cost of frontage roads and cost of traffic delays during construction. The eastern route would be completed so much quicker.

The cities of Cleveland and Greenville will both receive maximun benefits from either route. However, the entire Miss. Delta is a distressed area and Indianola is located in the center. (Most good to the most people.)

A four-lane connector road from Indianola to Shaw would give us in Mississippi and all points North 4-lanes to Jackson and the Gulf Coast. Time is a very important factor.

In Hoc,

John W. McPherson

JOHN W. MCPHERSON

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: December 22, 2004

NAME: Thomas G. Gresham

ADDRESS: Double Quick, Inc.
P. O. Box 690
Indianola, MS 38751

COMMENTS: As an operator of retail convenience stores all over northwest MS and southeast AR, as well as a member of Delta Council and MEC, I feel the eastern route of I-69 would positively effect more people in the MS Delta than the other two routes. The eastern route would give the Delta two four lane north-south routes which would enhance economic development and growth for this area. Along with the development of I-69, an interstate designed connector from I-69 at Shaw to Indianola and Highway 49W would give the entire Delta four-lane access to Jackson and the MS Gulf Coast as well as New Orleans. This would greatly benefit the entire Delta. Higher priority of four-laning Highway 8 from Rosedale to Shelby, along with improved two-lane connector roads from Merigold to Drew and Shelby to Parchman, would benefit these areas in conjunction with I-69.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
Dec. 13
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: Dec. 13, 2004

NAME: Tim Climer, Exec. Director, Sunflower Co. EDD

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 1508
Indianola, MS 38751
662/887-3737

COMMENTS: As Sunflower County's director of economic development, I heartily endorse the eastern route of I-69. I feel that a larger area of the Delta will be positively impacted with an alternative other than the current path of U.S. Hwy. 61.

In addition, once the routing of I-69 is determined, Sunflower County, along with our neighbors in the Delta, will support an interstate connector from Shaw to Indianola (current State Hwy. 448), priority completion of 4-laning Hwy. 8 from Rosedale to Ruleville, and interstate connector 2-lane roads from Merigold to Drew, and from Shelby to Parchman. These would benefit the Delta in a major way.

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COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

SR 8 WIDENING TO FOUR LANES
ROSEDALE TO CLEVELAND
BOLIVAR COUNTY

DATE: 12-15-04

NAME: SUPERVISOR COAHMA B4
JOHNNY NEWSOM
433 ADNREWS STREET
CLARKSDALE, MS 38614

ADDRESS:

COMMENTS: Opinion that I have is by a simple poll-ready to go ahead and say this is it and the route we are going to take-the red-Central route seems to ideal route b/c existing roadway. The eastern route is using farm land and we won't see the positive affect. Bottom line we are ready to see construction.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 -- ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12-21-04

NAME: Hugh JAck Stubbs, Coahoma COunty Board Supervisors

ADDRESS: Post Office Box 579

Clarksdale, MS 38614

COMMENTS: I strongly recomend the western alternate at the intersection of Highway 49 and 61 in the Northern COahoma County area beecause of the locatioh of the welcoming center and the difficulty of an additional intersection or interchange for tourist trying to get to the center.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

SR 8 WIDENING TO FOUR LANES
ROSEDALE TO CLEVELAND
BOLIVAR COUNTY

DATE: 12-15-04

NAME: HUGH JACK STUBBS
P.O. BOX 579
CLARKSDALE, MS 38614

ADDRESS:

COMMENTS: I am concerned about the interchange in the north part where 69-goes west-welcome center on 49/61 in Lula. My preference-track the existing intersection-the western route or else traffic will have to go off the interstate to get to the welcome center-in favor of going through the existing to bring tourism to the welcome center.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 11-15-04

NAME: Jimmy Walker

ADDRESS: 337 Westover dr -
Clarksdale, Ms. 38614

COMMENTS:
ORANGE Route @ Lula 49 Intersection
would be preferred -
Welcome Center
Low intervention, ect
This is Route preferred by Senator Finnis

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

SR 8 WIDENING TO FOUR LANES
ROSEDALE TO CLEVELAND
BOLIVAR COUNTY

DATE: 12-15-04

NAME: DELMA FURNISS
P.O. BOX 104
RENA LARA, MS 38767

ADDRESS:

COMMENTS: Up at Lola at the Hospitality section there are 2 routes. I am STRONGLY for the western route in front of the newly built hospitality center off of 49/61. Reason is... much more accessible for the traffic. Or else you would have to get off the interstate and travel to the hospitality center.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12-15-03

NAME: DELMA FURNISS

ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 104
195 BOBO-RENA LARA ROAD
RENA LARA, MS 38767

COMMENTS: MY COMMENTS APPLY ONLY TO THAT SEGMENT OF PROPOSED I-69 NEAR LULA, MS IN FRONT OF THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION. I STRONGLY URGE THAT THE PRESENT U.S. 61 BE USED AS I-69 IN FRONT OF THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION. ON THE MAP THIS IS LISTED AS THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN FRONT OF THE HOSPITALITY STATION. ONE MAIN REASON I URGE YOU TO SUPPORT THE PRESENT U.S. 61 IN FRONT OF THE HOSPITALITY STATION IS SO THE HOSPITALITY STATION WILL BE EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO VISITORS AND TOURISTS. IF THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IS USED, IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR VISITORS AND TOURISTS TO GET OFF I-69 TO THE HOSPITALITY STATION -- IT SEEMS THEY WOULD HAVE TO GET OFF I-69 ON TO HY. 315, THEN CROSS HY 61, THEN ON TO HY 49, THEN TO THE HOSPITALITY STATION. THIS WOULD MAKE IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR VISITORS AND TOURIST TO USE THE HOSPITALITY STATION. WE NEED ALL THE VISITORS AND TOURISTS THAT WE CAN GET TO STOP IN MISSISSIPPI. I AM STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IN THIS PARTICULAR AREA. I STRONGLY SUPPORT THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN THIS AREA FOR EASY ACCESS TO THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION. PLEASE SEE PAGE 2 ENCLOSED

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

Pg. 2.
DELMA FURNISS
12-15-03

SOME CONCERN AS BEEN EXPRESSED THAT NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS MAY BE ENCOUNTERED ON THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE AND THAT MAY CAUSE SOME DELAY. I AM CONVINCED THAT THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE. I BELIEVE THAT MUCH, MUCH MORE NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS WILL BE ENCOUNTERED IF THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IS USED. THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IN THIS AREA WILL BE ALL NEW CONSTRUCTION AND THE CHANCES TO ENCOUNTER NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS IS MUCH, MUCH GREATER. THERE MAY BE MILES OF NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS. IF THE PRESENT U.S. 61 (WESTERN ALTERNATIVE) IS USED IN THIS PARTICULAR AREA, THE CHANCES OF ENCOUNTERING NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS WILL BE MUCH, MUCH LESS. BY USING THIS WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN THIS AREA, U.S. 61 IS ALREADY THERE, IT JUST NEEDS UPGRADING. THIS UPGRADING OF PRESENT U.S. 61 WILL PROBABLY NOT ENCOUNTER ANY NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS -- BUT VERY LITTLE IF ANY.

I ALSO SUPPORT THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE BECAUSE THERE WILL ONLY BE ONE INTERCHANGE AT THIS LOCATION -- I-69 (Hy 61) + Hy 49 + Hy 315. IF THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IS USED THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE TWO INTERCHANGES AT THIS LOCATION -- THE ONE DESCRIBED ABOVE AND ALSO A NEW ONE ON THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE. I URGE YOU TO ADOPT THE PRESENT U.S. 61 (WESTERN ALTERNATIVE) IN FRONT OF THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION —

Delma Furniss
Post Office Box 104
195 Bobo-Rena Lara Road
Rena Lara, Mississippi 38767

Mississippi House of Representatives 1984-1993
Mississippi Senate 1993-2003

Telephone: 662-624-8687
E-Mail: furnissd@bellsouth.net

JANUARY 7, 2005

COMMISSIONER BILL MINOR
COMMISSIONER DICK HALL
COMMISSIONER WAYNE BROWN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BUTCH BROWN
ENVIRONMENTALIST CLAIBORNE BARNWELL
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
POST OFFICE BOX 1850
JACKSON, MS 39215-1850

DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES:

I WISH TO THANK ALL OF YOU AGAIN FOR ALL YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT IN GETTING THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION UP AND RUNNING. IT IS REALLY GREAT AND IS GOING TO BE A WONDERFUL ASSET TO OUR REGION AND OUR ENTIRE STATE.

AND NOW I NEED YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT AGAIN. IN THE HOSPITALITY STATION AREA NEAR LULA THERE ARE TWO I-69 ALTERNATIVES PROPOSED. THE ONE I STRONGLY SUPPORT (AND MOST OF THE PEOPLE IN OUR AREA ALSO SUPPORT) IS THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE. THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE WOULD USE THE PRESENT Hy 61 IN FRONT OF THE HOSPITALITY STATION. THIS WOULD PROVIDE EASY ACCESS TO THE HOSPITALITY STATION.

WE STRONGLY OPPOSE THE OTHER ALTERNATIVE IN THIS AREA (CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE) AS I-69 WILL BYPASS THE HOSPITALITY STATION IF THIS CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IS USED. WE NEED EASY ACCESS (THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE) TO THE HOSPITALITY STATION.

THE ENCLOSED COPY OF MY COMMENTS TO I-69 PROJECT MANAGER ROBERT WALKER MORE FULLY EXPRESSES MY SUPPORT FOR THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN THE HOSPITALITY STATION AREA.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION AND SUPPORT FOR THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN THIS PARTICULAR AREA. IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO OUR ENTIRE REGION AND TO STATE TOURISM AS A WHOLE. SINCERELY, Delma Furniss

ENCLOSURE

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12-15-04

NAME: DELMA FURNISS

ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 104
195 BOBO-REMA LAMA ROAD
REMA LAMA, MS 38767

COMMENTS: MY COMMENTS APPLY ONLY TO THAT SEGMENT OF PROPOSED I-69 NEAR LULA, MS IN FRONT OF THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION. I STRONGLY URGE THAT THE PRESENT U.S. 61 TO BE USED AS I-69 IN FRONT OF THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION. ON THE MAP THIS IS LISTED AS THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN FRONT OF THE HOSPITALITY STATION. ONE MAIN REASON I URGE YOU TO SUPPORT THE PRESENT U.S. 61 IN FRONT OF THE HOSPITALITY STATION IS SO THE HOSPITALITY STATION WILL BE EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO VISITORS AND TOURISTS. IF THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IS USED, IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR VISITORS AND TOURISTS TO GET OFF I-69 TO THE HOSPITALITY STATION -- IT SEEMS THEY WOULD HAVE TO GET OFF I-69 ON TO HY. 315, THEN CROSS HY 61, THEN ON TO HY 49, THEN TO THE HOSPITALITY STATION. THIS WOULD MAKE IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR VISITORS AND TOURIST TO USE THE HOSPITALITY STATION. WE NEED ALL THE VISITORS AND TOURISTS THAT WE CAN GET TO STOP IN MISSISSIPPI.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

I AM STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IN THIS PARTICULAR AREA. I STRONGLY SUPPORT THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN THIS AREA FOR EASY ACCESS TO THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION. PLEASE SEE PAGE 2 ENCLOSED.

Pg. 2.
DELMA FURNISS
12-15-03 04

SOME CONCERN AS BEEN EXPRESSED THAT NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS MAY BE ENCOUNTERED ON THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE AND THAT MAY CAUSE SOME DELAY. I AM CONVINCED THAT THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE. I BELIEVE THAT MUCH, MUCH MORE NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS WILL BE ENCOUNTERED IF THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IS USED. THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IN THIS AREA WILL BE ALL NEW CONSTRUCTION AND THE CHANCES TO ENCOUNTER NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS IS MUCH, MUCH GREATER. THERE MAY BE MILES OF NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS. IF THE PRESENT U.S. 61 (WESTERN ALTERNATIVE) IS USED IN THIS PARTICULAR AREA, THE CHANCES OF ENCOUNTERING NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS WILL BE MUCH, MUCH LESS. BY USING THIS WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN THIS AREA, U.S. 61 IS ALREADY THERE, IT JUST NEEDS UPGRADING. THIS UPGRADING OF PRESENT U.S. 61 WILL PROBABLY NOT ENCOUNTER ANY NATIVE AMERICAN ARTIFACTS -- BUT VERY LITTLE, IF ANY.

I ALSO SUPPORT THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE BECAUSE THERE WILL ONLY BE ONE INTERCHANGE AT THIS LOCATION -- I-69 (Hy 61) + Hy 49 + Hy 315. IF THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IS USED THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE TWO INTERCHANGES AT THIS LOCATION -- THE ONE DESCRIBED ABOVE AND ALSO A NEW ONE ON THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE. I URGE YOU TO ADOPT THE PRESENT U.S. 61 (WESTERN ALTERNATIVE) IN FRONT OF THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION -

THANK YOU -- Delma Furniss

Appendix D
Public Involvement

City and county government resolutions and correspondence

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENT SHEET

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
Tuesday ✦ September 25, 2001 ✦ 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.
State Room - H. L. Newell Union Bldg.
Delta State University
Cleveland, Mississippi

DATE: November 9, 2001

NAME: Bolivar Bolivar County Board of Supervisors

ADDRESS: Post ~~Office Box 698~~
Cleveland, Mississippi 38732

REPRESENTING:

COMMENTS: See ~~Attached~~

RECEIVED 11/14/01

ORIG Pub. Mtg. Comment Rec'd
COPY to Resolution Rec'd

After completing the above information, please fold. staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Rosedale is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirety; and unite as allies to this amended Resolution; and

WHEREAS, the routing of I-69 is expected to provide major economic development opportunities for the entire County and Mississippi Delta,

WHEREAS, the City of Rosedale is in full support of the Great River Bridge and of the Great River Bridge being the designated River crossing for I-69; and

WHEREAS, the City of Rosedale is also in full support of adding rail to the Great River Bridge project, which provides the last opportunity for rail to be included in the design of a bridge across the ississippi River; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Rosedale supports the I-69 route leaving the north Highway 61 bypass in a southwesterly fashion and crossing Highway 8 between East Rosedale being Point A and West Cleveland being Point B, the exact distance between the two points to be determined by Bolivar County Residents expressing the most economic needs and the MDOT in the direction of the Great River Bridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Rosedale requests 4-laning Highway 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale, with an interchange to I-69; and

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED, that a 4-lane connector be included on Highway 1 from Rosedale to I-69 in Benoit; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the City of Rosedale respectfully requests the support of our local, state, and federal in this position.

SIGNED, this the 27th day of March, 2001.

CITY OF ROSEDALE

Eddie Andrew Williams III

Eddie Andrew Williams, III, Mayor

ATTEST:

Margaret Jones

BOLIVAR COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING, INC.
Eastgate Shopping Center-P.O. Box 593
Cleveland, MS 38732
(662) 846-6161
(662) 846-2953

McKinney
ector

Dr. J.Y. Trice
Executive Director

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Council on Aging is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirely; and

WHEREAS, the routing of I-69 is expected to provide major economic development opportunities for the entire County and Mississippi Delta;

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Council on Aging is in full support of the Great River Bridge and of the Great River Bridge being the designated River crossing for I-69; and

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Council on Aging is also in full support of adding rail to the Great River Bridge project, which provides the last opportunity for rail to be included in the design of a bridge across the Mississippi River; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Bolivar County Council on Aging supports the I-69 route to bisect the County, leaving the north Highway 61 in a southwesterly fashion, crossing at a location between Cleveland and Rosedale at a point to be determined by MDOT in the direction of the Great River Bridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Bolivar County Council on Aging requests 4-laning Highway 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale, with an interchange to I-69; and

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED, that a 4-lane connector be included on Highway 1 from Rosedale to I-69 in Benoit; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Bolivar County Council on Aging respectfully requests the support of our local, state, and federal officials in this position

SIGNED, this the 2nd day of April, 2001.

BOLIVAR COUNTY
COUNCIL ON AGING

J.Y. Trice, Executive Director

1ST:
LaShonda McKinney

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Cleveland-Bolivar County Industrial Development Foundation is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirety; and

WHEREAS, the routing of I-69 is expected to provide major economic development opportunities for the entire County and Mississippi Delta;

WHEREAS, the Cleveland-Bolivar County Industrial Development Foundation is in full support of the Great River Bridge and of the Great River Bridge being the designated River crossing for I-69; and

WHEREAS, the Cleveland-Bolivar County Industrial Development Foundation is also in full support of adding rail to the Great River Bridge project, which provides the last opportunity for rail to be included in the design of a bridge across the Mississippi River; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cleveland-Bolivar County Industrial Development Foundation supports the I-69 route to bisect the County, leaving the north Highway 61 in a southwesterly fashion, crossing at a location between Cleveland and Rosedale at a point to be determined by MDOT in the direction of the Great River Bridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Cleveland-Bolivar County Industrial Development Foundation requests 4-laning Highway 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale, with an interchange to I-69; and

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED, that a 4-lane connector be included on Highway 1 from Rosedale to I-69 in Benoit; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Cleveland-Bolivar County Industrial Development Foundation respectfully requests the support of our local, state, and federal officials in this position.

SIGNED, this the 2nd day of April, 2001.

CLEVELAND-BOLIVAR COUNTY
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
FOUNDATION

Wayne Cole

Wayne Cole, Chairman

ATTEST:

Jean Morgan

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirety; and

WHEREAS, the routing of I-69 is expected to provide major economic development opportunities for the entire County and Mississippi Delta;

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors is in full support of the Great River Bridge and of the Great River Bridge being the designated River crossing for I-69; and

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors is also in full support of adding rail to the Great River Bridge project, which provides the last opportunity for rail to be included in the design of a bridge across the Mississippi River; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors supports the I-69 route to bisect the County, leaving the north Highway 61 bypass in a southwesterly fashion, crossing at a location between Rosedale and Cleveland at a point to be determined by MDOT in the direction of the Great River Bridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors requests 4-laning Highway 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale, with an interchange to I-69; and

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED, that a 4-lane connector be included on Highway 1 from Rosedale to I-69 in Benoit; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors respectfully requests the support of our local, state, and federal officials in this position

SIGNED, this the 2nd day of April, 2001.

BOLIVAR COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Danny Whitten, President

ATTEST:

CERTIFIED--A TRUE COPY
JEANNIE R. WALKER, CHANCERY CLERK
Date 4-9-01
BY _____ D.C

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Economic Development District of Bolivar County is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirety; and

WHEREAS, the routing of I-69 is expected to provide major economic development opportunities for the entire County and Mississippi Delta;

WHEREAS, the Economic Development District is in full support of the Great River Bridge and of the Great River Bridge being the designated River crossing for I-69; and

WHEREAS, the Economic Development District is also in full support of adding rail to the Great River Bridge project, which provides the last opportunity for rail to be included in the design of a bridge across the Mississippi River; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Economic Development District supports the I-69 route to bisect the County, leaving the north Highway 61 in a southwesterly fashion, crossing at a location between Cleveland and Rosedale at a point to be determined by MDOT in the direction of the Great River Bridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Economic Development District requests 4-laning Highway 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale, with an interchange to I-69; and

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED, that a 4-lane connector be included on Highway 1 from Rosedale to I-69 in Benoit; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the EDD respectfully requests the support of our local, state, and federal officials in this position.

SIGNED, this the 2nd day of April, 2001.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT OF BOLIVAR COUNTY

Joe Wayne Reed

Joe Wayne Reed, Chairman

ATTEST:

Dean Morganti

Dean Morganti, Secretary

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Cleveland-Bolivar Chamber of Commerce is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirety; and

WHEREAS, the routing of I-69 is expected to provide major economic development opportunities for the entire County and Mississippi Delta;

WHEREAS, the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce is in full support of the Great River Bridge and of the Great River Bridge being the designated River crossing for I-69; and

WHEREAS, the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce is also in full support of adding rail to the Great River Bridge project, which provides the last opportunity for rail to be included in the design of a bridge across the Mississippi River; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce supports the I-69 route to bisect the County, leaving the north Highway 61 in a southwesterly fashion, crossing at a location between Cleveland and Rosedale at a point to be determined by MDOT in the direction of the Great River Bridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce requests 4-laning Highway 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale, with an interchange to I-69; and

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED, that a 4-lane connector be included on Highway 1 from Rosedale to I-69 in Benoit; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests the support of our local, state, and federal officials in this position.

SIGNED, this the 2nd day of April, 2001.

CLEVELAND-BOLIVAR COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mark Hargett

Mark Hargett, President

ATTEST:

Dean Morganti

Dean Morganti, Secretary

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Cleveland is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirety; and

WHEREAS, the routing of I-69 is expected to provide major economic development opportunities for the entire County and Mississippi Delta;

WHEREAS, the City of Cleveland is in full support of the Great River Bridge and of the Great River Bridge being the designated River crossing for I-69; and

WHEREAS, the City of Cleveland is also in full support of adding rail to the Great River Bridge project, which provides the last opportunity for rail to be included in the design of a bridge across the Mississippi River; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Cleveland supports the I-69 route to bisect the County, leaving the north Highway 61 bypass in a southwesterly fashion, crossing at a location between Rosedale and Cleveland at a point to be determined by MDOT in the direction of the Great River Bridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Cleveland requests 4-laning Highway 8 on Cleveland to Rosedale, with an interchange to I-69; and

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED, that a 4-lane connector be included on Highway 1 from Rosedale to I-69 in Benoit; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the City of Cleveland respectfully requests the support of our local, state, and federal officials in this position.

SIGNED, this the 3rd day of April, 2001.

CITY OF CLEVELAND

Martin King, Mayor

ATTEST:

Dyan Cluttrum

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Town of Benoit is concerned with the economic development the County in its entirety; and

WHEREAS, the routing of I-69 is expected to provide major economic elopment opportunities for the entire County and Mississippi Delta;

WHEREAS, the Town of Benoit is in full support of the Great River lge and of the Great River Bridge being the designated River crossing I-69; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Benoit is also in full support of adding rail eh Great River Bridge project, which provides the last opportunity rail to be included in the design of a bridge across the Mississippi r; and

OW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Benoit supports the route to bisect the county, leaving the north Highway 61 bypass in ithwesterly fashion, crossing at a location between Rosedale and eland at a point to be determined by MDOT in the direction of the : River Bridge; and

E IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Benoit requests 4-laning 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale, with an interchange to I-69; and

E IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED, that a 4-lane connector be included ghway 1 from Rosedale to I-69 in Benoit; and

IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Town of Benoit respectfully requests upport of our local, state, and federal officials in this position.

GNED, this the 3 day of April, 2001.

OF BENOIT

Jokes, Mayor

T:

Williamson, Clerk

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirety; and

WHEREAS, the routing of I-69 is expected to provide major economic development opportunities for the entire County and Mississippi Delta;

WHEREAS, the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission is in full support of the Great River Bridge and of the Great River Bridge being the designated River crossing for I-69; and

WHEREAS, the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission is also in full support of adding rail to the Great River Bridge project, which provides the last opportunity for rail to be included in the design of a bridge across the Mississippi River; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission supports the I-69 route to bisect the County, leaving the north Highway 61 in a southwesterly fashion, crossing at a location between Cleveland and Rosedale at a point to be determined by MDOT in the direction of the Great River Bridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission requests 4-laning Highway 8 from Cleveland to Rosedale, with an interchange to I-69; and

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED, that a 4-lane connector be included on Highway 1 from Rosedale to I-69 in Benoit; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission respectfully requests the support of our local, state, and federal officials in this position.

SIGNED, this the 10 day of APRIL, 2001

ROSEDALE-BOLIVAR COUNTY
PORT COMMISSION

Jimmy Yeager, President

ATTEST:

Walter Dentin

Extra Cy

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Sunflower County, Mississippi, is vitally interested in development of transportation corridors to enhance public travel, safety and economic development of Sunflower County and surrounding areas, and

WHEREAS, this Board is cognizant and supportive of efforts to preserve wildlife and environmentally sensitive areas in the State of Mississippi, and

WHEREAS, members of this Board have attended meetings and conferred with various public officials regarding the most effective location for proposed Interstate 69 in order to promote maximum economic development, while simultaneously preserving and protecting environmentally sensitive areas,

NOW, THEREFORE, on motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the Board of Supervisors of Sunflower County, Mississippi, does hereby strongly support an I-69 river crossing at Eutaw Landing in the Benoit area, and further urges the Mississippi Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to carefully examine the merits of an I-69 route which would run East of Cleveland, Mississippi, and South of Dahomey Wildlife Refuge, which is believed by this Board to be a route which would be most environmentally sensitive and economically feasible and which would optimize the interests of bringing better transportation, safety and economic development to the Mississippi Delta.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of Sunflower County, Mississippi, respectfully requests the support of other local, State, and Federal officials in this position.

SO RESOLVED, this the 16th day of July, 2001.

SUNFLOWER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BY: Edgar Donahoe
EDGAR DONAHOE, PRESIDENT

ATTEST:
Paula L. Sykes
PAULA SYKES, CLERK

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirety; and

WHEREAS, the transportation infrastructure provided by I-69 will provide major economic development opportunities for the entire county and Mississippi Delta; and

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors is in full support of the Great River Bridge and of the Great River Bridge being the designated River crossing for I-69; and

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors seeks increased development of the Port and Industrial Park in Rosedale; and

WHEREAS, due to the fact that the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge plans to expand in a westerly fashion toward the Mississippi River and the fact that environmental concerns have been raised about running a route west of Dahomey due to the wildlife habitat in that area;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors orts Segment B8 to B4, the I-69 route with the least issues, which runs immediately west of Cleveland and bisects the County between Cleveland and Pace about 3 miles west of Cleveland at point determined by MDOT in the direction of the Great River Bridge; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors respectfully requests the support of our local, state, and federal officials in this position.

SIGNED, this the 5th day of November, 2001.

BOLIVAR COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Donny Whitten, President

ATTEST:

RECEIVED
RECEIVED 11/14/01
PLANNING
ORIG [ ] COMMON FILE
COPY [ ] EXECUTIVE FILE

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors is very deeply concerned with the economic development of this County and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, we believe the transportation infrastructure provided by I-69 along the Red Central Alignment Route will provide major economic development for Bolivar County and the Mississippi Delta Region; and

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors is in full agreement with the Great River Bridge being the designated crossing for I-69; and

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors would like to see the increased development of the Rosedale Port and Industrial Park that we believe would be complemented by this route; and

WHEREAS, the Red Central Alignment Route being the
feasible because of closer proximity to populated
for multi-modal transportation with clos
Rosedale/Bolivar County Port, with the
area, also we believe it to be the least en
Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS, the Bolivar County E
B2-B3-B10-B13-B15-C2 and C4, the I-69
immediately West of Cleveland and bisects
approximately 3 or 4 miles West of Clevela
direction of the Charles W. Dean Bridge (G

Find
Section

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

Missing sec

BENNIE G. THOMPSON
SECOND DISTRICT, MISSISSIPPI

THE COMMISSION ON
CONGRESSIONAL MAILING
STANDARDS

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2431 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-2402
(202) 225-5876
(202) 225-5886: FAX
E-Mail: ThompsonMS2ND@mail.house.gov
Home Page: http://www.house.gov/thompson

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–2402

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
GENERAL FARM COMMODITIES
AND RISK MANAGEMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SPECIALTY CROPS AND
FOREIGN AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY
RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON RULES
CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS
CONGRESSIONAL GAMING CAUCUS
CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS
CONGRESSIONAL SPORTSMEN'S CAUCUS
CONGRESSIONAL RURAL CAUCUS
HOUSE EDUCATION CAUCUS

September 17, 2004

Mr. Adrian L. Brown, County Administrator
Bolivar County Board of Supervisors
P.O. Box 698
Cleveland, MS 38732

RE: Interstate 69 Project
Bolivar County Recommendation (Red-Central Alignment)

Dear Mr. Brown:

Please accept this letter as commitment to support the Bolivar County Preferred I-69 Route. The leadership in Bolivar County should be commended for its efforts to improve the quality of life for the entire Mississippi Delta.

The Bolivar County preferred route recommendation (Red-Central Alignment) appears to have the greatest impact on community and economic development of the entire Mississippi Delta region than the other two routes presently being studied by the Mississippi Department of Transportation. In fact, because of U.S. Highway 61 and a number of other attributes, the Bolivar County recommendation appears to be the most economically feasible since Bolivar County has approximately 10 incorporated communities along U.S. Highway 61 along with a substantial number of businesses that would benefit greatly from the development of this proposed major route (Red-Central Alignment).

If I may be able to assist you any further in this regard, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress

BGT:fw

RECEIVED
OCT 26 2004
ENVIRONMENTAL/LOCATION

107 WEST MADISON STREET
BOLTON, MS 39041
(601) 866-9003
(601) 866-9036: FAX
(800) 355-9003: In St.

509 HIGHWAY 82 WEST
GREENWOOD, MS 38930
(662) 455-9003
(662) 453-0116: FAX

810 COURTHOUSE LANE
GREENVILLE, MS 38701
(662) 335-9003
(662) 334-1304: FAX

355 EAST MAIN STREET
MARKS, MS 38646
(662) 326-9003
(662) 326-9003: FAX

MOUND BAYOU CITY HALL
SUITE 134
105 WEST GREEN STREET
MOUND BAYOU, MS 38762
(662) 741-9003
(662) 741-9003: FAX

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF I-69

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen, as the governing authorities, of the Town of Duncan, Mississippi, are interested in the future of the Interstate 69 ("I-69") project currently under study by the Federal Highway Administration and the Mississippi Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, Duncan is in vital need of interstate access for its future economic well-being; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen understand that there are currently three plans under consideration of the route I-69 will take south of Clarksdale; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen express their support of the route which follows the current United States Highway 61 and the placing of an interchange at the Town of Duncan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Duncan, Mississippi, as follows to wit:

1. That the Mayor and Board of Aldermen fo the Town of Duncan hereby supports the proposed route of I-69 south of Clarksdale which follows the current United States Highway 61;

2. That the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Duncan supports the placement of an interchange at the Town of Duncan to provide safe and convenient access to I-69 by the citizens of the Town of Duncan, personnel of the Duncan Volunteer Fire Department, emergency vehicles serving the elderly at the Oak Grove Retirement Home and to travelers using Mississippi State Highway 444, the primary east-west connecting road to Mississippi Highway Number 1; and

3. That the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Duncan supports the efforts of public officials and economic development groups to bring I-69 to Bolivar County and the Town of Duncan.

SO RESOLVED, on this, the 5th day of October, 2004.

TOWN OF DUNCAN, MISSISSIPPI

BY: Charles Harvey
CHARLES HARVEY
Mayor

ATTEST:

Thomas N. Boschert
THOMAS N. BOSCHERT
Town Clerk

(SEAL)

Mae Rosie Williams, Mayor
Rachel Ramiz, Town Clerk
Milteona Lambert, Secretary
Aelicia L. Thomas, Attorney
Harold Ward, Judge

"A Small Town With A Big Future"

TOWN OF PACE
Post Office Box 216
Pace, Mississippi 38764
662-723-6292 PHONE
662-723-6198 FAX

Board of Aldermen:
Johnny F. Bradley, Sr.
Linda W. Hall
Mederth Hall
Beverly Shelly
Willie B. Tenzy

November 15, 2004

Mr. Larry L. "Butch" Brown
Executive Director
MDOT
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Dear Mr Brown:

I write this letter on behalf of the Mayor and Board and the citizens of the Town of Pace We wholeheartedly support the Bolivar County Recommendation (Red-Central Alignment).

The Bolivar County Recommendation (Red-Central Alignment) appears to be the most beneficial and the most economical not only to the citizens of Pace but also to the communities along U S. Highway 61. There is no doubt that these communities would greatly benefit from the development of this proposed major route.

If I can be of further assistance in this matter, please do not hesitate to request it

Sincerely,

Mae Rosie Williams

Mae Rosie Williams, Mayor
Town of Pace

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
KENNEDY V. JOHNSON

CITY OF MOUND BAYOU
106 South Green Ave
P O Box 680
Mound Bayou, MS 38762
Telephone (662) 741-2193
Facsimile (662) 741-2195

November 15, 2004

Mr. Larry L. "Butch" Brown
Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Re: I-69 (Red-Central Route) Project

Dear Mr. Brown:

Please accept this letter in support of the Bolivar County Preferred I-69 Route. As an elected official in Bolivar County I must join other County Officials in an effort to improve the equality of life for the Mississippi Delta, especially Mound Bayou and Bolivar County.

The preferred Red-Central Alignment will have the greatest impact on community and economic development in the Delta area. With the recent expansion of U.S. Highway 61, the central alignment would be more cost effective. There are over ten incorporated municipalities and several key businesses located along the Red-Central Alignment, making it a key route for economic growth in the Delta area. It is also imperative that this project does not discriminate against future development in the City of Mound Bayou. I have, at several meetings, brought to the attention of project developers that putting an interchange South of Mound Bayou would greatly deter traffic and have an adverse impact on Mound Bayou's economy. The City of Mound Bayou would also incur heavy cost in developing this access area. Therefore, the Mayor and Board of the City of Mound Bayou ask that MDOT and USDOT/FHA approve the central alignment with an access exit at the current U.S. 61 Mound Bayou exit. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call me at (662)741-2193 or (662)402-1153.

Thanks,

Kennedy V. Johnson
Mayor

Cc: Senator Thad Cochran
Congressman Bennie G. Thompson
Commission Dick Hall
Mr. Robert Walker

Town of Beulah
Post Office Box 68
Beulah, MS 38726
Phone: (662) 759-3758
Fax: (662) 759-3758

November 16, 2004

Mr. Larry L. Butch Brown
Executive Director MDOC
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

RE: Interstate 69 Project

Dear Mr. Brown:

Please accept this letter as commitment to support the Bolivar County I-69 Route. The leadership in Bolivar County should be commended for its efforts to improve the quality of life for the entire Mississippi Delta.

In Bolivar County preferred route recommendation (Red Central Alignment) appears to have the greatest impact on community and economic development of the entire Mississippi Delta region than the other two routes presently being studied by the Mississippi Department of Transportation .In fact, because of U.S. Highway 61 and a number of other atributes, the Bolivar County recommendation appears to be the most economically feasible since Bolivar County has approximately 10 incorporated communites along U.S. Highway 61 along with a substantial number of businesses that would benefit greatly from the development of this proposed major route.

If I may be able to assist you further in this regard, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,
Carl Lewis
Carl Lewis
Vice Mayor

TOWN OF RENOVA

OFFICERS

MAURICE LUCAS
Mayor

PAMELA MARTIN
Town Clerk & Assessor
Tax Collector

5 SECOND ST.
RENOVA, MISSISSIPPI 38732

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

HARVEY GREEN
ELBERT G. SCOTT
LENORA PAYNE
MILTON HUNT
MANUEL COLEMAN, JR.

November 22, 2004

Mr. Larry L. "Butch" Brown
Executive Director
MDOT
P. O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

RE: I-69 Alignment Recommendation

Dear Mr. Brown:

The town of Renova would like to go on record in support of the Central I-69 Alignment through Bolivar County. This preferred route will have the greatest economic impact on the Mississippi Delta, resulting in the growth of all 14 communities along the route (Alligator, Duncan, Shelby, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Merigold, Renova, Cleveland, Pace, Skene, Boyle, Shaw, Scott, and Benoit). These communities are either directly on the route for immediate access or very close by, enabling them to derive immense benefits from this intercontinental trade route. Since Bolivar County has no interstate or rail system presently, I-69 would provide the transportation infrastructure so badly needed in this area.

The Central Route is also the most economically feasible of the three alignments under consideration, saving approximately $60 million dollars in construction costs according to current estimates.

Thank you for your dedicated efforts to provide a better highway infrastructure for the Delta region. We trust that you will take our recommendation for the much-needed highway route through Bolivar County under serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Maurice Lucas
Mayor

Town of Merigold

Post Office Box 348
Merigold, Mississippi 38759
(662)748-2765

December 3, 2004

To Whom it May Concern:

RE: I-69 Routing

The Town of Merigold supports the Central Route for I-69. This would be the most cost effective and advantageous route proposed. It is more central to the geographic layout of the Delta and would enhance transportation to and from both ports in Greenville and Rosedale together with the industries in Cleveland. It is more centrally located to Delta State University and apparently is a much more economically feasible route than the eastern or western route together being less environmentally disruptive.

Showing off the best parts of Bolivar County to traffic going through, instead of Parchman, would also benefit the impression people may have of our State. Again, the Town of Merigold favors the Central Route which has been proposed for I-69 routing. If you need any additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

TOWN OF MERIGOLD, MISSISSIPPI

By: _____
Andrew M. W. Westerfield
Mayor

AMWW:amb

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Cleveland, Mississippi is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirety; and,

WHEREAS, the transportation infrastructure provided by I-69 will provide major economic development opportunities for the entire county and Mississippi Delta; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Cleveland seeks increased development of the Port and Industrial Park in Rosedale, and the future development of the Cleveland Municipal Airport; and

WHEREAS; studies indicate that the I-69 Central Route through Bolivar County provides for the most cost efficient and environmentally sensitive route; impacts the most minority residents; and, maximizes economic opportunities for the county and the Delta as a whole.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Cleveland support the I-69 Central Route, specifically segments C4, C2,B15,B13, B10, B2, and B1, as identified in the Draft EIS, as the preferred route through Bolivar County, and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the City of Cleveland respectfully requests the support of our local, state and federal officials in this position.

SIGNED, this the 7th day of December, 2004.

CITY OF CLEVELAND

Martin King, Mayor

ATTEST

Lynn Butrum, City Clerk

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE IS A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT ON FILE.

BY: Lynn Butrum
CITY CLERK

Town of Boyle
P.O. BOX 367
BOYLE, MISSISSIPPI 38730-0367
Phone: (662) 843-4661

Joe W Reed, Mayor
Lisa Cole, Deputy
Kirk Povall, Attorney

Board of Aldermen
Sanders Richardson
Brown Ryle, Jr
Larry McDaniels
Jeanette Washington
Joe Denson

December 7, 2004

Mr. Andy Hughes
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
666 North Street, Suite 105
Jackson, MS 39202-3199

RE: I-69 Alignment

Dear Mr. Hughes:

The Town of Boyle would like to go on record in support of the Central Alignment for I-69 for the following reasons:

- The Central route is shorter.
- It is less disruptive to farmland.
- It is more environmentally friendly.
- It is the only route that provides access to major communities. These communities---Alligator, Duncan, Shelby, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Merigold, as well as Cleveland, Boyle, Shaw, Skene, and Benoit, will realize a great economic impact, as a result.
- A route running close to Parchman, our State Penitentiary, would not be good for tourism and would not be wise for the prison since, as an intercontinental route from Canada to Mexico, it would provide easy access for prisoners to escape and flee the country.
- It would be less costly, with a savings of at least $60 million.
- It would involve fewer wetlands.
- It makes much more sense, as an economic development route, to locate in the most populated area, providing more business and job opportunities.

Your special consideration of this request would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Joe W. Reed
Mayor

JWR:dm

cc: Butch Brown, MDOT

Mayor's Office
662-887-1825
City Clerk's Office
662-887-3101
Police Department
662-887-1811
662-887-2595 (fax)
Court Clerk
662-887-7622

City of Indianola

101 Front Street
P.O. Box 269
Indianola, Mississippi 38751
Fax 662-887-6009

Fire Department
662-887-4955
Public Works
662-887-3427
Inspection Dept
662-887-2358
Recreation Dept
662-887-4267
Cemetery Dept
662-887-3895

RECEIVED
DEC 1 2 2004

December 13, 2004

Mr. Robert Walker, P.E.
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
666 North Street, Suite 201
Jackson, MS 39202

Dear Mr. Walker:

I reference the draft environmental impact statement for the I-69 project from Tunica County, Mississippi to Benoit, Mississippi. First of all, this community (Indianola) is totally in favor of the green or eastern alternative for the I-69 project as exhibited in figure 3-1 (study area and alternatives).

Secondly, this community is highly in favor of four-laning Highway 448. This, we feel, would provide additional interconnectivity between I-69 and the recently completed U.S. Hwy 49 West (four laned Indianola to Jackson and the Gulf Coast). Having interconnectivity is just as important as having the interstate highway. It all services to improve logistics throughout Mississippi.

Thank you in advance for considering Indianola's interest on this project.

Sincerely,

Arthur Marble
Mayor, City of Indianola

AM/sf

CITY OF GREENVILLE

HEATHER MCTEER HUDSON, MAYOR
P.O BOX 897
GREENVILLE, MISSISSIPPI 38702-0897
OFFICE 662-378-1501 / FACSIMILE 662-378-1564
WEBSITE ADDRESS: http://www greenville ms us
EMAIL ADDRESS: mayor@www greenville ms us

December 14, 2004

Mr. Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
P. O. Box 22625
Jackson, Mississippi 39225

Dear Mr. Walker:

On behalf of the City of Greenville, I am in support of the proposed I-69 Connector through Greenville as well as the Central Alternative Route of I-69. As you know, transportation is key to future economic development in the Mississippi Delta. After speaking with Mayor Martin King of Cleveland, Mississippi, we both agree that this is the most beneficial connector and route through the Delta.

As the selected connector and route, the paths we propose will signify the beginning of a tremendous impact for future growth, development and cooperation between Mississippi Delta counties. You are aware that Greenville is home to a number of sizable and noteworthy Mississippi industries including Masterfoods, Inc., Textron Fastening Systems, Inc. and Leading Edge. Likewise, areas immediately surrounding Greenville are home to significant businesses including Cleveland's new facility, Faurecia, Inc. The proposed route will open transportation doors directly to the Delta that will aid and assist these businesses in the furtherance of their trade. Furthermore, the proposed connector and route will help facilitate even more economic attraction to the Delta and undoubtedly, help shift jobs and expansion in our direction. I hope that you seriously consider this proposal as we make plans for the future of Greenville and the entire Mississippi Delta.

Again, thank you in advance and I look forward to talking with you soon. If I can be of any assistance, please feel free to give me a call.

With best personal regards, I am,

Sincerely,

Heather McTeer Hudson
Mayor of Greenville

Sharedoc/documents/correspondence/I-69 sup let 12-14-04

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

SR 8 WIDENING TO FOUR LANES
ROSEDALE TO CLEVELAND
BOLIVAR COUNTY

DATE: 12/14/04

NAME: MAYOR CAREY G. ESTES
CITY OF ROSEDALE
P. O. BOX 370
ROSEDALE, MS 38769

ADDRESS:

COMMENTS:
I am in favor of the central route of I-69 especially for Bolivar County. It passes more of the small communities and towns and I feel it would be very beneficial economically for these towns during this time of slump in the economy. Also by Rosedale being on the MS River and the Port of Rosedale being there, I think it would be very helpful for the port as well as the towns of Pace, Beulah, Benoit, Gunnison and Rosedale.

Because of all the small communities and towns having a lack of jobs, this will help to create more jobs by bringing industry into the area. Also, I think it will benefit the Cleveland Airport by being in the vicinity or between Cleveland and Rosedale. I think it will help also because of the University here (Delta State) and also with the widening of Highway 8 which will be intersected by I-69 between Pace and Cleveland that will help with the moving of imports and exports by way of Rosedale Port.

Also, it is the most feasible cost-wise.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

TOWN OF DUNCAN
Post Office Box 106
Duncan, MS 38740

Charles Harvey
Mayor

December 14, 2004

The Central route for Interstate 69 in Bolivar County, Mississippi, is the route that will best serve all of the municipalities and people in this area.

Charles Harvey

THE CITY OF CLEVELAND

CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI 38732

December 14, 2004

MARTIN T KING, JR
MAYOR

LYNN C BUTRUM CMC
CITY CLERK

BOARD OF ALDERMEN:
W. ROSS STORY
NORMAN BURKE JR
TED CAMPBELL
BILLY NOWELL
WILLARD SAMUELS
PAUL JANOUSH
DAVID WORK

OFFICERS:
WAYNE COLE
CAO

JOHN W. VALENTINE
CITY ATTORNEY

BRETT MOORMAN
DIRECTOR OF
PUBLIC WORKS

QUINTON STEEN
DIRECTOR OF
PARKS & RECREATION

GREG KORB
CITY ENGINEER

Mr. Butch Brown
Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, Mississippi 39215

Dear Mr. Brown:

On behalf of the Cleveland Airport Commission, I write this letter in support of the I-69 Central Route through Bolivar County. Our airport is situated west of Cleveland and the Central Route will have a substantial impact on our facility.

Our fixed base operator is currently in discussions with the Airport Commission and the City concerning an expansion of his operations over the next three years. The owner has indicated that the expansion of his company will position itself to be a major regional aircraft, parts and service provider in close proximity to the central route of I-69. Also, the City is in the initial phase of a major runway expansion at the airport. The Federal Aviation Administration has given approval to extend the runway 1,000 feet from 4,000 feet to 5,000 feet.

Our airport facility will greatly benefit from having a major interstate within a mile or two of our doorstep. The Central Route makes the most economic sense for our facility.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Work
Chairman
Cleveland Airport Commission

cc: Martin King, Mayor
Wayne Cole, CAO

100 NORTH STREET • P.O. BOX 1439 • TEL: 662-846-1471 • FAX: 662-843-8029

OFFICERS
Robert Patton
MAYOR
Jackie Sanders
CITY CLERK
Carmere Scott
DEPUTY CITY CLERK
Cecilia M Bland
MUNICIPAL COURT CLERK
James Carmicle
CHIEF OF POLICE

CITY OF SHELBY

P.O. Box 43
305 Third Street
Shelby, Mississippi 38774
Phone: (662) 398-5156 ~ Fax: (662) 398-7878

BOARD OF ALDERMEN
Preston Billings
Don Harris, Jr
Dr R. T. Hollingsworth
Rev. Curtis Hooper
Kermit Stanton, Jr

December 14, 2004

Mr. Larry "Butch" Brown
Mississippi Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Re: Interstate 69 Route
City of Shelby's Recommendation (Red-Central Alignment)

Dear Mr. Brown:

On behalf of the City of Shelby and Board of Aldermen, it is my distinct pleasure to offer this letter as commitment and support the Red Central Alignment proposed I-69 Route.

It is our opinion that the Red Central Alignment route recommendation appears to have the greatest impact on community and economic development than the other two routes presently being studied.

The Red Central Alignment has many municipalities alongside Hwy 61, such as the City of Shelby that will benefit substantially.

In fact, it is my personal opinion that the Red Central Alignment will take Bolivar County, the Mississippi Delta, and the State of Mississippi to the next level of global trade and economics.

In sum, the Red Central Alignment is the best fit for the overall Mississippi Delta economy because of the heavily populated area and the establishment of an existing major route, U.S. Highway 61.

Sincerely,

Robert Patton

Robert Patton, Mayor
City of Shelby

Office of the Mayor

ROGER D. CARTER
MAYOR

December 14, 2004

TO WHOM IT CONCERN:

LETTER OF SUPPORT
INTERSTATE 69 ROUTE

The City of Shaw is in full support of the Central Route Alternative (red route). Our support is base upon the central route, that it will enhance the economic and community growth of the City of Shaw. This route will make Bolivar County and the City of Shaw an attractive area for businesses interested in relocating in the Mississippi Delta

If you require any additional information, please call me at 662-754-6200 or 662-754-2414.

Sincerely,

Roger D. Carter
Mayor

200 MAIN STREET · POST OFFICE BOX 679 · SHAW, MISSISSIPPI 38773
TELEPHONE (601) 754-3131 · DIRECT (601) 754-6200
TELEFAX (601) 754-2414

THE CITY OF CLEVELAND

CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI 38732

12-14-04

MARTIN T KING, JR
MAYOR

LYNN C BUTRUM, CMC
CITY CLERK

BOARD OF ALDERMEN:
W. ROSS STORY
NORMAN BURKE JR
TED CAMPBELL
BILLY NOWELL
WILLARD SAMUELS
PAUL JANOUSH
DAVID WORK

OFFICERS:
WAYNE COLE
CAO

JOHN W. VALENTINE
CITY ATTORNEY

BRETT MOORMAN
DIRECTOR OF
PUBLIC WORKS

QUINTON STEEN
DIRECTOR OF
PARKS & RECREATION

GREG KORB
CITY ENGINEER

TO: Mr. Butch Brown, Exec. Director
M.D.O.T.

I write these comments in favor of the Central Route being the choice because, in my opinion it will benefit already developed towns along its vicinity, thus benefiting more citizens, as compared to the Eastern Route.

It is my understanding that the cost estimate of Central Route is 60 M less than the other Route, which is obviously a sizeable benefit.

The Central Route serves a historically impoverished area, as well as being located in the middle of the original Proposed corridor, which set the boundaries both East and west.

I strongly urge the adoption of the Central Route.

Sincerely,

W. T. King.

100 NORTH STREET • P.O. BOX 1439 • TEL: 662-846-1471 • FAX: 662-843-8029

THE CITY OF CLEVELAND

CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI 38732

December 17, 2004

Mr. Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
P. O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225

MARTIN T. KING, JR
MAYOR

LYNN C. BUTRUM, CMC
CITY CLERK

BOARD OF ALDERMEN:
W. ROSS STORY
NORMAN BURKE JR
TED CAMPBELL
BILLY NOWELL
WILLARD SAMUELS
PAUL JANOUSH
DAVID WORK

OFFICERS:
WAYNE COLE
CAO

JOHN W. VALENTINE
CITY ATTORNEY

BRETT MOORMAN
DIRECTOR OF
PUBLIC WORKS

QUINTON STEEN
DIRECTOR OF
PARKS & RECREATION

GREG KORB
CITY ENGINEER

Dear Robert:

On behalf of the City of Cleveland, I offer my full support of the Central Alignment of I-69 and for the proposed I-69 Connector to Greenville. I agree with Mayor Heather McTeer Hudson of Greenville that the construction of these two highways will jumpstart the economic development the Delta area so badly needs. The Delta has been suffering from the lack of an interstate highway system, and I-69 will fill that void.

Both Cleveland and Greenville have industries that must get their product to market quickly, as well as import, in an efficient manner, raw materials to manufacture that product. Cleveland's newest industry, Faurecia, hopes to expand here; and, we are hoping that the designation of the Central Route and the addition of the connector will encourage them to do so. The knowledge that I-69 would run through Bolivar County was a key factor in the Company's decision to locate here.

Cleveland's growth will follow the I-69 interchanges; therefore, the Central Alignment would be best for this community; and, our neighbor to the South is a vital player in the future economic development of the Delta, so the Connector is important to the entire area. Therefore, we urgently request that you assist us in our efforts to provide the Delta with a more secure future by promoting the construction of these two I-69 roadways.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Martin T. King, Jr.
Mayor

DEC 2 : 2004

100 NORTH STREET • P.O. BOX 1439 • TEL: 662-846-1471 • FAX: 662-843-8029

GLENN M. DONALD, SUPERVISOR
DISTRICT 1, MOORHEAD
TELEPHONE: 246-5237 HOME
TELEPHONE: 887-1755 OFFICE
TELEPHONE: 207-0398 OFFICE
FACSIMILE: 887-1755
E-MAIL: REVGLEN89@AOL.COM
MARY S. KENT, SUPERVISOR
DISTRICT 2, INDIANOLA
TELEPHONE: 887-3452 HOME
DENNIS W. HOLMES, VICE-PRESIDENT
DISTRICT 3, INDIANOLA
TELEPHONE: 887-4918 HOME
TELEPHONE: 887-3300 OFFICE
FACSIMILE: 887-1000

SUNFLOWER COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUNFLOWER COUNTY COURTHOUSE
POST OFFICE BOX 988
INDIANOLA, MISSISSIPPI 38751
TELEPHONE: (662) 887-4703 OR (662) 887-2881

EDGAR DONAHOE, PRESIDENT
DISTRICT 4, INDIANOLA
TELEPHONE: 887-1344 TOLL FREE
BARRY W. BRYANT, SUPERVISOR
DISTRICT 5, DREW
TELEPHONE: 586-2300 HOME
TELEPHONE: 745-8709 OFFICE
PAULA S. SYKES
CLERK OF THE BOARD AND
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
TELEPHONE: 887-4703
FACSIMILE: 887-7054
JAN GARRETT, CGFM
COMPTROLLER
TELEPHONE: 887-2881
FACSIMILE: 887-7054

December 22, 2004

Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P. O. Box 22625
Jackson, Ms 39225-2625

Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell, Director
MDOT Environmental Division
P. O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Re: Resolution of support for proposed eastern route for interstate 69 construction

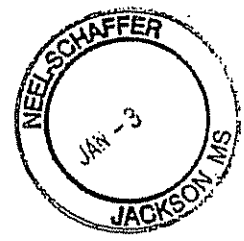
Dear Friends:

Enclosed please find a certified copy of the Resolution of the Sunflower County Board of Supervisors in support for the proposed eastern route for interstate 69 construction. Your assistance in assuring that this resolution is included for consideration will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Paula S. Sykes, Chancery Clerk and
County Administrator

file c:\MyFiles\BoardOrders\BoardLetter\I 69 Resolution of Support.wpd



RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR PROPOSED EASTERN ROUTE
FOR INTERSTATE 69 CONSTRUCTION

WHEREAS, proposals have been set forth for construction of Interstate Highway 69 extending from Mexico through the United States to Canada, and specifically extending through a portion of the Mississippi Delta, and

WHEREAS, alternate routes have been proposed for such highway as it extends through Mississippi from Tennessee to Arkansas, and

WHEREAS, the Sunflower County Board of Supervisors has studied and reviewed the proposed alternative routes, considering the benefits to be derived from such highway by citizens of Sunflower County and citizens of the Mississippi Delta as a whole, and

WHEREAS, this Board believes that the construction of such highway along the Eastern route would benefit the greatest number of citizens and the betterment of Sunflower County and the Delta region as a whole, since it would offer greater access to municipalities lying within Sunflower County as it traversed through a small portion of Sunflower County, and

WHEREAS, this Board further believes that consideration of the potential economic development impact of such highway should be strongly considered by those making the final decision, and this Board believes that the strongest economic impact will be derived from utilization of the Eastern route, since utilization of the Central or Western routes would result in a natural limitation of the economic development area to be affected, since the location of the Mississippi River naturally and necessarily limits economic development to its banks, since no bridge is to be constructed except at the previously chosen Eutaw Landing Crossing, and

WHEREAS, utilization of the Eastern route would allow economic development activities for a distance of 50 miles or greater on both sides of the proposed interstate highway, thus resulting in greater benefit to all areas of the Mississippi Delta, and

WHEREAS, this Board further believes that those in charge of making the ultimate decision should consider the fact that the State of Mississippi owns an extremely large tract of land which lies nearly adjacent to the proposed Eastern route, and which tract of land is presently utilized for the State Penitentiary on a very limited basis. The majority of such lands would be available for use for a major economic development project on the same scale as the previously State supported Nissan project near Canton, Mississippi. This Board further believes that locating such interstate highway on the Eastern route adjacent to such State owned lands would give a great advantage to the State of Mississippi in seeking economic development projects of such magnitude.

NOW, THEREFORE, on motion of Supervisor Bryant, seconded by Supervisor Donald, and unanimously approved, this Board does unanimously support the location of Interstate 69 on the Eastern alternate route and urges the Mississippi Department of Transportation and other officials involved in such project to render a final decision under which such construction would be made and done along the proposed Eastern route through Sunflower County and East of Cleveland, Mississippi.

The Clerk of this Board is hereby directed to forward a copy of this Resolution to the Mississippi Department of Transportation for its consideration in making such decision.

SO RESOLVED, this the 20th day of December, 2004.

Edgar Donald
PRESIDENT

ATTEST:
Paula S. Sykes
Paula S. Sykes, Clerk

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY OF SUNFLOWER
I, Paula S. Sykes, Clerk of the Chancery Court in and for said County and State, hereby certify that the foregoing contains a whole and true correct copy of Resolution
as the same appears on file in my office at Indianola, Mississippi
Witness my hand and official Seal, this the
2nd day of December 2004
PAULA S. SYKES, Clerk of the Chancery Court of Sunflower Co., Miss.
BY Paula S. Sykes D.C.

Mayor's Office
662-887-1825
City Clerk's Office
662-887-3101
Police Department
662-887-1811
662-887-2595 (fax)
Court Clerk
662-887-7622

City of Indianola

101 Front Street
P O. Box 269
Indianola, Mississippi 38751
Fax 662-887-6009

Fire Department
662-887-4955
Public Works
662-887-3427
Inspection Dept
662-887-2358
Recreation Dept
662-887-4267
Cemetery Dept
662-887-3895

December 22, 2004

Mr. Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Dear Mr. Walker:

The Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Indianola passed the enclosed resolution at their December 15, 2004 special meeting. Please include this with your public hearing feedback on the I-69 project.

If you have any questions or need any further information, please contact me at 662-887-3101.

Sincerely,

Jane Hetzler Allen

Jane Hetzler Allen
City Clerk

RESOLUTION RE: INTERSTATE HIGHWAY I-69

WHEREAS, the City of Indianola is located at the heart and crossroads of the Mississippi Delta, being strategically located at the intersection of U. S. Highways 82 and 49-W; AND

WHEREAS, improved highways are needed North from Indianola; and

WHEREAS, improved highways and an interstate connector road from Indianola to I-69 would benefit and expedite travel between Little Rock and Jackson and between the Tunica-Cleveland-Clarksdale areas and Jackson; and

WHEREAS, the I-69 eastern route alternative is best for the delta as a whole according to socio-economic criteria:

NOW, THEREFORE, on motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Indianola support and request:

1. An interstate connector road or highway between Shaw and Indianola and that Highway 448 be four-laned in its entirety.

2. The I-69 eastern route alternative.

CERTIFICATE

I, JANE ALLEN, City Clerk of the City of Indianola, Mississippi, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly passed and adopted at a special meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of said city held on December 15, 2004; that the authority therein granted has not been rescinded and remains in full force and effect.

DATED this the 15th day of December, 2004.

Jane Ellen Allen

JANE ALLEN, City Clerk

CLARKSDALE
COAHOMA
COUNTY

December 27, 2004

Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Dear Mr. Walker:

This letter is in response to the Public Meeting held in Clarksdale, December 15, 2004 regarding I-69, the Northern Section and Southern Section.

In the Northern Section north of Clarksdale, at Lula, we prefer the west alternative (Orange) because it will provide better access and visibility to the Delma Furniss Welcome Station near the intersection of existing US 61 and US 49. The west alternative will also be less confusing to travelers who would have to deal with two intersections if the central alternative (Red), a completely new route, is built in this vicinity.

In the Southern Section south of Clarksdale, we strongly urge that a connector route be developed approximately along the existing route of MS Highway 448 from Indianola to Shaw and connecting to I-69 regardless of which alternative (West, Central or East) is ultimately selected. We feel this would open areas for development in Sunflower County along existing US 82 and thus have a greater overall economic impact on the Delta.

Please let me know if we can provide additional information in this regard.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Walker, Chairman
Transportation Committee

RECEIVED
JAN 6 2005

Chamber of Commerce & Industrial Foundation
P. O. Box 160 • Clarksdale, MS 38614 • 662-627-7337 • 662-627-1313 fax
www.clarksdale-ms.com • ccoc@clarksdale.com

THE CITY OF DREW
130 WEST SHAW AVE.
DREW, MISSISSIPPI 38737

RESOLUTION
OF THE
CITY OF DREW

A Resolution Supporting the Eastern Alternative for I-69 and other related initiatives.

Whereas, the CITY OF DREW is part of the economic development organization for North Sunflower County, and

Whereas, the Eastern Alternative would positively impact a greater portion of the whole Mississippi Delta and all of its residents than the other two alternatives, and

Whereas, the Eastern Alternative would give the Whole Delta a second four-lane highway running parallel with Highway 61, which is already in the middle of Bolivar County would greatly increase the economic development for the entire Mississippi Delta. The Eastern Alternative would greatly help other Delta Counties like Quitman, Tallahatchie, Leflore, and Humphrey.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THE BOARD OF THE CITY OF DREW SUPPORTS THE EASTERN ALTERNATIVE FOR I-69 FROM CLARKSDALE TO BENOIT, AND

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, The Board of The City of Drew also supports the following related initiatives associated with the construction of I-69, including: 1) High priority to four-lane Highway 8 from Ruleville to Rosedale,
2) High priority to four-lane Highway 49 from Clarksdale to Indianola, 3) Improve the Drew-Merigold Road, 4) Improve Highway 32 from Parchman to Shelby.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF THE CITY OF DREW THIS THE 1st DAY OF FEBRUARY 2005.

James A. Pettigrew
Mayor

Benoit School District

Great Schools Make Better Communities

Suzanne Hawley, Ed.D.
Superintendent

February 11, 2004

Mr. Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
P O Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Dear Mr. Walker:

Please accept this letter as an endorsement for the I-69 Section near Benoit School District/Ray Brooks School to cross in the curve just south of the school. This route is north of the one that would cross Lake Bolivar and would take it across our 16th Section Land. We feel this would be the most beneficial to the Town of Benoit and Benoit School District. It would lie in close proximity to Benoit and any development would impact this small rural town and our school district. We look forward to this project moving ahead.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Hawley, Ed.D., Superintendent
Benoit School District

FEB 13 2004
JACKSON, MS

P. O. Box 189, Benoit, MS 38725 / Tel. 662-742-3287 / Fax 662-742-3149
shawley@mde.k12.ms.us

Bern Prewitt
P. O. Box 517
Boyle, MS 38730
(662) 843-8450

RE: I-69 Project
Central Route Alternative

To Whom It May Concern:

I am currently a Supervisor for District 5 in Cleveland, Mississippi and support the Central Route Alternative. I would like to share with you a couple of reasons for supporting the central route for I-69.

1. The central route would serve more towns or cities than any other route; therefore, the central route would serve more people.

2. The central route would serve a larger portion of economically disadvantaged and minority residents.

3. The central route would be closer to an airport and port facilities.

4. The central route would be closer to DSU which is the only university in the Delta.

5. The central route would be closer to several industrial parks to help our industry prosper.

6. The central route would be the most economical route with rights of way and environmental issues already set since it would be following the existing Highway 61.

Please, take this into strong consideration.

Thank you,

Bern Prewitt
Supervisor District 5
Bolivar County

STATEMENT WITH REGARD TO POTENTIAL OF INTERSTATE 69

by

Supervisor Richard M. Coleman

I am reminded of my early education on how the fur trade route built the economy of new villages and townships. This is a comparison of the benefits and contributions that I-69 will present and how its construction, upon completion, will further develop the small agri-towns.

The commerce route will share cultures, social amenities, and infrastructure of eight states and three countries with collaborative partnership for the first time in our history. Heretofore, Interstate 40 has been the most prominent roadway from coast to coast. However, due to the complexities of benefits offered by I-69, there is no comparison when we speak in terms of the resources it will bring to the local economies in our area.

Therefore, it would be my professional judgment that I-69's central route is the more feasible alternative for interstate transportation. This interstate mode of transportation will increase the capabilities of current industries and business operations. Also, it is hoped that I-69 will increase capabilities to maximize the potential of the ports in this region.

Appendix D
Public Involvement

Community organization comments and correspondence

File T38

April 5, 2001

Town of Benoit

Committee to Promote Interstate 69 and the Mississippi River Bridge
PO Box 60, Benoit, MS 38725
Tel. 662/742-3435 or 742-3751

Memo: To Mayor, Aldermen, Committee Members, April 5,2001
From: Early C. Ewing, Jr.

Subject: Status of I-69 Highway and River Bridge

Enclosed are copies of correspondence with the engineering firms who are involved in the routing of Interstate 69. They aren't calling it this yet but this is the route that it will take. You will recall that we had a Public Hearing on this at Ray Brooks on March 14, 2001. Several routes were considered at that time and this routing has not been fixed formally but the North Route has tentatively selected. There are three alternates, each is marked where it crosses Rte. 1, the Bolivar Road and West Preston extended. There is a flag and a white cross on the pavement. The South Route crosses No. 1 just south of Ray Brooks, The Middle Route just south of James Herbisons' shop and the North Route just north of New Morning Star Church. I believe that the latter one will be selected after another public hearing in May or June. I believe this one will cross the land of Delbert Farmer, Hamp Matthews, Terrell Patterson, Don Roberson, Margaret Ewing, Dahomey Plantation, James Kline and others to the East.

We have suggested a continuation of the North Route that goes east to the Bouge, then turns north to around Pace and then goes up to Shelby. This will be best for all of Bolivar County. It will be good for both Rosedale and Cleveland.

One thing to consider is the Greenville Connector which is proposed to run from Lake Monocnut and McConnel Plantation to the south. Then it will cross the end of Lake Bolivar, join No 1 north of Lamont and go east of Greenville and then on to the Greenville Bridge.

If you see the map prepared for the City of Greenville note that it calls for the Connector to cross the water at the west end of Lake Bolivar. I believe that it will more likely come across near the silos and won't have to cross any water or woods.

You all would like to have a timetable. We have enough money for the planning of the bridge and the part of the highway as far as No.1. Then we just lack about 450 million dollars to build it. This planning is scheduled to be completed by Jan. 1, 2002. If the money is appropriated this year or next and this is the event to look for, construction could start in 2003 and be finished by 2008.

Enclosed with this are letters to the engineers HNTB, Neel-Schaffer, Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce, with copies to the mayors of Rosedale Cleveland and Shelby.

Sincerely,

Early C. Ewing, Jr.
Chairman

RECEIVED
NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC.
APR 09 2001
Mark
Jimmy

Town of Benoit
Committee to Promote Interstate 69 and the Mississippi River Bridge
PO Box 60, Benoit, MS 38725
Tel. 662/742-3435 or 742-3751

File TB37

April 4, 2001

Neel - Schaffer Engineering
P O Box 622625
Jackson, MS 39202

Gentlemen,

This letter has suggestions for the route of I69 north of Benoit, MS. You had a representative at the I69 Meeting. It was held at the Ray Brooks School on March 14. 2001. He gave me his card but I haven't been able to find it anywhere. Would you please try to get this to him or the appropriate person.

As I understand it your firm now has the contract to develop a plan for locating Interstate 69 as it travels east of Highway One from Benoit. The town of Benoit has a committee to consider what we should do when the highway comes by Benoit. At our public hearing on the 14th. it seemed that the North Intersection with Highway One at Benoit would be the one chosen and that Neel-Schaffer would be the firm selected to locate the route to the North. Our committee had come to the same conclusion as is reflected in our minutes and as presented to HTNB at the meeting. A copy of these minutes and our letter to Betty Burry is enclosed.

We consider an intersection with No. 1 just north of Benoit and possibly along the route of the E-W section line between sections 26 and 27 in T21 of Bolivar County. This section line runs entirely through farmland to a point east of Bouge Philia. It does not pass through any woods or cross any major physical obstacle till it reaches the Bouge. This is important if one wishes to avoid the Dahomey Wildlife Refuge. If it goes north after it crosses the Bouge it will pass about halfway between Rosedale and Cleveland on a straight shoot to Shelby. Please note the advantages to both cities offered by such a route (see our committee report). A truck at Shelby or the Great River

Bridge would be poised to reach any point in the Western Delta with the greatest of ease.

I am enclosing a copy of the Bolivar County map that shows this route. I am also enclosing a copy of our Town of Benoit's committee report, and a copy of our report to HTNB.

The Church does not have a cemetery. The section line road may be traveled all but a short distance, in a car in dry weather. It goes past the far end of an agricultural aviation airstrip, which might be a problem.

Please give this route your careful consideration it offers a lot of advantages.

Sincerely,

Early C. Ewing, Jr.
Chmn. I-69 Committee, Town of Benoit

cc: Mayor and Board of Aldermen, Committee Members Benoit, Bolivar Co. Cof C, Bolivar Co. Board of Supervisors, Mayor Rosedale, Mayor Cleveland Mayor Shelby

EARLY C. EWING, JR.
BENOIT, MISSISSIPPI 38725

File: TB 36

April 4, 2001

MINUTES- Interstate 69 Committee Meeting 5:00PM March 13.2001

Present: Freddie Kline, Mary Jo Dreher, Early Ewing (chmn., secy.)
Absent: Deborah Gammage, Toby Nokes (ex officio), Rodney Mills,
Robert Johnson

The first business was to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the three proposed intersections of the I69 bridge access highway. This does not consider a r-o-w for a rail connection.

The South location is between the Ray Brooks football field and the school section woods next to it. This location was discussed and unanimously rejected because it placed the proposed interstate highway and highway One intersection too close to the school.

The Middle Location crosses No. 1 at the site of James Earl Herbisons shop and then follows through the edge of town but within the city limits east to a point where it turns north across Highway 448 at some unspecified location. This site was unanimously rejected because it passes through the Town of Benoit yet is separated from it by a wooded slough.

The North Location goes west of the Town of Benoit and joins No 1 somewhere north of New Morning Star Church. The exact location was discussed and it was unanimously decided that it should go west of the Levee View Housing Development and then follow the existing section line road or go north of it to a junction with No.1. Most likely then it should continue east to the Bouge Philia and then turn north to meet present Highway 8 in the vicinity of Pace. This would mean that it would traverse farm land, not woodland and would not interfere with Dahomey Wildlife Refuge or a possible extension of the Refuge to the west in any way.

This routing would mean that the highway would go through the middle of Bolivar County and be approximately equi-distant from Cleveland and Rosedale. A four lane connector between these two cities would make it equally accessible to the industries and Delta State at Cleveland and an easy connection to Highway 61 to the south as well as to the Mississippi River Port of Rosedale, the Great River Road State Park and the Tourist Attractions

601-742-3435 P O BOX 60 307 WALNUT STREET

EARLY C. EWING, JR.
BENOIT, MISSISSIPPI 38725

of Historic Rosedale. A link to the south and west would be provided by the Greenville Connector and I69 and the Great River Bridge.

Subjects for our next meeting to be held after the route around Benoit is decided upon probably in July are:

Flyovers for taking local roads over I69
Possible extension of the city limits
Necessary street and road improvements
Possible Zoning Amendments
Possible Building Code Amendments
Necessary Water and Sewer System Extensions

Respectfully Submitted,

Early C. Ewing

Early C. Ewing, Jr. Chmn. & Secy.

cc: Mayor, Aldermen, and Committee Members, Bolivar Co. CofC

601-742-3435 PO BOX 60 307 WALNUT STREET

Burry

File T35 March 13,2001

Town of Benoit

Committee to Promote Interstate 69 and the Mississippi River Bridge
PO Box 60, Benoit, MS 38725
Tel. 662/742-3435 or 742-3751

To: I-69 Mississippi River Crossing
HTNB Corp.- Betty Burry
1201 Walnut, Suite 700
Kansas City, MO 64106

Subject: Suggestions Regarding Locations for the proposed highway to connect to the east side of bridge.

Dear Ms. Burry,

Thank you for the March 2001 announcement about the routing of the proposed I69 Highway around the town of Benoit. We have a committee to study the effects of various plans for the highway as it goes around Benoit. This groups recommendations are to be given to the Governing Body of the Town of Benoit and after their approval transmitted to you. Unfortunately we haven't had time to get all this done as the aldermen don't meet for about three weeks. Consequently we are passing these suggestions directly to you.

If this bridge and highway are built the traffic must be conveyed to Highway 61. We propose that the proposed bridge access road cross Highway One with an interchange and proceed to the east far enough to avoid the east side of Dahomey Woods. Then it would cross the Bouge, turn north and go up to Highway 8 about Pace and from there to Highway 61. This would mean a crossing about halfway between Cleveland and Rosedale with easy access to both.

You have suggested three alternatives where I-69 might intersect State Highway One. South, just south of Ray Brooks School, In the south edge of the town of Benoit which I will call Herbisons for the person whose property it is located near on and North just north of town. Let us discuss each briefly.

South; this route meets Highway One exactly at the edge of the school yard. It is hard to conceive of a worse place for a four lane highway and an interchange. As it continues to the east it would cross three major sloughs, one state highway, # 448, and one county highway, Litton Road. It would also have to cross Browns' Bayou and Burrus Bayou.

Herbisons; this route would pass within the city limits of Benoit, though not in a developed area. It would then have to cross all the obstacles noted for South.

North; this route could not follow Highway One to the north because of blocking the wildlife corridor between Dahomey Wildlife Refuge and the Mississippi River. However, if the north route is moved to the south a few hundred yards it could follow a section line across the RR and go unobstructed through the fields to a point across the Bouge Phalia where it turns north to Highway #8 near Pace, MS. The obstructions here would be a frame church, no cemetery, one crossing of Burrus Bayou and it would pass just to the north of an agricultural airstrip. It would split the farm land of one of our committee members.

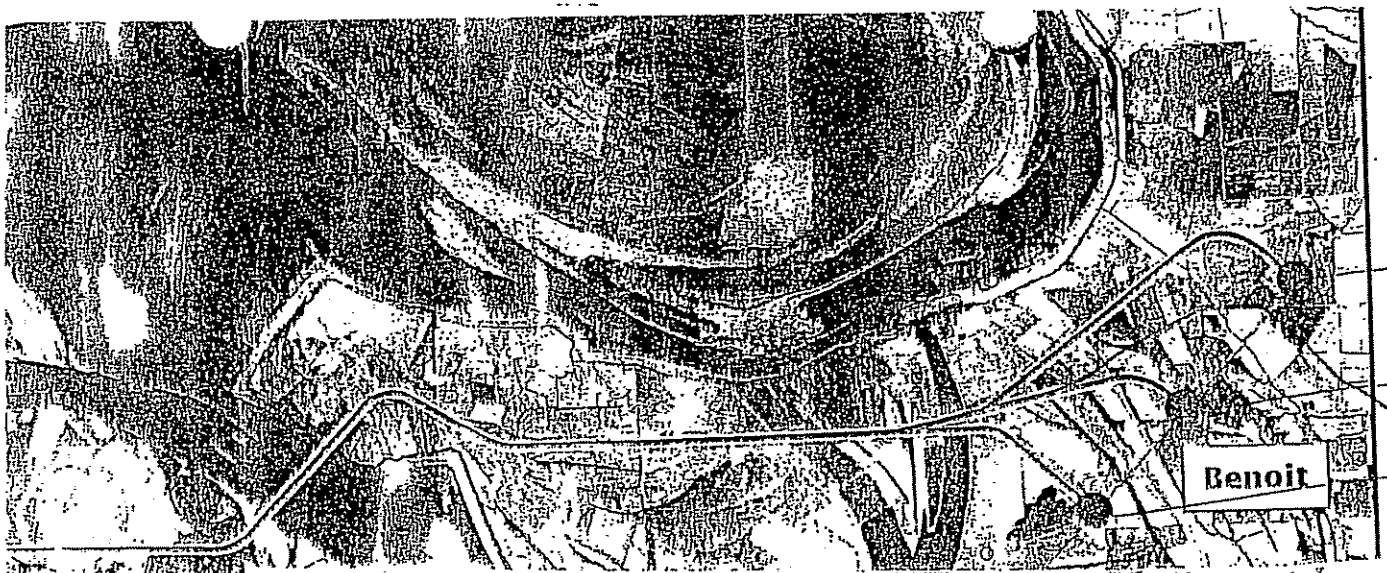
This route was the unanimous choice of our committee.

We felt that extra accomodation should be given so as to provide frequent and easy crossing under or over the Interstate for farm equipment. Many farmers farm leased land so increases in land values, if any, would not help them. Interchanges would not be of much help to an eight row planter. Wherever the road crosses a stream or ditch extend the bridge to allow for farm passage. If this land were not being farmed it would not be so easy to build the highway. Worse still it might still be a wildlife area.

Respectfully submitted,

Early C. Ewing, Jr.
Chairman

Committee members: Mary Jo Dreher, James F. Kline, absent: Deborah Gammage, Bennie Price, Robert Johnson, Rodney Mills



This map shows the crossing of the Mississippi River at Eutaw Landing and then proceeds east to the vicinity of Benoit. It passes by Benoit to the north by the New Morning Star Church, by the very edge of town near James Allen Herbisons' shop, and finally one just south of Ray Brooks School.

A very important consideration is where does it go after it crosses Highway One. All three routes show a crossing of Highway One. Presumably we can't use Highway 1 north of town because of the conflict with Dahomey Wildlife Refuge and its corridor to the river. Either of these three alternates will presumably have to go east past the east boundary of the Dahomey Refuge then turn north crossing Highway 8 in the vicinity of Pace then joining highway 61 in the vicinity of Shelby.

If we use the north junction with One we can avoid nearly all wooded areas by making te connection next to the Church and then going due east without having to cross woodlands, highways or major drainage till one gets to the Bouge Phalia. If we use the Herbison junction we will have to cross more sloughs as well as the Litton Road and Highway 448. The south junction would put the interchange on the Ray Brooks School Grounds. All traffic on this alternate would go directly by the schoolyard. This would be more hazardous to children than to the bears and deer on Highway One North.

The slight alteration in the North Alternate is marked in red and it seems to be the clear choice.

RECEIVED
NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC.
AUG 16 2001
JRS
File 2-4345-07

P
12

Town of Benoit
Benoit, MS 38725

Committee to Promote Interstate 69 and the Mississippi River Bridge
P O Box 60, Benoit, MS 38725 Tel. 662/742-3435 or 742- 3751

File: TB55 Comments on Clarksdale Scoping Meeting July 11, 2001

Mr. E Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Div. Engr.
Miss Dept. Transportation
P O Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Mr. Jerry Mugg
Ms. Betty Burry
HNTB Engineers
1201 Walnut, Suite 201
Kansas City, MO 64106

Mr. Robert Walker
Neel-Schaffer Inc.
666 North State Street, Suite 201
Jackson, MS 39202

comments

Dear Lady and Gentlemen,

Our Committee attended a scooping meeting of Neel-Schaffer in Clarksdale July 11, 2001, regarding the route of 169 from Benoit to Robinsonville. It was introductory in nature and didn't present any possible routes. They are to be forthcoming at our next meeting.

One thing that concerned us was a diagram that showed the Bridge-Benoit segment crossing Rte. One to the South of Benoit. We feel that the traffic generated through Benoit would be very detrimental to our town We just don't have the infrastructure to handle it. We seem to be getting increasing traffic through town already. If completion is in segments,and that happened to be broken here it would be terrible.

If the route goes West and North of town , this in town traffic, will be reduced and it will not disturb a residential area ~~a~~ either. It will also pass behind our school (that is provided a Greenville Connector is built a few miles east of the bridge). Previous correspondence has given you maps of these route alternatives.

Another consideration is that we do not wish to funnel commercial traffic along the scenic shores of Lake Bolivar. A "Restoration" of Deer Creek is presently under consideration and the route of a four lane Interstate would detract from this as well.

Please keep these considerations in mind as you consider the Route of Interstate 69.We want to promote its' development for tourism as well as economics. We are for it 100%

Sincerly,

Early

Early C. Ewing, Jr., Chairman
CC: Committee, Bolivar Co. Board of Supervisors, Bob Eley, Chamber of Commerce

EARLY C EWING, JR.
BENOIT, MISSISSIPPI 38725

12

File: TB 54 Report I69 Mtg. C'dale 7/11/01

Town of Benoit
Benoit, MS 38725

Committee to Promote Interstate 69 and the Mississippi River Bridge
P O Box 60, Benoit, MS 38725 Tel. 662/742-3435 or 742- 3751

REPORT OF I69 SCOPING MEETING CLARKSDALE JULY 11, 2001

This meeting was held at the Clarksdale School in town. The one on the south edge of town is the Coahoma County School. In attendance from our committee were Early Ewing, Robert Johnson and Rodney Mills.

Claiborne Barnwell, of Neal Sheaffer, explained that this was the first of several planning meetings to be held by the engineering firm in connection with the Environmental Statement regarding the proposed route of I69 from State Road (SR) 304 at Robinsonville to Benoit approximately 100 miles.

Cecil Vick of the Federal Highway Administration, Planning and Policy Division explained that Congress felt that the movement of goods was the primary purpose of I69 and this guided their designation of the corridor (18) within which the route of this highway should fall. This corridor, Map attached, delineates the general route of the highway. It is to benefit economic development and benefit minorities and low income people along the way. The local state highway departments would select the best routes, guided by the environmental assessment. They can't pick a route without taking all these factors into account.

This entire highway is to be some 1600 miles long and is divided into segments which may be completed at different times. In the southern section it is to go to Memphis, Sherveport, Houston and the Rio Grande Valley. In all it will cover eight states. We want to be careful about segments in this area. A completed Bridge and no I69 on this side of the river could cause some traffic complications. It is to be coordinated with the proposed Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA). This guarantees that I69 will carry heavy truck traffic.

Once the route is selected with consideration of environmental and historic sites then the planning phase of design, interchanges, frontage roads and interconnections can begin. Perhaps this will be next Spring 2002

Robert Walker of the Mississippi Highway Department talked to us next. He tells us that congress has approved the purpose and need of I69 but the money to build it isn't forthcoming yet. It seems to me that the consultants are going

to use up all the money drawing colorful maps of demographics and history. He mentioned stand alone sections that we need to be careful of.

Jimmy Shirley also of the Highway Department said the preliminary work should be done and then we will have another public meeting in 2or3 months to present corridor alternatives. They envision a three year study period. They are setting up a web site

Larry Meisner, another consultant, talked about the social impacts.

David Kelly,of Coastal Environments, Baton Rouge talked about Geology, Archeological Sites, Historic Structures, Traditional Cultural Properties, such as churches and babtising sites. All these things could complicate everything.

Next was the EPA Lady followed by Kenneth Weeden and Associates who mentioned Evironmental Civil Rights, Environmental Justice and minorities and Low Income. It seems to me these disadvantaged people stand to gain the most from this in construction and economic development jobs.

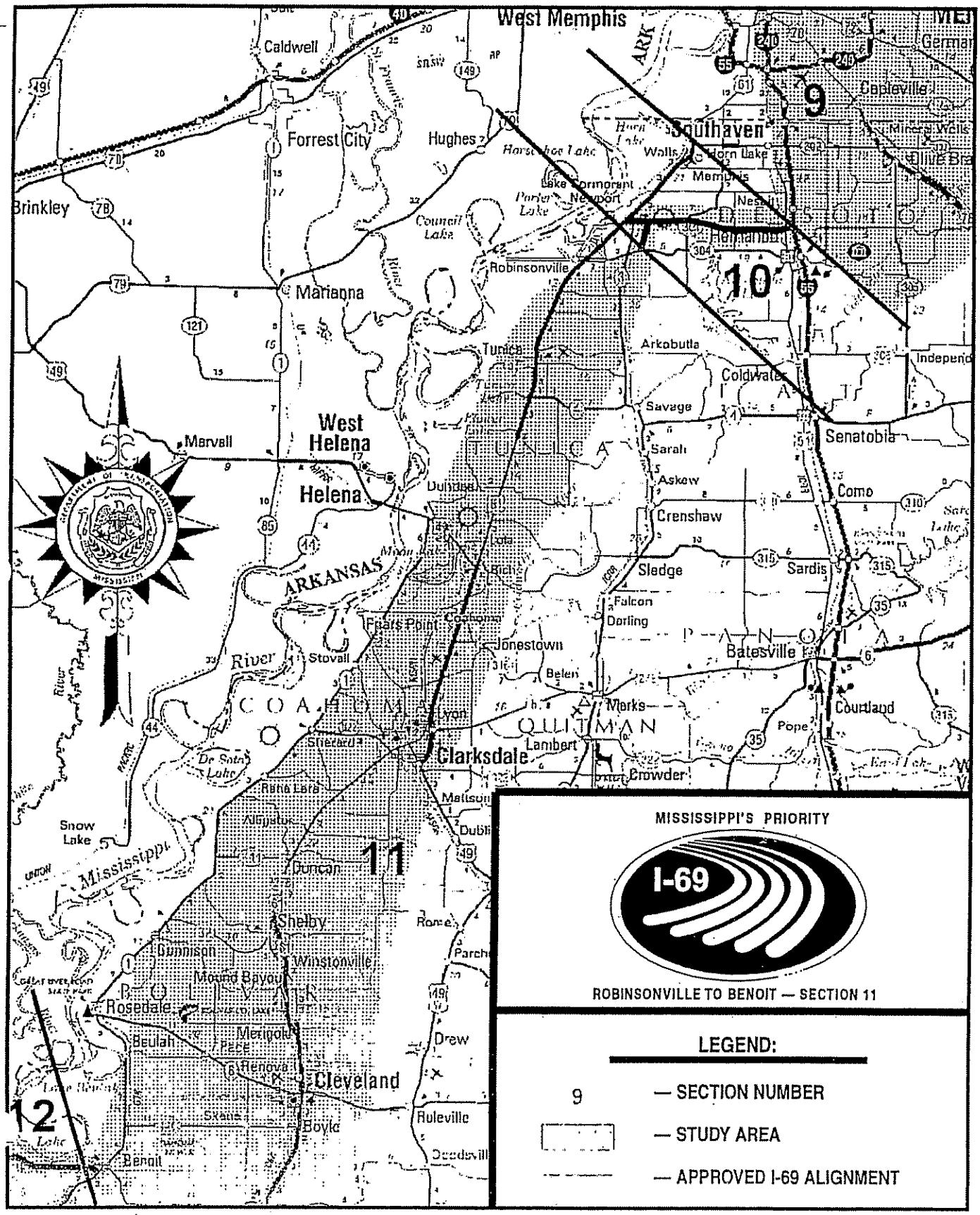
Cecil Vick Mentioned the degree of cooperation required among cooperating agencies. If we had the money now it would take 10 years, ready by 2010 as it is it may take 20.

Indianola and Sunflower County want it to go east of Cleveland. Neil Schaffer say they will come up with three alternatives as HNTB did with the section west of Benoit.

They stressed that each of us should write them a comment about the route!!

Next Day we toured this section by car but this didn't amount to anything.

Early C Ewing, Jr. 7/29/2001



Location of Segment from Benoit North not located 7/24/01

File T49 April 13, 2001

Town of Benoit

Committee to Promote Interstate 69 and the Mississippi River Bridge
PO Box 60, Benoit, MS 38725
Tel. 662/742-3435 or 742-3751

RECEIVED
NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC
APR 17 2001
4345-07 Mark B
JS
RW

Mr. E Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer
Mississippi Department of Transportation
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Dear Mr. Barnwell,

This is in response to your letter of Nov. 17, 2000. It relates to the Proposed Route from the Mississippi River to SR 1. Although this route has not been finally chosen it seems that it will go from the Bridge to join SR1 at a point north of Benoit. In the meantime the Town of Benoit has formed a committee to make suggestions to the engineers as to the site and to plan the improvements to Benoits infrastructure that I69 will require if we are to make the most of it. I am chairman of that committee.

HTNB has laid out three possible routes. Our committee feels that the north route will be the best for a number of reasons as outlined in the minutes of our committee meeting (enclosed) and as presented to Neel-Schaffer Engineering in our letter to them (also enclosed).

The towns of Bolivar County are getting together to present a unified opinion as to the location of I69 after it leaves Benoit (copy enclosed). This resolution has been approved by the following agencies and more are to follow. They are Rosedale, Cleveland, Board of Supervisors, Bolivar County Port Commission, Bolivar County Council on Aging, The Economic Development District, The Industrial Development Foundation and the Bolivar County-Cleveland Chamber of Commerce. When they have a chance to meet I'm sure Benoit and the other municipalities will join.

File P47

I have a slightly different personal opinion. The connectors along Highway 8 to Cleveland and Rosedale and the Port are essential, the connector along Highway 1 from Rosedale to Benoit is, because of considerations of cost and possibly the environment, is not essential at this time. This probably applies to the railroad as well.

This should not be considered as being against the resolution of the various county entities. It may possibly make the route more practical and thus promote the economic development of all of us.

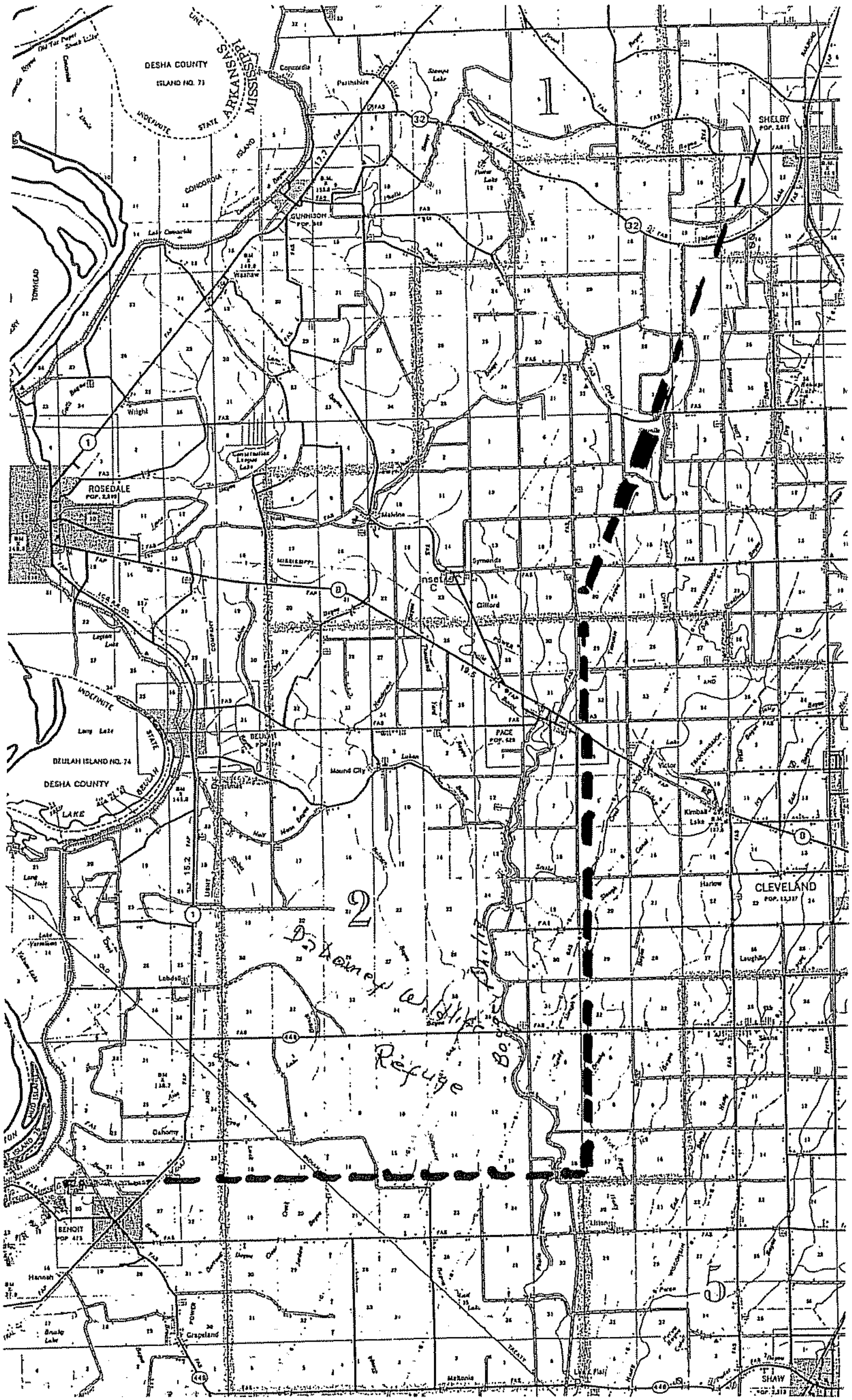
To illustrate this possible route through the central part of Bolivar County a map is enclosed which goes east to entirely avoid The Dahomey Woods. Ved

We request that you give this plan your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Early C. Ewing, Jr.
Chairman

cc: Mr. Andrew H. Hughes, US DOT, Federal Highway Admn.
Hon. Bennie Thompson, Trent Lott, Thad Cochran,
cc: Cleveland-Bolivar Co. CofC., Neel-Schaffer. (Map Only)



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ARKANSAS
MISSISSIPPI
INDEFINITE
STATE
CONCORDIA
ISLAND
Concordia
Perthshire
SHELBY
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Wright
ROSEDALE
Malvina
Symonds
Gifford
PACE
BEULAH ISLAND NO. 74
DESHA COUNTY
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Mound City
Victor
CLEVELAND
Harlow
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File TB 064

Town of Benoit
Benoit, MS 38725

oct 10 2002

Committee to Promote Interstate 69 and the Mississippi River Bridge
P O Box 60, Benoit, MS 38725 Tel. 662/742-3435 or 742- 3751

Mr. Jimmy R. Shirley, P. E.
Neel Schaffer, INC.
PO Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2525

Dear Mr. Shirley,

This letter is in response to the recent meeting that we had at Ray Brooks School discussing the Great River Bridge and Interstate Highway 69.

Our committee agrees with the selection of the North Alternative as the route of the highway in the Benoit Area. We suggest that it continue eastward of the crossing of Highway One in a straight line till it crosses the Bouge Philia and then head north up to an interchange with Highway 8 in the vicinity of Pace. This would provide good access to Rosedale, its' port, the Great River Road State Park and Highway One serving the extreme West of Bolivar County. At the same time it would serve Cleveland, Delta State University, the industrial development of Cleveland, and those areas served by Highway 8 west of Cleveland.

In order to best serve Western Mississippi a connector should be built between the East end of the Bridge and Highway One south of Scott. This would serve Greenville and the western end of Highway 82 in Mississippi. It could follow a county gravel road across the west end of Lake Bolivar and would pass through cleared fields. As it goes south of the lake it will be through something called the Windmill Pasture, which is very sandy and poor cropland. It does not disturb any houses or other development that I am aware of. I don't remember everything but I was an insect scout on all this property back in the 1930's.

Sooner or later we are going to have to do some serious planning of the infrastructure and development of Benoit. Could you recommend someone to help us with this?

Sincerely,

Early C. Ewing, Jr., Chairman

CC: Mayor, Committeemen, Walter Lyons, Dist Engr,

RECEIVED
NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC.
OCT

ROBERT WALKER • I-69 PROJECT MANAGER • P. O. BOX 22625 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39225-2625
TELEPHONE: 601.948.3071 • FAX: 601 948 3178 • EMAIL: i69@neel-schaffer.com • WEBSITE: www.msdoti69.com

November 27, 2002

Mr. Early C. Ewing, Jr., Chairman
Benoit Interstate 69 Committee
P.O. Box 60
Benoit, MS 38725

Dear Mr. Ewing:

This will confirm our recent telephone conversation concerning the Interstate 69 (I-69) letter you mailed me dated October 10, 2002.

A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was prepared by the HNTB Corporation for Section of Independent Utility (SIU) Number 12 of I-69, and that environmental document was approved for presentation at a Public Hearing. SIU 12 is the section of I-69 from US 65 near McGehee, Arkansas to SR 1 near Benoit, Mississippi, and that section includes the Great River Bridge crossing of the Mississippi River. The State of Arkansas is the Lead State for this study encompassing these two states. Two public hearings for the SIU 12 Study were recently conducted. One hearing was held at McGehee on September 22, 2002, and the other was conducted the following day at the Ray Brooks School near Benoit. On behalf of the Benoit Interstate 69 Committee, you referenced the Public Hearing at the Ray Brooks School in your letter dated October 10, 2002.

As you are aware, Mr. Jerry Mugg of HNTB Corporation is the Project Manager for the SIU 12 Study. The state highway agency contacts for that study are Mr. Bill Richardson for the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department and Mr. Claiborne Barnwell for the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT). These three individuals are being furnished a copy of this correspondence and a copy of your letter of October 10, 2002.

Neel-Schaffer is part of a consultant team selected by the MDOT to perform the environmental and location studies for SIU 11. That is the section of I-69 in Mississippi from SR 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County to SR 304 near Robinsonville in Tunica County. It is obvious that some overlap west of SR 1 and Benoit onto the SIU 12 Study will be required to conduct the SIU 11 Study. At the present time, that overlap is anticipated to be in the vicinity of where the SIU 12 Study east of the Great River Bridge splits from one alternative into three alternatives for connecting to SR 1 near Benoit. Those three options are identified in the SIU 12 DEIS as the North Alternative, Middle Alternative, and South Alternative.

At the recent SIU 12 Public Hearing, the North Alternative was presented as the Preferred Alternative for locating I-69 in the Benoit Area. However, it was noted in the presentation at the hearing that the final selection of a Preferred Alternative in the Benoit Area will be based upon the results of the SIU 11 Study from Benoit to near Robinsonville. The following were two of the reasons provided during the

presentation at the SIU 12 Public Hearing for selecting the North Alternative as the Preferred Alternative in the Benoit Area.

- It avoids impacting the Ray Brooks School.
- It appears to provide the best flexibility for conducting the adjacent study to the east on SIU 11.

In your recent letter, you stated the Benoit Interstate 69 Committee agrees with the North Alternative selection presented at the SIU 12 Public Hearing for locating I-69 in the Benoit area.

You further suggested in your letter that the I-69 routing for the SIU 11 Study cross SR 1 at the location of the North Alternative, continue eastward on a straight line until it crosses the Bogue Phalia, and turn north to interchange with SR 8 in the vicinity of Pace. Although the alternative you suggested from SR 1 to the crossing of the Bogue Phalia was once considered, a revision of that alternative was required earlier this year to avoid a possible future southern expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge to Litton Road.

The last series of public meetings for the SIU 11 Study were conducted on successive days in Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica on July16-18, 2002. At the meetings, the study team used alternative maps and displays for identifying the alternatives recommended for elimination and the alternatives recommended for more detailed studies. The alternatives recommended for elimination were indicated by a gray color on the maps and displays, while the alternatives recommended for further study were indicated by other colors. Attached for your reference is a copy of the alternative map presented to the public in a handout at those meetings.

Between Benoit and the Bogue Phalia, the following two east-west alternatives were recommended for further study at the SIU 11 public meetings in July.

- An alternative that connects to the North Alternative of the SIU 12 Study and proceeds southeast to cross Litton Road southwest of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. The alternative then proceeds east and turns north after crossing the Bogue Phalia.
- An alternative that connects to the South Alternative of the SIU 12 Study near Ray Brooks School. The alternative proceeds east to cross SR 448 in the south part of Benoit, north of where SR 448 makes its north-south to east-west alignment change. The alternative then continues to the east, paralleling SR 448 to the north and Litton Road to the south, until crossing the Bogue Phalia and turning north.

The alternative suggested in your letter would continue north after crossing the Bogue Phalia to interchange with SR 8 in the vicinity of Pace. For an alternative that crosses SR 8 between Pace and Cleveland, the SIU 11 study team determined that the best location to accommodate a future interchange would be slightly east of the Bolivar County Correctional Facility. When compared to a crossing between Pace and the correctional facility, the SIU 11 study team's proposed crossing has the following important advantages.

- Relocations of natural gas pipelines and the pipeline substation are avoided;
- Additional major drainage structures are not needed; and,

- An out-of-direction alignment, passing east of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and then curving back to the west after clearing the northern limits of the Refuge, is avoided.

In our telephone conversation, we agreed on an estimated date to begin planning on the infrastructure improvements needed to address the estimated development of Benoit associated with I-69. It will take a minimum of two years before a Record of Decision (ROD) is obtained for the SIU 11 Study from Benoit to near Robinsonville. We agreed that planning should not begin until after the ROD is obtained. The following are key markers in the SIU 11 Study that must be completed before a ROD is obtained.

- The DEIS is prepared and approved for presentation at a Public Hearing.
- The Public Hearing is conducted.
- A Preferred Alternative is approved.
- A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is completed.
- A Record of Decision (ROD) is obtained.

Considerable work has been accomplished on the DEIS for the SIU 11 Study since the last series of public meetings were held in July of this year. To provide additional public information, a newsletter will be distributed in the near future and the website will be updated.

In our telephone conversation, we also discussed the archaeological studies Coastal Environments Incorporated will conduct this winter on the SIU 11 Study from Benoit to near Robinsonville. You requested that their field crews contact you when they are in the Benoit area so you could observe how the studies are performed. By copy of this correspondence, I am requesting Mr. David Kelley of Coastal Environments to provide you this opportunity.

If you have any questions, please give Robert Walker or me a call at 601-948-3071.

Sincerely,

NEEL-SCHAFFER, INC.

Jimmy Shirley, P.E.

Attachment

pc: Mr. Bill Richardson – Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, w/attachments
Mr. Claiborne Barnwell – Mississippi Department of Transportation, w/attachments
Mr. Walter Lyons – Mississippi Department of Transportation, w/attachments
Mr. Jerry Mugg – HNTB Corporation, w/attachments
Mr. David Kelley – Coastal Environments Incorporated, w/attachments
Mr. Robert Walker - Neel-Schaffer, Inc., w/attachments

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THE ADOPTION OF THE CENTRAL ALIGNMENT B THROUGH BOLIVAR COUNTY FOR THE LOCATION OF INTERSTATE 69 ("I-69")

WHEREAS, the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission ("the Port")has been interested for many years in the project to locate Interstate 69 in Bolivar County, Mississippi;

and

WHEREAS, it is to the best interest of the Port and to its future development to be able to offer to its customers access to an interstate highway as close to the Port as possible;

and

WHEREAS, it is the understanding of the Port Commission that there are three routes currently under consideration by the Mississippi Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Commission for the route which Interstate 69 will take south of Clarksdale, Mississippi;

and

WHEREAS, an analysis of each of the proposed I-69 alternative alignments results in a conclusion that the U. S. 61 alternative (Central Alignment B) is significantly better with respect to the probability of stimulating economic development for the Port and for Bolivar County;

and

WHEREAS, a route for I-69 located east of Cleveland, Mississippi, as proposed by Alternate G (Eastern Route) would result in all inbound and outbound traffic from I-69 to the Port having to move through the city traffic volume, which would be avoided if the I-69 Interchange is located west of Cleveland

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port Commission as follows:

1. That the Port supports the efforts of the economic developments groups and the public officials to bring Interstate 69 to Bolivar County, Mississippi.

2. That the Port supports the proposed route of Interstate 69 south of Clarksdale, Mississippi, which follows the current U S. Highway No. 61 through Bolivar County, Mississippi, and which has been designated as Central Alignment B.

3. That the Port supports the placement of an interchange west of Cleveland on the route designated as Central Alignment B to provide safe and convenient access to I-69 by members of the public using the facilities located at the Port of Rosedale.

RESOLVED AND ORDERED, all members present voting "Aye", on this the 11th day of November, 2004.

ROSEDALE-BOLIVAR COUNTY
PORT COMMISSION

By: _____
President

ATTEST:

_____
Secretary

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce is concerned with the economic development of the County in its entirety; and

WHEREAS, the transportation infrastructure provided by I-69 through the Central Alignment will provide major economic development opportunities for the entire county and Mississippi Delta; and

WHEREAS, the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce is concerned about selecting a route that would be serve our regional university, Delta State; and

WHEREAS, the Chamber seeks increased growth and development of the Port and Industrial Park in Rosedale, and the City of Cleveland is growing to the West; and

WHEREAS, the Central Route is at least $60 million cheaper than the other routes; it has closer proximity to existing population centers, thereby providing a greater economic development potential; it follows existing US Hwy. 61 through the northern half of Bolivar County and, therefore, makes it the least environmentally disruptive of the routes and avoids WRP land; it serves more economically disadvantaged and minority residents; it has more enhancement potential for multi-modal transportation with closer proximity to the Cleveland Airport and the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port; and it does more to develop the tourism and heritage efforts of the Blues Corridor by following Hwy. 61.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce supports Segments B1-B2-B3-B10-B13-B15-C2 and C4, the I-69 route with the least issues, which runs immediately west of Cleveland and bisects the County between Cleveland and Pace approximately 3 or 4 miles west of Cleveland at a point determined by MDOT in the direction of the Charles W. Dean Bridge (Great River Bridge); and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests the support of our local, state, and federal officials in this position.

SIGNED, this the 7th day of December, 2004.

CLEVELAND-BOLIVAR COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Michelle Roberts

Michelle Roberts, President

ATTEST:

Scott Luth, Secretary

Bolivar County Farm Bureau Policy Opinion
Concerning the Proposed Route of Interstate I 69
December 10, 2004

The Bolivar County Farm Bureau, and it's membership of over 2050 Bolivar County citizens, fully support the proposed Interstate 69. We recognize the economic impact that the completion to I-69 will have on our membership and all of Bolivar County.

Production agriculture is the number one industry here in Bolivar County and will remain a major contributor in the future. We recognize as with any construction project the magnitude of I-69, some inconvenience is to be expected. As we enter the final preparation stage of I-69, the Bolivar County Farm Bureau Board of Directors request full consideration be given to the unique transportation and logistics needs of the Farmer/Producer in the final construction design.

Bolivar County Farm Bureau Federation
Marty Chenault, President

Cleveland
BOLIVAR COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

600 Third Street
P.O. Box 490
Cleveland, MS 38732
Tel: (662) 843-2712
Fax; (662) 843-2718

December 14, 2004

Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell
Enviromental/Location Division
Mississippi Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Dear Mr. Barnwell:

As the lead economic developer for Bolivar County, I have followed the Great River Bridge and the I-69 routing for the last four and a half years. After many meetings and reading numerous reports, it is clear the best route for not only Bolivar County, but for the entire State, is the central alignment, with one exception. From Skene to the bridge, I recommend the southern-most alternative. This change adheres to the wishes of those directly affected in the Benoit area.

An analysis of each of the proposed I-69 alternative alignments was undertaken by your office in order to arrive at a rational judgment regarding an optimum alignment for stimulating new economic development. Based upon the analysis of each of the alternatives with the methodology outlined, the three matrices allow a conclusion to be drawn that the **US 61 alternative (Central Alignment) is significantly better with respect to the probability of capturing economic development potential.** The only exception to this study is that the Eastern alignment is closer to Cleveland, thereby giving the Eastern route some development credibility. However, Cleveland's residential and commercial growth is primarily North and West. An interstate interchange to the East of Cleveland would limit economic growth based on existing development in the area. Conversely an interstate interchange several miles to the West of Cleveland would allow for long-term, controlled, economic growth potential. **Therefore, I recommend the Central Alignment as having the best long-term economic growth potential for Cleveland and Bolivar County as a whole.**

It has also been researched that the **Central Alignment exhibits the greatest amount of existing population of the three routes under study.** Communities on or near its path include Cleveland in Bolivar County, and the string of towns extending the length of US 61: Alligator, Winstonville, Renova; Mound Bayou, Merigold, Shelby, Skene, Boyle, Shaw, Duncan, Clarksdale (Coahoma County), and Tunica/North Tunica (Tunica County). **The Eastern Alignment exhibited the second largest amount of existing population of the 3 routes, but only because it skirts the eastern limits of Cleveland. No other communities are on or near its path,** except Jonestown and suburban portions of Clarksdale. **Interchanges along the Bolivar/Sunflower County line have little resident population.** The Eastern route in consideration, while slightly closer to the remainder of the Delta, does not provide the necessary

connector roads to access the larger populated areas. **Therefore, in order to have the greatest impact on the population of the Delta region as a whole, it must align within close proximity of the existing communities. The Central Alignment is the only route that will accomplish this goal.**

The project's Environmental Justice guidelines, which seek to ensure that a proposed action does not disproportionately impact low income and/or minority populations, state: "The location of the SIU No. 11 alignment will take into account settlements, communities and land ownership patterns. As a result, displacements are anticipated to be relatively low. Local access will be maintained through the use of overpasses and interchanges. Environmental Justice guidelines further state: "In this region, to the extent that economic reinvestment is a by-product of both the I-69 Mississippi River Crossing and the National I-69 Corridor, low income and/or minority populations will likely be beneficially impacted." **It is our opinion that this will only occur if I-69 is constructed with interchanges within close proximity to existing municipalities with the highest concentrations of low income and/or minority populations. The Central Alignment is the only route that will accomplish this goal.**

Lastly, the only route that lies within the Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone is the US 61 alternative (Central Alignment). Since the primary purpose of this route is to enhance the economic development potential of the region, this central route, which is the only one that runs through impoverished communities, far surpasses the other two routes in accomplishing that mission.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the I-69 process and look forward to your final decision.

Sincerely,

Scott Luth, Executive Vice President
Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce

Bolivar County ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

P.O. Box 490 Cleveland, Mississippi 38732 Phone (601) 843-2712

December 14, 2004

Mr. Larry "Butch" Brown
Executive Director, MDOT
P. O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Dear Mr. Brown:

As Chairman of the Economic Development District of Bolivar County, I would like to go on record in support of the Central Alignment due to the fact that it is the route that would provide the greatest economic boost to the Delta. It is the only route that comes close to a populated area, providing access to a number of towns in Bolivar County, such as Alligator, Duncan, Shelby, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Merigold, Cleveland, Boyle, Shaw, Skene, and Benoit. It has, therefore, the most potential for bringing in new business and industrial development, with the creation of numerous new jobs.

Since the EDD is concerned about the future development of our Port and industrial parks, we feel that the Central Route would provide the transportation infrastructure to attract more industrial prospects. At one time, the Cleveland Industrial Park east of the City was expected to be the site for industrial growth; however, over the past few years, the growth of Cleveland has steadily spread to the west, and there is no longer a desire to purchase property to the east. The industrial site has limited expansion area due to its close proximity to the Sunflower County line, as well as the construction of elderly housing and medical-oriented facilities on adjoining properties.

The Central Route is also much less costly to build, about $60 million cheaper. Considering the tremendous needs of the Delta, we certainly do not want to squander limited funds. A route across Sunflower County, as proposed, would not provide the economic development impact needed for this region. It does not encompass one single community along the way, runs through many acres of wetland property, crosses the Sunflower River several times, and comes within a couple of miles of Parchman---providing hardened criminals easy access to an escape route to Canada or Mexico. On the other hand, the Central Alignment is environmentally friendly, with no wetlands along the route, and it runs through an area that is already developed for highway travel.

Thank you for your careful consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Joe Wayne Reed
Chairman

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
of Sunflower County
INDIANOLA, MISSISSIPPI

RESOLUTION
of the
SUNFLOWER COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

A Resolution Supporting the Eastern Alternative for I-69 and other related initiatives.

WHEREAS, the Sunflower County Economic Development District is the economic development organization for Sunflower County, and

WHEREAS, the future economic vitality of the Delta will be greatly enhanced by the construction of I-69 and related connector routes with no further undue delay, and

WHEREAS, the Eastern Alternative would positively impact a greater portion of the Delta's residents than the other alternatives, and

WHEREAS, the Eastern Alternative would give the Delta a second North-South four-lane option to go along with the existing U.S. Highway 61, thereby increasing economic opportunities for all.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Board of Trustees of the Sunflower County Economic Development District supports the Eastern Alternative for I-69 from Clarksdale to Benoit, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Board of Trustees of the Sunflower County Economic Development District also supports the following related initiatives associated with the construction of I-69, including: 1) An interstate-designated four-lane connector route from Shaw to Indianola (old State Highway 448), 2) Higher priority for the improvement to four lanes for State Highway 8 from Cleveland to Ruleville, 3) Resumption of the decades-old plan to four-lane U.S. Highway 49W between Drew and Ruleville, 4) Improvement of the two-lane connector road from Merigold to Drew and 5) Improvement of the two-lane connector road between Shelby and Parchman.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE SUNFLOWER COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT THIS 21st DAY OF DECEMBER, 2004.

Samuel C. Jones
Chairman

704 East Baker Street • P.O. Box 1503 • Indianola, MS 38751
Telephone: 662-887-3767 • www.sunflowercountyedd.com • Fax: 662-887-3788

December 27, 2004

Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
P.O.Box 22625
Jackson, Ms 39225-2625

We, the Mississippi Rice Consultants would like to express our concerns as to the path of the proposed I-69 Project. We are a group of independent crop consultant specializing in rice production. We are deeply concerned with the amount of quality farmland being destroyed in the proposed route. Quality farmland is Bolivar County's natural resource. We feel that the MDOT and the I-69 Project Managers should reconsider the impact on quality farmland before deciding on I-69 final path.

Dan Roach, President
Mississippi Rice Consultants Assn.
1405 Deering Street
Cleveland, Ms 38732
662 719 3626

NORTH SUNFLOWER
COMMUNITY COUNCIL
OF SUNFLOWER COUNTY
DREW-RULEVILLE, MS.

RESOLUTION
OF THE
NORTH SUNFLOWER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

A Resolution Supporting the Eastern Alternative for I-69 and other related initiatives.

Whereas, the North Sunflower Community Council is part of the economic development organization for North Sunflower County, and

Whereas, the Eastern Alternative would positively impact a greater portion of the whole Mississippi Delta and all of its residents than the other two alternatives, and

Whereas, the Eastern Alternative would give the Whole Delta a second four-lane highway running parallel with Highway 61, which is already in the middle of Bolivar County would greatly increase the economic development for the entire Mississippi Delta.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THE BOARD OF THE NORTH SUNFLOWER COMMUNITY COUNCIL SUPPORTS THE EASTERN ALTERNATIVE FOR I-69 FROM CLARKSDALE TO BENOIT, AND

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, The Board of North Sunflower Community Council Also supports the following related initiatives associated with the construction of I-69, including: 1) High priority to four-lane Highway 8 from Ruleville to Rosedale, 2) High priority to four-lane Highway 49 from Clarksdale to Indianola, 3) Improve the Drew-Merigold Road, 4) Improve Highway 32 from Parchman to Shelby.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF NORTH SUNFLOWER COMMUNITY COUNCIL THIS THE 10th DAY OF JANUARY, 2005.

Jimmy Pettigrew
President

DREW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
129 WEST SHAW AVE.
DREW, MISSISSIPPI 38737

RESOLUTION
OF THE
DREW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A Resolution Supporting the Eastern Alternative for I-69 and other related initiatives.

Whereas, the Drew Chamber of Commerce is part of the economic development organization for North Sunflower County, and

Whereas, the Eastern Alternative would positively impact a greater portion of the whole Mississippi Delta and all of its residents than the other two alternatives, and

Whereas, the Eastern Alternative would give the Whole Delta a second four-lane highway running parallel with Highway 61, which is already in the middle of Bolivar County would greatly increase the economic development for the entire Mississippi Delta.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THE BOARD OF THE DREW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SUPPORTS THE EASTERN ALTERNATIVE FOR I-69 FROM CLARKSDALE TO BENOIT, AND

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, The DREW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Also supports the following related initiatives associated with the construction of I-69, including: 1) High priority to four-lane Highway 8 from Ruleville to Rosedale, 2) High priority to four-lane Highway 49 from Clarksdale to Indianola, 3) Improve the Drew-Merigold Road, 4) Improve Highway 32 from Parchman to Shelby.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE DREW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE THIS THE 25th DAY OF JANUARY 2005.

President

DREW-RULEVILLE ROTARY CLUB
P.O. BOX 311
DREW, MISSISSIPPI 38737

RESOLUTION
OF THE
DREW-RULEVILLE ROTARY CLUB

A Resolution Supporting the Eastern Alternative for I-69 and other related initiatives.

Whereas, the Drew-Ruleville Rotary Club is part of the economic development organization for North Sunflower County, and

Whereas, the Eastern Alternative would positively impact a greater portion of the whole Mississippi Delta and all of its residents than the other two alternatives, and

Whereas, the Eastern Alternative would give the Whole Delta a second four-lane highway running parallel with Highway 61, which is already in the middle of Bolivar County would greatly increase the economic development for the entire Mississippi Delta.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THE BOARD OF THE DREW-RULEVILLE ROTARY CLUB SUPPORTS THE EASTERN ALTERNATIVE FOR I-69 FROM CLARKSDALE TO BENOIT, AND

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, The DREW-RULEVILLE ROTARY CLUB, Also supports the following related initiatives associated with the construction of I-69, including: 1) High priority to four-lane Highway 8 from Ruleville to Rosedale, 2) High priority to four-lane Highway 49 from Clarksdale to Indianola, 3) Improve the Drew-Merigold Road, 4) Improve Highway 32 from Parchman to Shelby.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE DREW-RULEVILLE ROTARY CLUB THIS THE 25th DAY OF JANUARY 2005.

Jimmy Pettigrew
President

Cleveland
BOLIVAR COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

600 Third Street
P.O. Box 490
Cleveland, MS 38732
Tel: (662) 843-2712
Fax: (662) 843-2718

Thursday, January 27, 2005

Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division, MDOT
P. O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Mr. Jimmy Shirley
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P. O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Dear Claiborne and Jimmy:

Thank you for your patience and assistance during the I-69 EIS process.

We are writing this letter to make sure that you, MDOT and Neel-Schaffer, fully understand our position on the preferred route through Bolivar County. The City of Cleveland, Bolivar County, other municipalities, and many businesses, continue to support and recommend the Central Route, given the choices offered at the most recent public hearings. We would also like to thank you for meeting with members of our farming community to minimize the impact I-69 would have on their farmland on the Central Route. Many of the changes that were made greatly lessened the highway's impact on these properties, and we encourage you to make those changes a permanent part of the Central Route.

However, since the public hearings and after many discussions with our farming community, we would like to request that MDOT further study the possibility of an Eastern Loop around Cleveland, branching off at Merigold going east of Cleveland and then toward the Bridge. If MDOT should consider an Eastern Loop study we would request that MDOT include a Western Hwy. 8 connector from Merigold as a part of the alternative to incorporate the Port of Rosedale. At this time the I-69 Committee, the City, and the County do not have sufficient information to support or reject an Eastern Loop alternative. Therefore we are asking for your guidance as to whether an Eastern Loop would be a viable option to study and whether the additional study would cause a substantial delay or add considerable expense to the EIS process.

Thank you for your anticipated response to this important question.

Sincerely,

Lucy Jaboush, Board Member
I-69 Mid-Continent Highway
Coalition, Inc.

Ancil Cox, Co-Chair
Great River Bridge Compact Authority

Martin King, Mayor
City of Cleveland

Richard Coleman, President
Bolivar County Board of Supervisors

JAN 2005
RECEIVED

RULEVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Post Office Box 552 • Ruleville, Mississippi 38771
(662) 756-4836

RESOLUTION
OF THE
RULEVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A Resolution Supporting the Eastern Alternative for Highway I-69 and other related initiatives.

Whereas, the Ruleville Chamber of Commerce is a part of the economic development organization for North Sunflower County, and

Whereas, the Eastern Alternative would positively impact a greater portion of the whole Mississippi Delta and all of its' residents than the other two (2) alternatives, and

Whereas, the Eastern Alternative would give the whole Delta a second four-lane highway running parallel with Highway 61, which is already in the middle of Bolivar County and would greatly increase the economic development of the entire Mississippi Delta,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Ruleville Chamber of Commerce supports the Eastern Alternative for Highway I-69 from Clarksdale to Benoit, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Ruleville Chamber of Commerce also supports the following related initiatives associated with the construction of Highway I-69, including: 1) High priority to four-lane Highway 8 from Ruleville to Rosedale, 2) High priority to four-lane Highway 49 from Clarksdale to Indianola, 3) Improve the Drew-Merigold Road, 4) Improve Highway 32 from Parchman to Shelby, 5) To four-lane Highway 442 from Shaw to Indianola, 6) Improve Highway 1 from Rosedale to Benoit.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE RULEVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE THIS 30TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2005.

Jo Anne Frothingham, President

The City With A Personality

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT of Sunflower County
INDIANOLA, MISSISSIPPI

February 9, 2005

Mr. Robert Walker
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Dear Mr. Walker: Robert

I enjoyed visiting with you recently concerning some of the issues involved in the I-69 routing decision, especially as it relates to Sunflower County.

Enclosed is some information supporting our position, namely that: 1) A route on the east side of Cleveland (particularly the Modified Eastern Alternative) would more positively impact regional economic development, 2) Connector routes, especially the 4-laning of the segment of Hwy 448 between Shaw and Indianola, are also vital to the long-term transportation needs of the region, and 3) Construction of I-69 and connector routes should commence as soon as possible once these routing issues are resolved.

The enclosures include three pages from the Neel-Schaffer Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Sunflower County's resolution from 2001 and updated information from both the Clarksdale-Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce and from our organization over the last couple of months.

We look forward to continue working with you in these and other endeavors.

Sincerely,

Tim Climer
Executive Director

TC/sw

Enclosures

FEB 11 2005
RECEIVED

204 East Baker Street • P.O. Box 1508 • Indianola, MS 38751
Telephone: 662.887.3737 • www.sunflowercountyedd.com • Fax: 662.887.3738

The port features a "T" dock, 150-ton crane, and more than 1,200 acres of developable land in close proximity. Three private companies maintain port facilities on adjacent sites. In Rosedale, Cives Steel Company and Jantran are the largest employers with approximately 165 employees each. A 1,000-acre industrial park is located at the Port. Improving SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland from two to four lanes is considered vital to the continued economic development of this port.

Summary of Economic Findings for Project Alternatives

An analysis to identify population, employment, and public facilities near the three proposed I-69 alternatives (see Appendix I) was undertaken based on the previously discussed methodology and approach. These data led to the conclusion that the Eastern Alternative is somewhat better than the others with respect to the probability of capturing economic development potential. The tables indicate that while the Central Alternative is closer to more population centers and public facilities than the other two alternatives; the Eastern Alternative is closer to more existing employment centers than the other two alternatives. The key factor favoring the Eastern Alternative was the east side of Cleveland along SR 8. This area has the highest number of employees of any alignment within the interchange 2.5 mile radius impact area. This one area made the major difference in the employment data for the three alternatives since all three alternatives follow the same alignment through the Clarksdale area. Based on this factor, the economic study recommended a modified eastern alignment that would connect with existing US 61 at Merigold and basically utilize the Central Alternative from that point to the north. This modified alignment would be able to take advantage of the heaviest concentration of industrial employment in Bolivar County and also utilize all other existing resources to the fullest potential possible along US 61. The modified Eastern Alternative would best satisfy the objective set forth in the economic study, which was to utilize existing infrastructure in order to maximize economic development potential. Using this alternative, 41 percent of the existing reported four-county manufacturing employment would be located within the study boundaries of this corridor.

Further examination of the study's methodology and conclusions relates to the relative advantage of a route east of Cleveland vs. a route west of Cleveland, since the alternatives are identical through the Clarksdale area and there is little difference in terms of economic impact north of Clarksdale. The methodology and approach of this study suggested locating I-69 as close as possible to the existing employment centers. Much of Cleveland's employment is on its east side due to its industrial parks and the hospital. Because the city has not expanded as much on the east

Eastern Alternative

This alignment proceeds almost due east from Benoit for about 17 miles and then proceeds in a northerly direction about three miles east of downtown Cleveland, slowly diverging from a parallel with US 61 through sparsely populated areas of Bolivar and Sunflower Counties. As the route enters Coahoma County it joins with the central alignment and runs the same as this alternative until near the Tunica County line. In Tunica County the alignment of the route remains east of US 61 and closer to the eastern boundary of Tunica County and intersects MS Highway 304.

- Urbanization - This alignment exhibits the second largest amount of existing population of the three routes with 37,956 persons, The other community on or near its path is Clarksdale. Interchanges along the Bolivar/Sunflower County line have little resident population. Similarly, interchanges in Tunica County serve very small numbers of people.
- Development Concentrations – The most significant development interchange is at the intersection of MS Highway 8 and I-69. This interchange has the greatest number of employees (as tabulated by the Mississippi Development Authority employment survey) of all the interchanges studied.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the analysis of each of the alternatives with the methodology outlined above, the three matrices below allow a conclusion to be drawn that the Eastern Alternative is somewhat better with respect to the probability of capturing economic development potential.

- *Proximity to urbanization* –Central Alternative is closer to more population centers than any of the three routes within its impact area. (Matrix One)
- *Proximity to Growth* - Eastern Alternative is closer to more existing employment than any of the three routes with over 3,000 employees within its impact area. (Matrix Two)
- *Public Facility Impact* –Central Alternative is closer to more community health centers, correctional facilities, airports, industrial sites, schools, and recreational facilities than any of the three routes. (Matrix Three)
- *Concentrating opportunities and resources* –Eastern Alternative takes greater advantage of the public and private investment already made in the Delta economy and foregoes the need for extending new facilities and services across a broad area of new development.

An alignment option that would maximize the ability to capitalize on development opportunity could be made.

The Eastern Alternative would proceed east of Cleveland to SR8. Modified I-69 would return to the Central Alternative at Merigold just north of Cleveland. The route would then remain on the proposed Central Alternative until its intersection with MS Highway 304. By following this modified alignment, the route would be able to take advantage of the heaviest concentration of industrial employment in Bolivar County at the interchange with MS Highway 8. The interchange would also link Sunflower County to the new interstate route by way of the state highway.

This modified Eastern Alternative best satisfies the objectives set forth at the beginning of this section of the report: maximizing economic development opportunities. Using the modification suggested, 41 percent of the existing reported four-county manufacturing employment tabulated by the Mississippi Development Authority is accounted for in this revised corridor.

A second refinement relates to interchanges identified for the recommended alternative route, Eastern Alternative. It would seem clear that fewer interchanges would serve to better concentrate economic development opportunities. Consequently, it is suggested that consideration be given to deferral of construction of all but the following interchanges. These preferred interchanges focus upon service to existing communities, connection to major routes, and reinforcement of existing development infrastructure.

Interchange to be Retained

Benoit
Shaw/US 61
Cleveland/MS 8
Merigold
Shelby/MS 32
Duncan/MS 444
Clarksdale South/US 49
Clarksdale North/MS 6
Lula/US 49
Tunica South/MS 4
Tunica East/Airport
Tunica North/US 61
MS 304

EXHIBIT 5

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Sunflower County, Mississippi, is vitally interested in development of transportation corridors to enhance public travel, safety and economic development of Sunflower County and surrounding areas, and

WHEREAS, this Board is cognizant and supportive of efforts to preserve wildlife and environmentally sensitive areas in the State of Mississippi, and

WHEREAS, members of this Board have attended meetings and conferred with various public officials regarding the most effective location for proposed Interstate 69 in order to promote maximum economic development, while simultaneously preserving and protecting environmentally sensitive areas,

NOW, THEREFORE, on motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the Board of Supervisors of Sunflower County, Mississippi, does hereby strongly support an I-69 river crossing at Eutaw Landing in the Benoit area, and further urges the Mississippi Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administrat to carefully examine the merits of an I-69 route which would East of Cleveland, Mississippi, and South of Dahomey Wildl Refuge, which is believed by this Board to be a route which would be most environmentally sensitive and economically feasible and which would optimize the interests of bringing better transportation, safety and economic development to the Mississippi Delta.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of Sunflower County, Mississippi, respectfully requests the support of other local, State, and Federal officials in this position.

SO RESOLVED, this the 16th day of July, 2001.

SUNFLOWER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BY: Edgar Donahoe
EDGAR DONAHOE, PRESIDENT

ATTEST:
Paula L. Sykes
PAULA SYKES, CLERK

BOLIVAR COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING, INC.
MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC TRANSIT
800 Davis Avenue • Hwy 61 South • P.O. Box 593
Cleveland, Mississippi 38732

LaShonda McKinney-Wilson
Project Director

Gwendolyn Thomas
Attorney

CEO & Chairman
Dr. J Y Trice

Secretary
James Rodges

Board Members:
John Calmese
Larry Harkins
Nerissa Norman

The Honorable Larry Brown and Commissioners
Mississippi Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Subject: I-69 Economic Highway Project

Gentlemen:

As former mayor of the city of Rosedale and currently the executive director of Bolivar County Council On Aging, I take pleasure in drafting you this letter which indicated my concerns and that of the citizens in general of Rosedale in particular and Bolivar County in general. I am pleased to express my concern and interest in the progress of the ongoing plans for the above mentioned I-69 highway which is designed for economic development. The proposed central route is the most progressive plan that can be executed wand will be more beneficiary in my judgment and that of so many more of Rosedale and Bolivar County than any of the other routes which will benefit more people. Let me numerate, gentlemen for you special consideration a few points of concern:

1. It's at least $60 million cheaper than the other routes
2. It has closer proximity to existing population centers and, therefore, presents greater economic development potential.
3. It follows existing US Highway 61 through the northern half of Bolivar County including Alligator, Duncan, Shelby, Winstonville, Mound Bayou, Merigold, Gunnison, Rosedale, Beulah, Pace, and even the community of Symonds, which has more than 50 families.
4. It serves more economically disadvantaged and minority residents
5. It has closer proximity to our regional university – Delta State.

The greatest economic impact will touch the citizens of all the above communities. I-69 will mean more to Bolivar County than either of the routes involved. Thanks for your consideration and understanding of these facts.

Sincerely,

J.Y. Trice, D.D.
Executive Director

Phones: 662-846-6161
846-6165
843-4679

Fax: 662-846-2953

William R. "Bill" Minor
Northern District Commissioner

Dick Hall
Central District Commissioner

Wayne H. Brown
Southern District Commissioner

MDOT
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Larry L. "Butch" Brown
Executive Director

Harry Lee James
Deputy Executive Director/
Chief Engineer

Brenda Znachko
Deputy Executive Director/
Administration

P. O. Box 1850 / Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1850 / Telephone (601) 359-7001 / FAX (601) 359-7110 / www.goMDOT.com

March 10, 2005

Mr. Ancil Cox
Great River Bridge Compact Authority
Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 490
Cleveland, MS 38732

RE: Interstate 69 Project Study, SIU 11
From the SR 304 Spur near Robinsonville to the Great River Bridge near Benoit

Dear Mr. Cox:

I am writing in response to the letter from the Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce dated January 27, 2005. The letter requested that further study be given to the alternative that would use the Central Alternative north of Merigold and loop around Cleveland to the east. This concept would connect the Central Alternative to the Eastern Alternative between Merigold and SR 8 on a location east of the Steam Plant Lake.

Given the choices offered at the public hearing held in December of 2004, the joint letter reiterated the support the Central Alternative has from the City of Cleveland, Bolivar County, other municipalities, and others. The joint letter also expressed appreciation for the changes that were proposed to the Central Alternative following the public hearings intended to lessen the impacts to prime farmland; the letter requested these modifications to be made a commitment of the study.

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As requested in your letter, the project team has adjusted the Central Alternative from the Litton Road area to Merigold. These adjustments lessened the amount of farmland being divided, reduced the residences requiring relocation, incorporated more county roads as frontage roads, and provided an overall improved alternative.

The study comparing the Modified Eastern Alternative with the Modified Central

Alternative are being conducted by the project's consultant and will be reviewed by the MDOT and FHWA staff. Once this information is complete, a meeting will be arranged in order to explain the decision in sufficient detail.

Thank you for the information you provided and please be assured that your comments will be part of this study's decision making process.

Sincerely,

E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer

Cc: Mr. Dick Hall, Central District Commissioner
Mr. Harry Lee James, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Engineer
Mr. Walter Lyons, District Engineer, Yazoo City
Mr. David Foster, Assistant Chief Engineer, Pre-Construction
Mr. Robert Walker, Neel-Schaffer

Cleveland
BOLIVAR COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

600 Third Street
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Cleveland, MS 38732
Tel: (662) 843-2712
Fax; (662) 843-2718

Thursday, January 27, 2005

Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division, MDOT
P. O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Mr. Jimmy Shirley
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P. O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Dear Claiborne and Jimmy:

Thank you for your patience and assistance during the I-69 EIS process.

We are writing this letter to make sure that you, MDOT and Neel-Schaffer, fully understand our position on the preferred route through Bolivar County. The City of Cleveland, Bolivar County, other municipalities, and many businesses, continue to support and recommend the Central Route, given the choices offered at the most recent public hearings. We would also like to thank you for meeting with members of our farming community to minimize the impact I-69 would have on their farmland on the Central Route. Many of the changes that were made greatly lessened the highway's impact on these properties, and we encourage you to make those changes a permanent part of the Central Route.

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Thank you for your anticipated response to this important question.

Sincerely,

Lucy Janoush, Board Member
I-69 Mid-Continent Highway
Coalition, Inc.

Ancil Cox, Co-Chair
Great River Bridge Compact Authority

Martin King, Mayor
City of Cleveland

Richard Coleman, President
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March 10, 2005

Mrs. Lucy Janoush
I-69 Mid-Continent Highway Coalition, Inc.
Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 490
Cleveland, MS 38732

RE: Interstate 69 Project Study, SIU 11
From the SR 304 Spur near Robinsonville to the Great River Bridge near Benoit

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E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer

Cc: Mr. Dick Hall, Central District Commissioner
Mr. Harry Lee James, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Engineer
Mr. Walter Lyons, District Engineer, Yazoo City
Mr. David Foster, Assistant Chief Engineer, Pre-Construction
Mr. Robert Walker, Neel-Schaffer

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Thursday, January 27, 2005

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Environmental Division, MDOT
P. O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Mr. Jimmy Shirley
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P. O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

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March 10, 2005

Honorable Martin King, Mayor
City of Cleveland
Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 490
Cleveland, MS 38732

RE: Interstate 69 Project Study, SIU 11
From the SR 304 Spur near Robinsonville to the Great River Bridge near Benoit

Dear Mayor King:

I am writing in response to the letter from the Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce dated January 27, 2005. The letter requested that further study be given to the alternative that would use the Central Alternative north of Merigold and loop around Cleveland to the east. This concept would connect the Central Alternative to the Eastern Alternative between Merigold and SR 8 on a location east of the Steam Plant Lake.

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E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer

Cc: Mr. Dick Hall, Central District Commissioner
Mr. Harry Lee James, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Engineer
Mr. Walter Lyons, District Engineer, Yazoo City
Mr. David Foster, Assistant Chief Engineer, Pre-Construction
Mr. Robert Walker, Neel-Schaffer ✓

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Thursday, January 27, 2005

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Environmental Division, MDOT
P. O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Mr. Jimmy Shirley
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P. O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Dear Claiborne and Jimmy:

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March 10, 2005

Honorable Richard Coleman, President
Bolivar County Board of Supervisors
Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 490
Cleveland, MS 38732

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Thursday, January 27, 2005

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Environmental Division, MDOT
P. O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Mr. Jimmy Shirley
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
P. O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

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Coalition, Inc.

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Ancil Cox, Co-Chair
Great River Bridge Compact Authority

Martin King, Mayor
City of Cleveland

Richard Coleman
Richard Coleman, President
Bolivar County Board of Supervisors

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT *of Sunflower County*

INDIANOLA, MISSISSIPPI

May 16, 2005

Commissioner Dick Hall
MDOT
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Dear Commissioner Hall,

It was good to see you at Delta Council's annual meeting. At the time, I was not aware of the attached article (exhibit "A") which appeared in the May issue of Delta Business Journal, though I concur entirely with your comments in the article.

With the imminent completion of the four-laning of U.S. Hwy 61, there is only one reasonable conclusion as to the immediate next step: the four-laning of Hwy 448 between Shaw (at Litton Road) and Indianola. This "missing link" of between 15-20 miles is the only remaining piece of a true Memphis-to-Jackson four-lane connection through the Delta.

Sunflower County has been very cooperative and patient throughout the I-69 routing process. It has been our policy that we would allow the I-69 decision-making to run its course before we join in earnest with our Delta neighbors (including Bolivar and Coahoma Counties) to push for the much-needed improvements to Hwy 448. With the I-69 process now in its most recent delay, we must draw attention to the fact that our "missing link" does not necessarily have to wait on that process, since the Litton Rd/Hwy 61 interchange is a part of both the Central and Eastern routes of I-69. We appreciate your guidance on this issue, as well as your comments supporting this important objective.

I also want to address some information about the aforementioned I-69 process. First, the "Modified Eastern Alternative" has never been compared to the "Central Alternative" on a "apples-to-apples" basis. In the attached exhibit "B", the study included, at the request of Bolivar County, a Merigold-to-Hwy 8 connector that runs west of Cleveland, as a part of the Eastern Alternate. Predictably, the additional 6.32 miles would make virtually any route more expensive as shown in the "Executive Project Summary".

204 East Baker Street • P.O. Box 1508 • Indianola, MS 38751
Telephone: 662.887.3737 • www.sunflowercountyedd.com • Fax: 662.887.5738

A better approach would be to simply compare the Eastern Modified and Central routes "head-to-head", from Merigold-to-Benoit, with no extraneous roads included. The mileage and costs would surely be very similar. This would be the only fair way to compare these alternatives.

Second, an economic impact study on the routes was already done, according to the attached documents from the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (see attached exhibit "C"). The Eastern route has already been determined as more favorable to economic development, as stated in the highlighted material.

Thanks so much for all you do to enhance transportation in the Delta. You will be interested to know that Sunflower County has been invited to join the I-69 Coalition, and we have accepted the invitation and paid our dues. Please call us for further information and questions, and we look forward to visiting with you very soon.

Sincerely,

Tim Climer

Tim Climer
Executive Director
Sunflower County Economic Development District

TC/sw

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Claiborne Barnwell
Mr. Walter Lyons
Ms. Kim Thurman
Mr. Kevin Magee
Mr. Robert Walker
Mr. Jimmy Shirley
Ms. Carolina Mederos
Mr. Cecil Vick, Jr.
Mr. Bill McGlathery

EXHIBIT "A"

Highways and byways

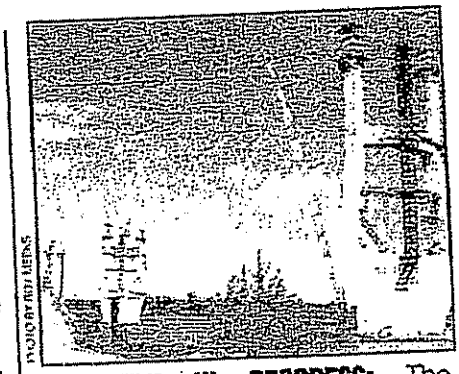
Hwy 61 and river bridge work ongoing

BY CHIP MABRY
DBJ Contributing Writer

Mississippi's Highway 61 will soon be a completed four-lane highway, according to the State Department of Transportation.

"We only have one piece left, from Shelby to the Coahoma

See HWY 61 PAGE 15 ➡



A WORK IN PROGRESS: The Mississippi River bridge in Greenville, Miss.

County line," says Dick Hall, Central District Transportation Commissioner.

The projected completion of the project is late July to early August. "Weather will play a key role in completing the project on time," says Carl Middleton, MDOT Assistant District Construction Engineer.

Hall believes that the completion of the project will have an immediate impact on the Delta. "The Delta will now have four-lane highways to Memphis and Jackson," says Hall.

The project completes an ongoing ten-year project to repair the existing highway and to add the two extra lanes. The Mississippi Department of Transportation began the Shelby to Coahoma County project in 1998 at an estimated cost of $12,160,000. It and the Highway 49 project are both results of the 1987 Highways and Roads act mandated by the Mississippi legislature. "Now we have the I-69 project, which will take years, but when it is completed, access to the Delta will be completely different. This should boost tourism throughout the region," says Hall.

Many businesses hope that a four-lane highway through the heart of the historical blues communities could have an impact on Delta tourism. "The immediate impact will come from Memphis and Jackson as they discover that these improvements have made the Delta more accessible," says Hall.

Kappi Allen, director of the Coahoma County Tourism Commission, expresses optimism. "It has been a long time coming," says Allen. "We are so grateful for the tourism that it will bring."

Allen hopes that the four lanes will make a huge impact on Memphis residents coming to the Delta. "It will help tourism by making the Delta a quick journey from Memphis," Allen says. **DBJ**

I-69 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SIU #11

EXECUTIVE PROJECT SUMMARY

Modified Eastern Alternative

In early January, the Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce officially requested that the study team look at a modified Eastern Alternative that would utilize the same east of Cleveland alignment but would tie into existing US Hwy 61 near Merigold the same as the Central Alternative does. In addition to this adjustment, the modified Eastern Alternative would include a connector from Merigold at US Hwy 61 to MS Hwy 8 west of Cleveland. The study team reviewed this modified alternative and came to the conclusion that it was not justified to take it further into the study. The following data was used to support this position. This data basically shows that the modified Eastern Alternative has more impacts and would cost more than the recently modified Central Alternative around Cleveland.

I-69 MODIFIED EASTERN ALTERNATIVE COMPARISON

	Modified Central Alternative	Eastern Alternate with MS 8 Connector
Mainline Length	18.3 miles	23.6 miles
Shaw Connector	5.4 miles	NA
Merigold/8 Connectors	0.6 miles	6.92 miles
Total Length	24.3 miles	30.5 miles
No. of Parcels Impacted	73	119
Estimated No. of Different Property Owners	<50	>64
Relocation Impacts		
Residents	4	11
Businesses	1	3
Estimated No. of Residents within 1/4 Mile	43	62
Estimated No. of Residents within 1/4 to 1/2 Mile	71	147
Estimated Cost	$154,894,225	$235,341,110
Advantages:	1. Shorter, more direct route 2. Less construction cost 3. Less number of property impacts 4. Less number of relocations 5. Less number of residents within close proximity	1. Closer to existing infrastructure 2. Less prime farmland impacts
Disadvantages:		1. Impacts minority area southeast of Cleveland

Proposed Preferred Alternative

Based on information known to date, a mostly Central Alternative, as presented on the following figure, represents the preferred alternative. This alternative appears to also be the environmentally preferred alternative and is the lowest cost alternative. It was also the most preferred alternative from the public's perspective.

The port features a "T" dock, 150-ton crane, and more than 1,200 acres of developable land in close proximity. Three private companies maintain port facilities on adjacent sites. In Rosedale, Cives Steel Company and Jantran are the largest employers with approximately 165 employees each. A 1,000-acre industrial park is located at the Port. Improving SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland from two to four lanes is considered vital to the continued economic development of this port.

Summary of Economic Findings for Project Alternatives

An analysis to identify population, employment, and public facilities near the three proposed I-69 alternatives (see Appendix I) was undertaken based on the previously discussed methodology and approach. These data led to the conclusion that the Eastern Alternative is somewhat better than the others with respect to the probability of capturing economic development potential. The tables indicate that while the Central Alternative is closer to more population centers and public facilities than the other two alternatives; the Eastern Alternative is closer to more existing employment centers than the other two alternatives. The key factor favoring the Eastern Alternative was the east side of Cleveland along SR 8. This area has the highest number of employees of any alignment within the interchange 2.5 mile radius impact area. This one area made the major difference in the employment data for the three alternatives since all three alternatives follow the same alignment through the Clarksdale area. Based on this factor, the economic study recommended a modified eastern alignment that would connect with existing US 61 at Merigold and basically utilize the Central Alternative from that point to the north. This modified alignment would be able to take advantage of the heaviest concentration of industrial employment in Bolivar County and also utilize all other existing resources to the fullest potential possible along US 61. The modified Eastern Alternative would best satisfy the objective set forth in the economic study, which was to utilize existing infrastructure in order to maximize economic development potential. Using this alternative, 41 percent of the existing reported four-county manufacturing employment would be located within the study boundaries of this corridor.

Further examination of the study's methodology and conclusions relates to the relative advantage of a route east of Cleveland vs. a route west of Cleveland, since the alternatives are identical through the Clarksdale area and there is little difference in terms of economic impact north of Clarksdale. The methodology and approach of this study suggested locating I-69 as close as possible to the existing employment centers. Much of Cleveland's employment is on its east side due to its industrial parks and the hospital. Because the city has not expanded as much on the east

Eastern Alternative

This alignment proceeds almost due east from Benoit for about 17 miles and then proceeds in a northerly direction about three miles east of downtown Cleveland, slowly diverging from a parallel with US 61 through sparsely populated areas of Bolivar and Sunflower Counties. As the route enters Coahoma County it joins with the central alignment and runs the same as this alternative until near the Tunica County line. In Tunica County the alignment of the route remains east of US 61 and closer to the eastern boundary of Tunica County and intersects MS Highway 304.

- Urbanization - This alignment exhibits the second largest amount of existing population of the three routes with 37,956 persons, The other community on or near its path is Clarksdale. Interchanges along the Bolivar/Sunflower County line have little resident population. Similarly, interchanges in Tunica County serve very small numbers of people.
- Development Concentrations – The most significant development interchange is at the intersection of MS Highway 8 and I-69. This interchange has the greatest number of employees (as tabulated by the Mississippi Development Authority employment survey) of all the interchanges studied.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the analysis of each of the alternatives with the methodology outlined above, the three matrices below allow a conclusion to be drawn that the Eastern Alternative is somewhat better with respect to the probability of capturing economic development potential.

- *Proximity to urbanization* –Central Alternative is closer to more population centers than any of the three routes within its impact area. (Matrix One)
- *Proximity to Growth* - Eastern Alternative is closer to more existing employment than any of the three routes with over 3,000 employees within its impact area. (Matrix Two)
- *Public Facility Impact* –Central Alternative is closer to more community health centers, correctional facilities, airports, industrial sites, schools, and recreational facilities than any of the three routes. (Matrix Three)
- *Concentrating opportunities and resources* –Eastern Alternative takes greater advantage of the public and private investment already made in the Delta economy and foregoes the need for extending new facilities and services across a broad area of new development.

An alignment option that would maximize the ability to capitalize on development opportunity could be made.

The Eastern Alternative would proceed east of Cleveland to SR8. Modified I-69 would return to the Central Alternative at Merigold just north of Cleveland. The route would then remain on the proposed Central Alternative until its intersection with MS Highway 304. By following this modified alignment, the route would be able to take advantage of the heaviest concentration of industrial employment in Bolivar County at the interchange with MS Highway 8. The interchange would also link Sunflower County to the new interstate route by way of the state highway.

This modified Eastern Alternative best satisfies the objectives set forth at the beginning of this section of the report: maximizing economic development opportunities. Using the modification suggested, 41 percent of the existing reported four-county manufacturing employment tabulated by the Mississippi Development Authority is accounted for in this revised corridor.

A second refinement relates to interchanges identified for the recommended alternative route, Eastern Alternative. It would seem clear that fewer interchanges would serve to better concentrate economic development opportunities. Consequently, it is suggested that consideration be given to deferral of construction of all but the following interchanges. These preferred interchanges focus upon service to existing communities, connection to major routes, and reinforcement of existing development infrastructure.

Interchange to be Retained

Benoit
Shaw/US 61
Cleveland/MS 8
Merigold
Shelby/MS 32
Duncan/MS 444
Clarksdale South/US 49
Clarksdale North/MS 6
Lula/US 49
Tunica South/MS 4
Tunica East/Airport
Tunica North/US 61
MS 304

Appendix D
Public Involvement

Public comments and correspondence

pl

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing

Great River Bridge and I-69 Design Comment Form

I FARM IN SOUTHWEST BOLIVAR COUNTY IN DIRECT AFFECTED AREA OF PROPOSED ROAD BRIDGE INTERSTATE ETC. ETC.

DEC. 1 **Your input is important!**

Please print clearly, and feel free to use additional paper if necessary.

I have been to 3 meetings held in the Scott Miss Benoit Miss area including one SEPT 25, 2002 and again late December 02. I must say the December meeting had some engineers present that LISTENED TO concerns that I and several others had. The September meeting had some out of focus people there & most I talked to could have cared less about my concerns. In this letter I have re expressed concerns plus data on Equipment I promised TO MAIL TO some engineers and comments including an offer to show in real eyesight terms some ideas for you to consider.

ALSO I WANT TO Apologise for some possibly distasteful comments made in September letter. Originally There was talk of a RAILROAD Crossing under the proposed bridge that was not needed but my new understanding is there will be no Railroad Line Built

For JOHN MERTEL HTHB JOHN T CORNISH EIT HTHB and MARVIN BUTLER AHTD there are enclosed papers about Heights & Widths and weight of COTTON Pickers Combines and Headers for Combines concerning heights of Pickers & width of Headers on Underpasses & over passes

Mailed comments must be postmarked by December 30, 2002.

See Page 2.

Your Name: Sam CRESPINO
Address: 336 S. CORNWYN DR.
City, State, Zip: GREENVILLE MISS 38701
Phone: Home 662 332-1829 MOBILE 662 379 0688
FARM OFFICE 662 742 3742

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing

Great River Bridge and I-69 Design Comment Form

Your input is important!

Page 2 Please print clearly, and feel free to use additional paper if necessary.

The previous names mentioned were some people I'd chance to talk with and also 2 other men who are Jimmy Shirley and Robert Walker who talked with me & my family extensively and the latter 2 I would like for my letter and equipment paperwork a copy of to be sent to them as they are involved in road from Memphis to East of Benoit as well as from East of Benoit to Bridge.

All 3 routes from East of Benoit to Bridge cross Land & ground that Farmer Planting Company or Bolivar Planting Co farm, rent, or own.

The North route which totally object to even though it is currently listed as preferred route affects 8 of our farms 11 landowners. It causes severe damage to several farms will effect drainage have a more severe noise impact on Town of Benoit & small community out of Lake Whittington Population estimate @ 250 people. It makes no sense to have a road heading South Southwest to turn east due East of Benoit 1 from road and head back north some 3½ miles

Mailed comments must be postmarked by December 30, 2002.

Your Name: Sam Crespino

Address: ~~Same~~

City, State, Zip:

Phone:

pg 3

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing

Great River Bridge and I-69 Design Comment Form

Your input is important!

pg 3 Please print clearly, and feel free to use additional paper if necessary.

to intersect Hiway I. If so used Road will then wind around Beroit counter clockwise to a point past due west and then hit straight line to cross Lake Bolivar. That puts Road on Beroit clock from 3:30 or 4:00 to back to 12:00 due north around to past due west & more possibly as much as 7 or 8 hours on the clock. 6 hours on clock = 180°

ANY Route chosen should take into account Amount of impact on property lines drainage Irrigation Pivots and Irrigation wells and their pads which usually end at property lines. Once on old DPi Land old Prudential Land and owned by Gaylon Lawrence and his Dad You people should interact with him and help him have as little impact as possible to his Land and irrigation systems. He has indicated a willingness to work with You just as he does in South Greenville mise with the new US 82 Bridge

Though it is an improvement the North Route still decapitates part of C Williams land and some Irrigation as well as James Powell well decapitation and messes up Freddie Kline Travis Satterfield Pivot Irrigation systems and many Pad Irrigation systems

Mailed comments must be postmarked by December 30, 2002.

Your Name: Sam Procopio

Address: Same

City, State, Zip:

Phone:

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing

Great River Bridge and I-69 Design Comment Form

Your input is important!

Please print clearly, and feel free to use additional paper if necessary.

The Center Route the one MDOT and others come up with in 2000 is the one many people of Benoit believed to be the route chosen with INTERSTATE People + HTNOB people entered picture. This route as shown will be maybe TO close to town of Benoit but There is room to move Center route further closed so as not to Be close to Benoit but still be North of 16th Section School Land but come over to meet the straight Line Path you already have in proposal This Route on Benoit clock = @ 3:30 to 8:00 or 50 = on 5 HRS to 4 on clock There's some 160 acres @ 3/8 mile long that Baylon Lawrence owns further away From Benoit these route is now that will cross Hwy 1 and just North of 16th Section and then connect to existing Route

The South Route as listed cant be used. I dont believe 16th Section Property will be sold to you by State of Miss as well as now there is a Lighted High School Football Field in use 2002 as well as Fencing up For new Baseball Field with lights TO Be used 2003 Baseball Field not yet built Beyond Baseball Field there is only 1/2 of mile TO Get TO South boundary of 16th Section

Mailed comments must be postmarked by December 30, 2002.

Your Name: Sam Crespino

Address: Same

City, State, Zip:

Phone:

Page 5

Page 5

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing

Great River Bridge and I-69 Design Comment Form

Your input is important!

Page 5 Please print clearly, and feel free to use additional paper if necessary.

Crossing Lake Bolivar at present location will affect 4 Landlord we deal with from across Lake going to Bridge. The Center Alignment even with some modification will affect way fewer people or Land owners will have much less impact on Land & Irrigation Systems to get to Lake Bolivar Crossing.

The South Route one studied will have to move up to lowered Center path or change considerably & move further South of 16th Section Land. Either case could involved more Land belonging to one Colon Lawrence. Its 3½ miles from Scott Miss and Benoit miss or the 3½ miles from 16th Section property to Scott miss there is 1 to 1½ miles where this unused RAILROAD is not butted up against Hiway. Once South of 16th Secti all property belongs to me Lawrence on either side of Hiway 1 all the way to Scott miss. We can or I can show you the area where the Railroad gets away from Hiway. Also this area get you groun away from Lake Bolivar and interchanges can be put on eastern side of Hwy 1 even though RAILROAD considers at 50 mph. and they entertain a move further from Hwy to give them new railroad and you more room at Lake Vista location. The area just past 16th Section on over to Lake Vista old bridge location is where Railroad moves away from Hwy 1.

Mailed comments must be postmarked by December 30, 2002.

Your Name: Sam Crespino

Address: Same

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing

Great River Bridge and I-69 Design Comment Form

Your input is important!

Page 6

Please print clearly, and feel free to use additional paper if necessary.

The Lake Vista Location, although I've been told is too close to Railroad would have little effect on property and all land across lake is already separated by existing gravel road all the way to Bridge Location which implies that existing gravel road could be paved and used as Frontage road on one side of Interstate and have little impact on irrigation systems.

Another possible route to cross Lake Bolivar is somewhere up road from Lake Vista but not up to school and crossing at that point you can move Road toward Lake Vista Gravel Road or move road from crossing Lake There to moving over to point where it would intersect with existing Road mapped somewhere close to where Lake Bolivar road and interstate meet. This new consideration route would be close to where hwy 1 curves (not necessarily) from Lake Bolivar but would impact Wilson Place & old Ralph Ray place. Existing route cut Wilson Place into leaving @ 100 acres right by Lake Bolivar cut off and to farm what's left one would travel all way to overpass at Lake Bolivar Road @ 2 miles then cross overpass & return somehow same 2 miles to come back to Land.

Mailed comments must be postmarked by December 30, 2002.

John Deere Harvest Equipment Specs are on separate attached pages 11 different pages in all 3 of which have exact dimensions

Your Name: Sam Crespino

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone:

Page 7

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing

Great River Bridge and I-69 Design Comment Form

Your input is important!

Page 7

Please print clearly, and feel free to use additional paper if necessary.

Newer Lake Crossing could cross Lake and no effect on land on Wilson Place as crossing would be at or near end of Wilson Place as it butts up to Lake on back side. From new crossing point. Interstate could go back Toward Lake Village Road location or as has been stated take straight Path near non irrigated land and Line out with previous map or before near Overpass location already shown on existing map.

Without considering new Lake Bolivar Crossing and having Interstate come South of 16th Section will result in a new Road having to be built along edge of 16th Section on West Side heading North North West nearly 2 miles to Get to existing Lake Bolivar Crossing while effecting more & more Land of Mr Lawrence Less impact of Irrigation Land would be in the areas of consideration laid out in document

Mr. Lawrence certainly would have numerous thoughts on ALL Things mentioned here.

Mailed comments must be postmarked by December 30, 2002.

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

I-69 Mississippi River Crossing

Great River Bridge and I-69 Design Comment Form

Your input is important!

Page 8

Please print clearly, and feel free to use additional paper if necessary.

Most of the land mentioned in These Routes except For Hwy 1 Visa Road & Crossing is FARMed by FARmer & Bolivar Planting Companies.

I would be happy to show Anyone in search of information about what is written in person - eye contact or TALK - via whatever means concerning any comment or STATEMENTS here in listed

Once again I will state more people from Greenville Miss population 45,000 and Washington County will use This interchange than the Few people in Rosedale heading South TO ARKANSAS TEXAS & MEXICO because Rosedale Residents will positively NOT drive 15 miles South TO Benoit TO CATCH INTERSTATE TO Head north when they can leave Rosedale miss on Hwy 8 and be on INTERSTATE heading North with 10 TO 12 TO 14 12 miles where Hwy 1 interchange comes. That interchange (East of Rosedale, West of Cleveland) will come in mileage way before direct Hwy 1 South interchange would come in mileage and again even North of Benoit and also no one would go 10 - 12 miles South TO go North on INTERSTATE. Both Rosedale has North INTERSTATE Access along Hwy 8 and South access to INTERSTATE by Following Hwy 1 TO interchange.

Mailed comments must be postmarked by December 30, 2002.

Your Name: Sam Crespino Reps & Literature on John Deere Harvest Equipment

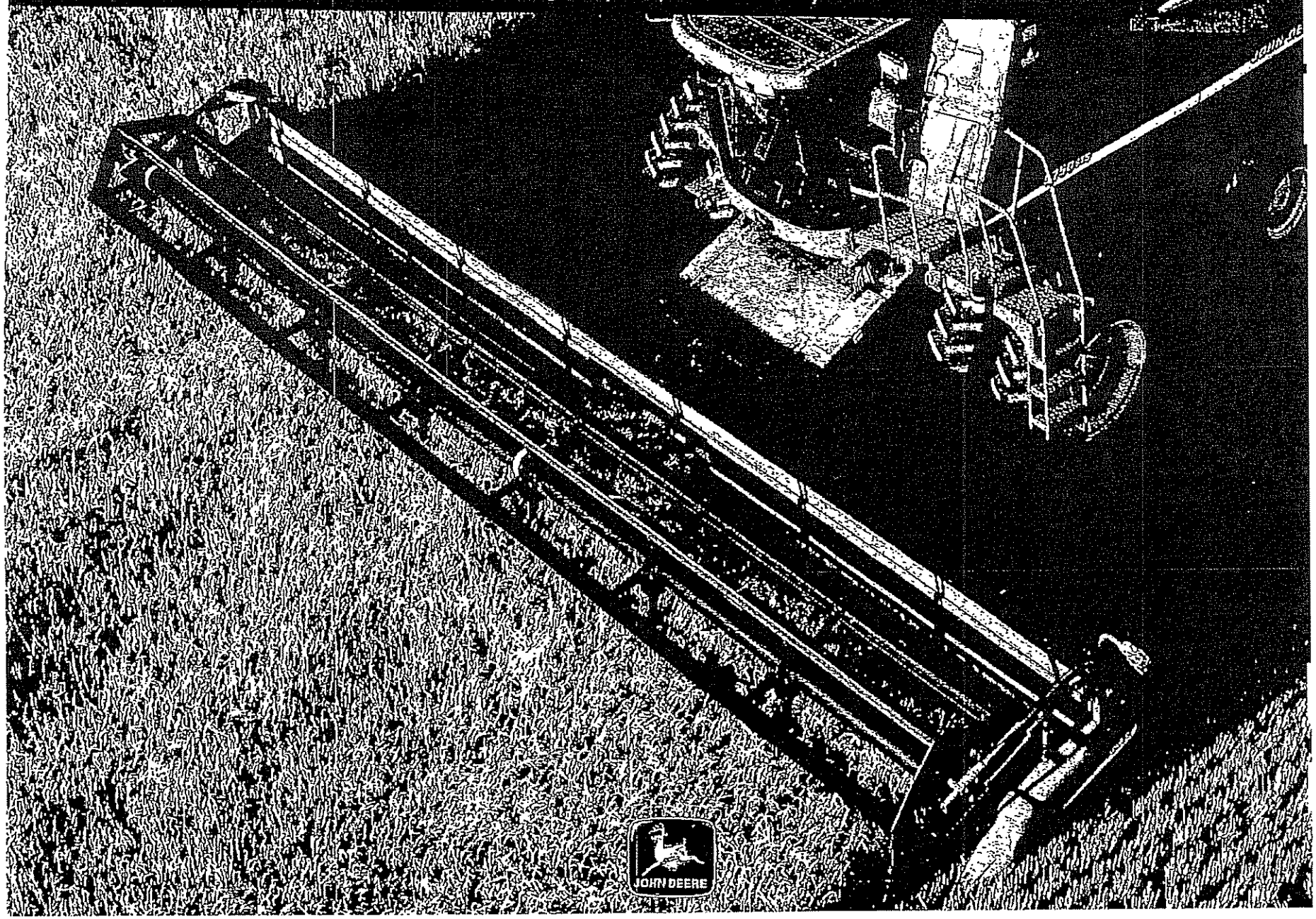
Address: 336 S. Bowman DR Attached 11 other pages with exact Dimensions.

City, State, Zip: Greenville Miss 38701

Phone: Home 662 332 1829
Mobile 662 379 0688
Farm office 662 742 3742

ALL-NEW DRAPER PLATFORMS

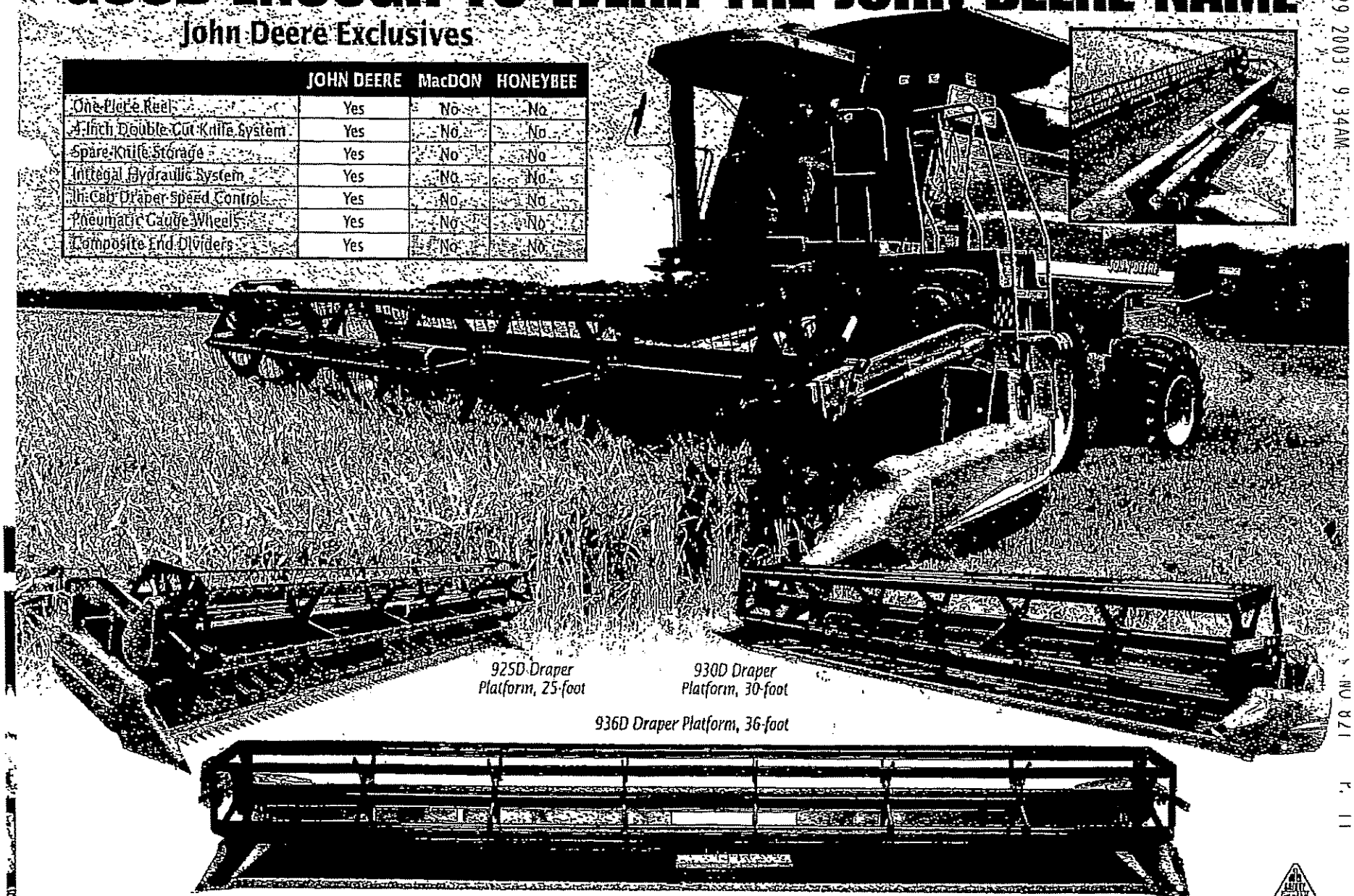
Feed your appetite for high capacity and reliability



AT LAST, A FAMILY OF DRAPER PLATFORMS GOOD ENOUGH TO WEAR THE JOHN DEERE NAME

John Deere Exclusives

	JOHN DEERE	MacDON	HONEYBEE
One-Piece Reel	Yes	No	No
4-Inch Double-Cut Knife System	Yes	No	No
Spare Knife Storage	Yes	No	No
Integral Hydraulic System	Yes	No	No
In-Cab Draper Speed Control	Yes	No	No
Pneumatic Gauge Wheels	Yes	No	No
Composite End Dividers	Yes	No	No



925D Draper Platform, 25-foot

930D Draper Platform, 30-foot

936D Draper Platform, 36-foot

OCT. 29 2003 9:34AM NO 871 P. 11

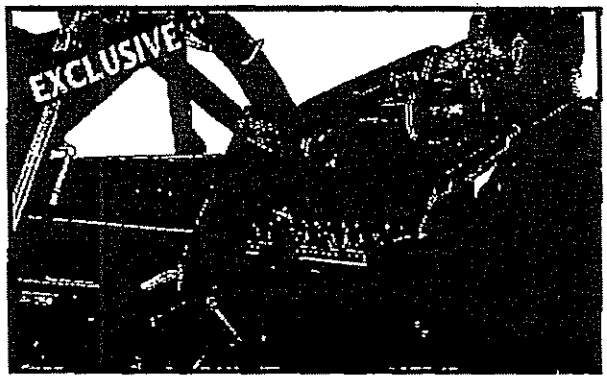
Specifications

Cutterbar:	
Type	Straight-line, double-cut with epicyclic drive
Length	25, 30, and 36 ft. (7.6, 9.1, and 10.9 m)
Knife speed	520 cycles per minute
Pickup Reel:	
Number of slats	6
Fingers	Nylon
Diameter	50 in. (127 cm)
Height control	hydraulic
Speed control	hydraulic
Operating speeds	6–55 rpm
Slat Reel:	
Number of slats	5
Diameter	50 in. (127 cm)
Height control	Hydraulic
Operating speeds	8–68 rpm
Draper Belts:	
Width	Side belts: 36-in. (91.4 cm) Center belt: 60-in. (152.4 cm)
Operating speed	Side belts: 0–508 rpm Center belt: 0–567 rpm
Speed control	Hydraulic, in cab
Feed Drum:	
Diameter	12 in. (30.1 cm)
Auger fingers	Heavy-duty, round 5/8-in. (16 mm) diameter with breakaway notch
Number of auger fingers	17
Auger finger pattern	Spiral, retracting
Finger reach	6 in. (152 mm)
Operating speed	256 rpm
Platform length:	
925D	26.5 ft. (8.09 m)
930D	31.5 ft. (9.61 m)
936D	37.5 ft. (11.44 m)
Platform width:	
925D	7.9 ft. (2.41 m)
930D	8.2 ft. (2.51 m)
936D	8.2 ft. (2.51 m)

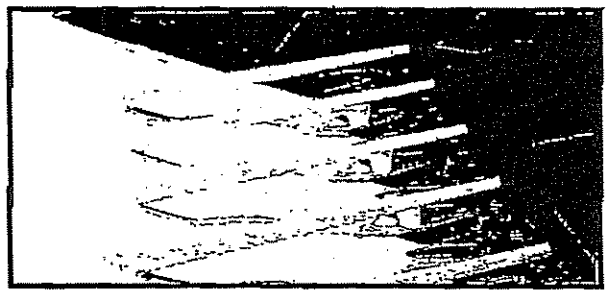
Weight (approximate)	Slat Reel	Pickup Reel
925D	NA	5,324 lb. (2,627 kg)
930D	5,780 lb. (2,627 kg)	6,028 lb. (2,740 kg)
936D	6,574 lb. (2,988 kg)	6,897 lb. (3,135 kg)

(Specifications and design subject to change without notice.)

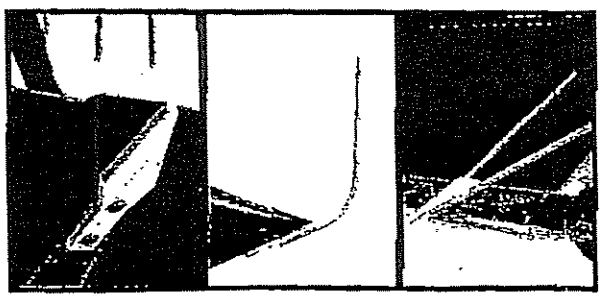
Options



Add more convenience to your harvest with this optional spare-knife storage compartment.



Optional crop lifters get under and lift plants to let you harvest more grain in down conditions.down. Lets you run at higher ground speeds in a down crop with less concern of bulldozing.



Choose from three crop dividers to match your conditions. Standard divider (left) handles normal standing crop. Single loop divider (middle) is ideal for standing and leaning crop. Go with the multiple loop divider (right) for down crop conditions.

A	3.00 m (32 ft 2 in.) /20 ft Auger
B	85 m (25 ft 8 in.)
C	52 m (14 ft 10 in.)
D	06 m (13 ft 4 in.)
E	77 m (12 ft 4 in.)
F	52 m (1 ft 8 in.)
G	63 m (11 ft 7 in.)
H	33 m (22 ft 9 in.) w/20 ft Auger
I	73 m (15 ft 6 in.) w/20 ft Auger
J	32 m (14 ft 2 in.) w/20 ft Auger
K	31 m (12 ft 5 in.) w/20 ft Auger
L	35 m (10 ft)
M	.9-24 R-1
	15 m (10 ft)
	.9-26 R1
	11 m (9 ft 10-1/2 in.)
	VT.

Dimensions

DIMENSION	9650 STS w/800/65R32 Cleat R-1	9750 STS w/800/65R32 Cleat R-1
A	9.80 m (32 ft 2 in.) w/20 ft Auger	10.00 m (32 ft 2 in.) w/20 ft Auger
B	7.85 m (25 ft 9 in.)	7.85 m (25 ft 9 in.)
C	4.62 m (14 ft 10 in.)	4.62 m (14 ft 10 in.)
D	4.02 m (13 ft 2 in.)	4.06 m (13 ft 4 in.)
E	3.77 m (12 ft 4 in.)	3.77 m (12 ft 4 in.)
F	0.52 m (1 ft 8 in.)	0.52 m (1 ft 8 in.)
G	3.53 m (11 ft 7 in.)	3.53 m (11 ft 7 in.)
H	6.93 m (22 ft 9 in.) w/20 ft Auger	6.93 m (22 ft 9 in.) w/20 ft Auger
I	4.73 m (15 ft 6 in.) w/20 ft Auger	4.73 m (15 ft 6 in.) w/20 ft Auger
J	4.32 m (14 ft 2 in.) w/20 ft Auger	4.32 m (14 ft 2 in.) w/20 ft Auger
K	3.81 m (12 ft 5 in.) w/20 ft Auger	3.81 m (12 ft 5 in.) w/20 ft Auger
L	3.05 m (10 ft)	3.05 m (10 ft)
M*	14.9-24 R-1 3.05 m (10 ft) 16.9-26 R1 3.01 m (9 ft 10-1/2 in.)	14.9-24 R-1 3.05 m (10 ft) 16.9-26 R1 3.01 m (9 ft 10-1/2 in.)

*"L" dimension is for fixed rear axle. For adjustable rear axle, see REAR AXLE ADJUSTMENT.

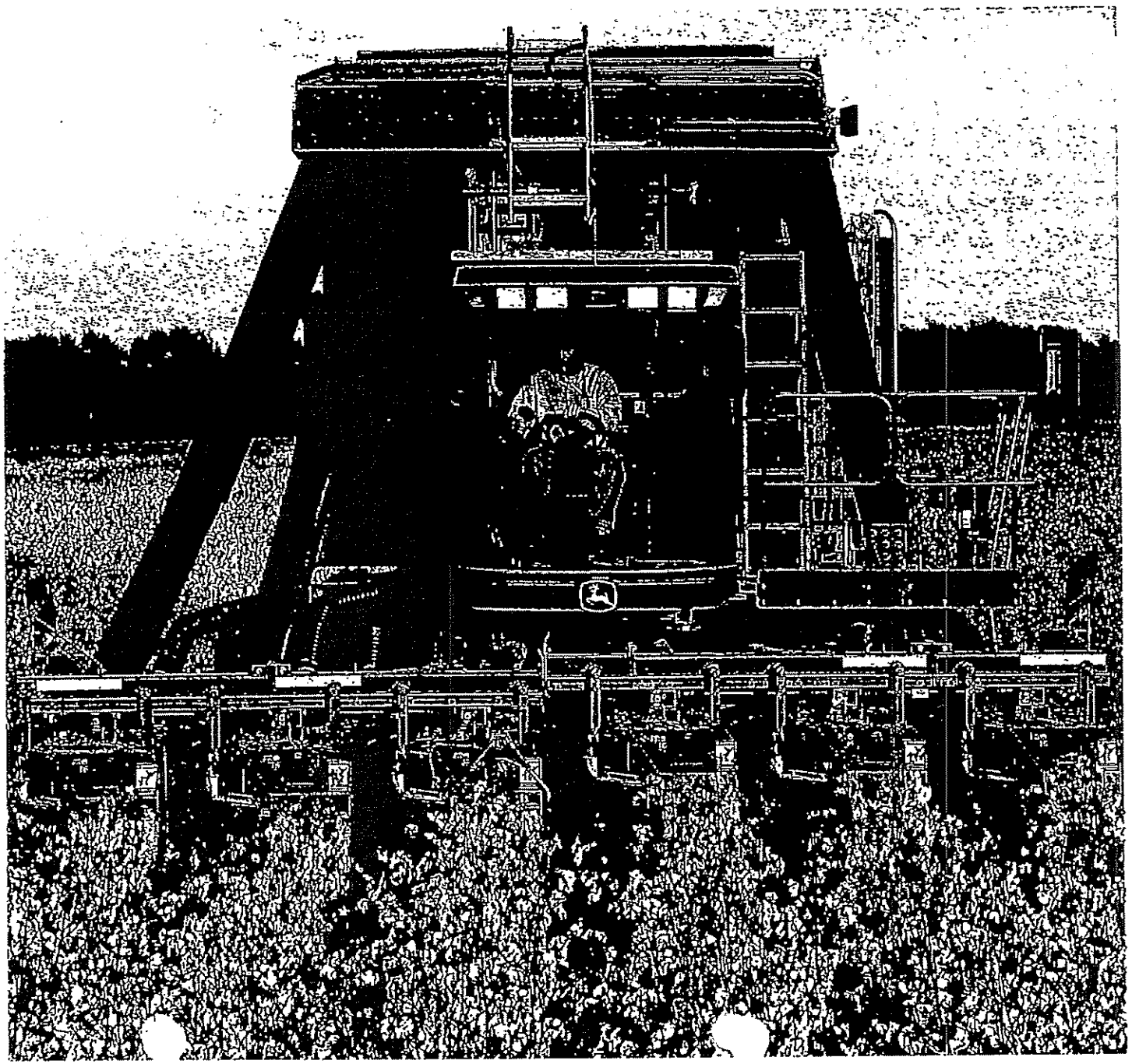
DUD6075,000217D -19-13JUN02-1/1

JOHN DEERE

9986 - 9970

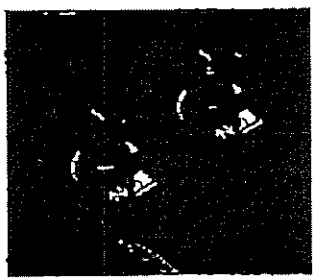
PRO-SERIES™ Pickers – *including the new 9986 Cotton Picker*

sign of an outstanding Pro



Electronic height sensing

Electronic height sensing *(standard) lets you adjust both height and sensitivity on-the-go from the comfort of your cab. You can pick more low-hanging bolls because row-unit height automatically adjusts to the terrain. In fact, the units can be adjusted to run virtually flat to pick bolls other machines would leave behind.*



Unit height and response rate controls *are located under the armrest. Once you've set the controls to match field conditions, you can lock these in place to prevent operators from changing the settings.*

OCT. 29 2003 9:37AM NO. 821 P. 16

Single-Pressure with Gear Driven We

Dual, Heavy-Duty, 82° C (180° F) The

)PS) with heater and air conditioner, Deete
with cassette and weather band, windshield
at belt, instructional seat and seat belt, elec
:hometer with hourmeter, console with spee
dle, electronically activated units/fan and op
presence sy

AH

AH

508 mm (20

508 mm (20

200 x 297 mm (7.86 x 11.69

5274 W/hr (18,000 B

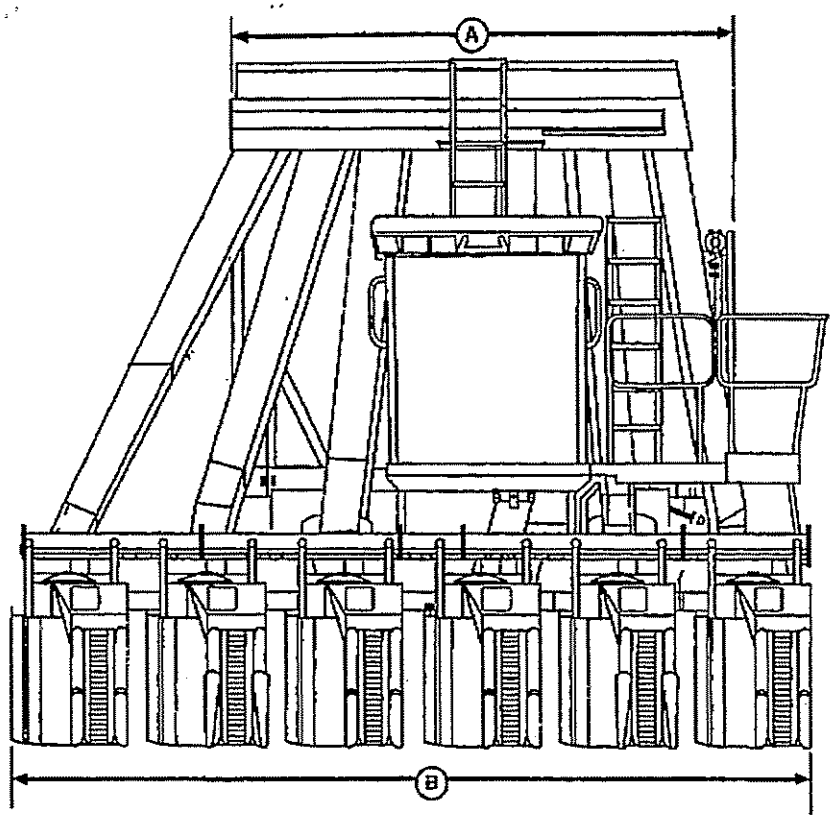
Nippondenso

64.46 kW/h (22,000 B

Approx. 2 kg (4-1/2

AG,G (1,1238 -19-14SEP

achine Dimensions



Shown in Raised Position

A—3651 mm (143.75 in.)

B—3810 mm (150 in.) 4 Units on 762 mm (30 in.) Row Spacing
4394 mm (173 in.) 4 Units on 1016 mm (40 in.) Row Spacing
5537 mm (218 in.) 6 Units on 762 mm (30 in.) Row Spacing
6994 mm (236 in.) 6 Units on 1016 mm (40 in.) Row Spacing

N601B4 -UN-15APR02

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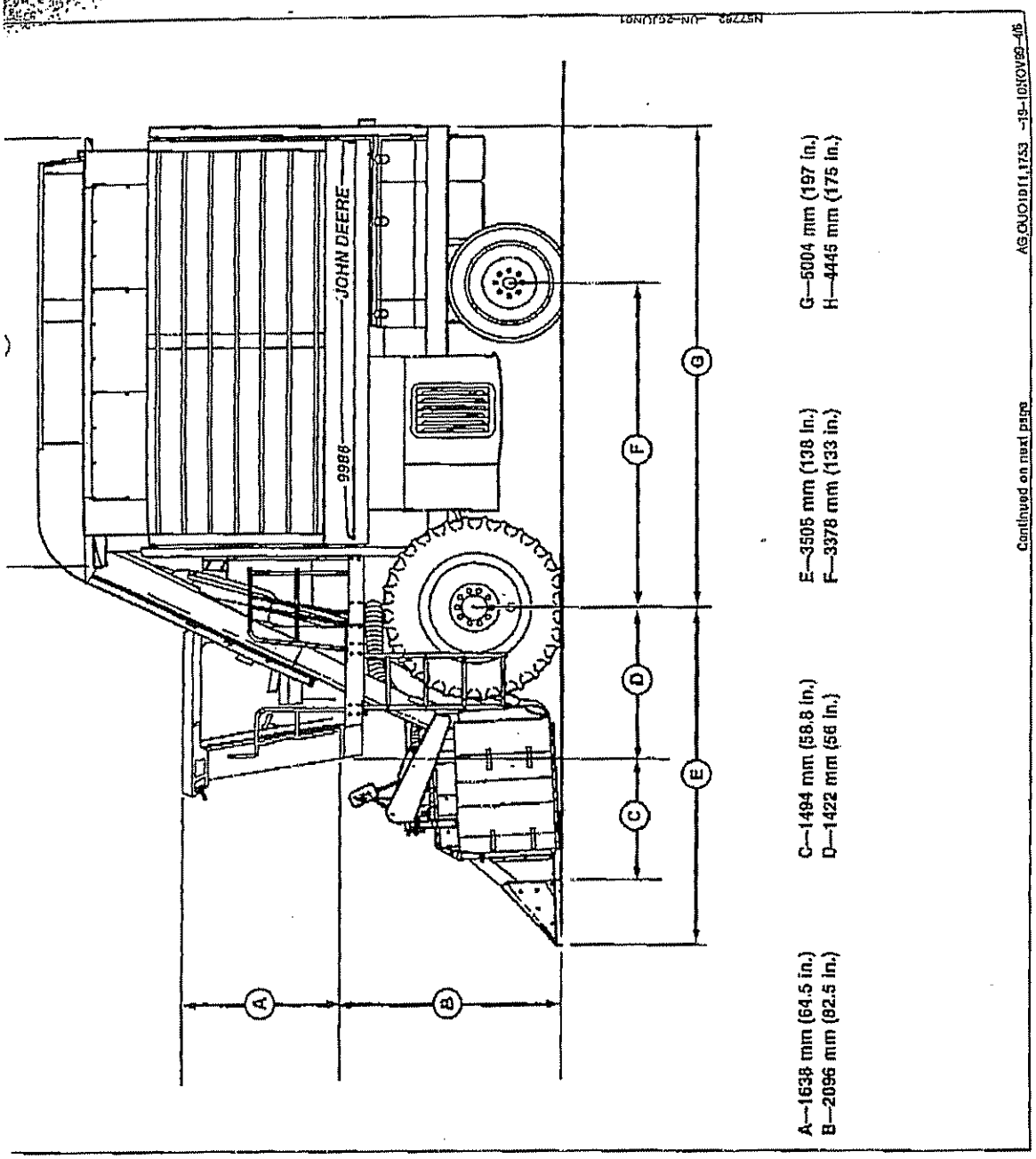
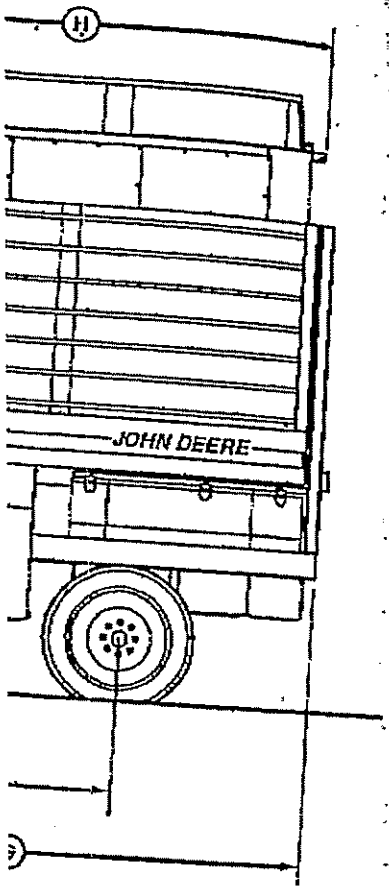


A—1638 mm (64.5 in.)
B—2096 mm (82.5 in.)
C—1494 mm (58.8 in.)
D—1422 mm (56 in.)
E—3505 mm (138 in.)
F—3378 mm (133 in.)
G—5004 mm (197 in.)
H—4445 mm (175 in.)

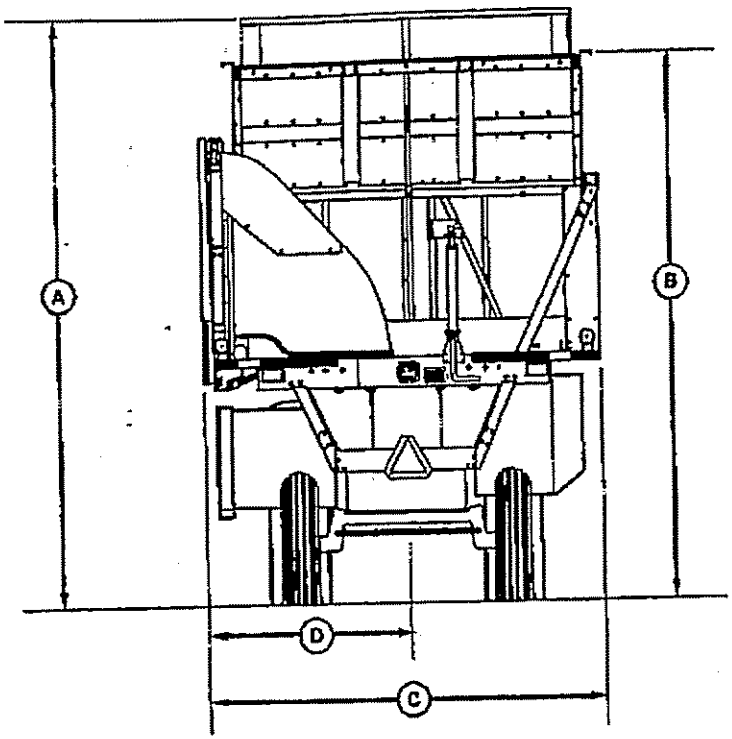
Continued on next page

AGCUO19I1,1753 -19-10NOV99-4/6



G—5004 mm (197 in.)
H—4445 mm (175 in.)

AG,OUO1011,1753 –19–10NOV99–4/8



A—5334 mm (210 in.) Full Up Position With Extension
4318 mm (170 in.) Transport Position With Extension

B—4851 mm (191 in.) Full Up Position Without Extension
3835 mm (151 in.) Transport Position Without Extension

C—3658 mm (144 in.)

D—2026 mm (79.75 in.)

Continued on next page

AG,OUO1011,1753 –19–10NOV99–5/8

210" = 17' 6"

9986

Engine ..... 6-cylinder, 8.1 L (497 cu. in.) turbocharged air-to-air aftercooled diesel; 325 hp (242 kW)

Picking Units:
PRO-16 ..... 20 spindles high with 16-bar front and 12-bar rear drums (560 spindles per unit); standard on 9986, not available on 9970. Automatic row-unit height control.
PRO-12 ..... 18 spindles high with two 12-bar drums (432 spindles per unit); available on 6-row 9986 only (standard on 9970). Automatic row-unit height control.

Ground speeds, full throttle (PRO-12 and PRO-16 units)

2-wheel drive
1st gear ..... 0 to 4.0 mph (0 to 6.4 km/h)
2nd gear ..... 0 to 4.5 mph (0 to 7.2 km/h)
3rd gear ..... 0 to 17.0 mph (0 to 27.4 km/h)

4-wheel drive (high range)
1st gear ..... 0 to 3.5 mph (0 to 5.6 km/h)
2nd gear ..... 0 to 3.8 mph (0 to 6.1 km/h)
3rd gear ..... 0 to 11.7 mph (0 to 18.9 km/h)

Capacities:
Cotton basket
With std. basket lid extension ..... 1,400 cu. ft. (39.6 m³)
Fuel tank ..... 150 gal. (568 L)

Water solution tank ..... 275 gal. (1041 L)
Lubrication system ..... 80 gal. (303 L)
Cooling system ..... 44 qt. (42 L)
Engine crankcase ..... 31 qt. (29 L)
Hydraulic/hydrostatic reservoir ..... 18 gal. (66 L)
Hydraulic system ..... Closed-center, pressure-compensated; standby pressure of 2,700 psi (18617 kPa)

Onboard unit-lubrication system:
Tether control ..... Single button for spindle, bar, cam, and gear lubrication.
Pump ..... Hydraulically driven gear pump.

Cotton conveying ..... Jet-Air-Trol system with Jet-Pod™ nozzle and common air duct for single suction doors

Tires:
Drive wheels ..... 20.8-42, 14PR (R1 or R2)
Drive wheels, duals ..... 20.8 x 42 in. 14PR R1 or R2 cleat (standard for 6-row machines)
Standard guide tires ..... 11.25-24, 12 PR
Cleated guide tires, optional 14.9-24, 12PR (R4)

Power rear axle
(82-102-in. tread) 14.9-24, 12PR (R2)

Transport width:
4-row, 30-in. ..... 150 in. (3810 mm)
4-row, 40-in. ..... 173 in. (4394 mm)
6-row, 30-in. ..... 218 in. (5537 mm)
6-row, 40-in. ..... 236 in. (6000 mm)

Transport height:
Basket down (with lid extension) ..... 168 in. (4267 mm)
Full-up position ..... 210 in. (5334 mm)

Weight:
4-row, 30-in. ..... 36,307 lb. (16,469 kg)
4-row, 36-, 38, or 40-in. ..... 35,818 lb. (16,247 kg)
6-row, 30-in, PRO-12 units ..... 40,734 lb. (18,477 kg)
6-row, 30-, 32-, 34-in, PRO-16 units ..... 43,584 lb. (19,769 kg)
6-row, 36-, 38-, 40-in, PRO-16 units ..... 44,026 lb. (19,770 kg)

DEAA12631 (Mfg. in U.S.A. (01-12)

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

9970

Engine ..... 6-cylinder, 8.1 L (497 cu. in.), turbocharged, intercooled diesel; 250 hp (186 kW)

Picking Units:
PRO-12 ..... 18 spindles high with two, 12-bar drums (432 spindles per unit). Standard on 4- and 5-row 9970. Automatic row-unit height control.

Ground speeds:
PRO-12 units, 2-wheel drive
1st gear ..... 0 to 3.6 mph (0 to 5.8 km/h)
2nd gear ..... 0 to 4.3 mph (0 to 6.4 km/h)
3rd gear ..... 0 to 15.5 mph (0 to 24.6 km/h)
4-wheel drive
1st gear ..... 0 to 2.9 mph (0 to 4.7 km/h)
2nd gear ..... 0 to 3.5 mph (0 to 5.6 km/h)
3rd gear ..... 0 to 9.0 mph (0 to 14.5 km/h)

Capacities:
Cotton basket
Intermediate height ..... 1,065 cu. ft. (30.2 m³)
Full height ..... 1,173 cu. ft. (32.8 m³)
Fuel tank ..... 120 gal. (454 L)
Water solution tank ..... 275 gal. (1041 L)
Lubrication system ..... 67 gal. (227 L)

Tires:
Drive wheels ..... 20.8-38, 14PR (R1 or R2)
Standard guide wheels ..... 9.00-24, 8PR (I1); cleated guide tires optional (non-powered only), 14.9-24, 8 PR (R4)
Power rear axle
(82-90 in. tread) 14.9-24, 6PR (R2)
Power rear axle
(94-118 in. tread 14.9-28, 6PR (R2)

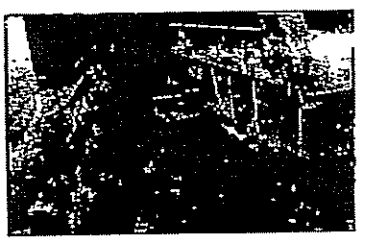
Transport height:
Basket down ..... 148 in. (3759 mm)
Intermediate position ..... 178 in. (4521 mm)
Full-up position ..... 90 in. (4824 mm)

Weight:
4-row, 30-in. ..... 29,050 lb. (13,177 kg)
4-row, 40-in. ..... 29,050 lb. (13,177 kg)
5-row, 30-in. ..... 30,990 lb. (14,057 kg)

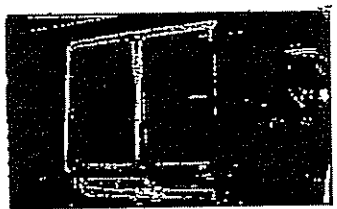
Design and specifications subject to change without notice.

***Optional cleated guide tires** improve traction in muddy conditions.*

***Optional stalklifter rods** get under plants to let you harvest the lowest-hanging bolls.*



***Factory-installed, 2-speed Mud-Hog™ rear-wheel-drive option** is great for muddy fields. (Warranty parts and service provided by authorized MudHog dealer.)*



***A rotary-screen trash shield** prevents trash buildup on the rotary-screen air inlet.*

OCT. 29 2003 9:38AM
NO. 821* P. 20

August 15, 2003

Mr. Dick Hall
Commissioner, Central District
P.O. Box 55942
Jackson, MS 39296

Dear Mr. Hall:

Enclosed please find a map relating to a proposed route for the I-69 Project in Bolivar County, Mississippi, and a copy of a letter written to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

I am deeply concerned about the impact this proposed route has on my farm and would appreciate any assistance that you can give.

Thank you for your help and understanding. Please feel free to contact me at 662-719-6200 during the day and evenings at 662-846-6332 if further information is needed.

Sincerely,

G.R. Harden

478 McKnight Road, Cleveland, Mississippi 38732 Phone 662-846-6332

August 15, 2003

Mr. Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Dear Mr. Walker:

Enclosed please find a map relating to a proposed route for the I-69 Project in Bolivar County, Mississippi.

As noted on the map for the proposed western route around Cleveland, the route would go through my Subdivision located at the top of the map where highlighted. This subdivision contains 19 lots and 9 two-acre lots that remain available. These lots sell for $30,000. Since the public information meeting in Bolivar County in April, I have lost two sales and do not anticipate being able to sell the remainder of the lots unless this can be resolved. The alignment travels south through farm acreage primarily that is either owned by me, or farmed by me and takes out two of my houses. This land has been in my family for generations! There are several other houses that do not belong to me that will also be affected.

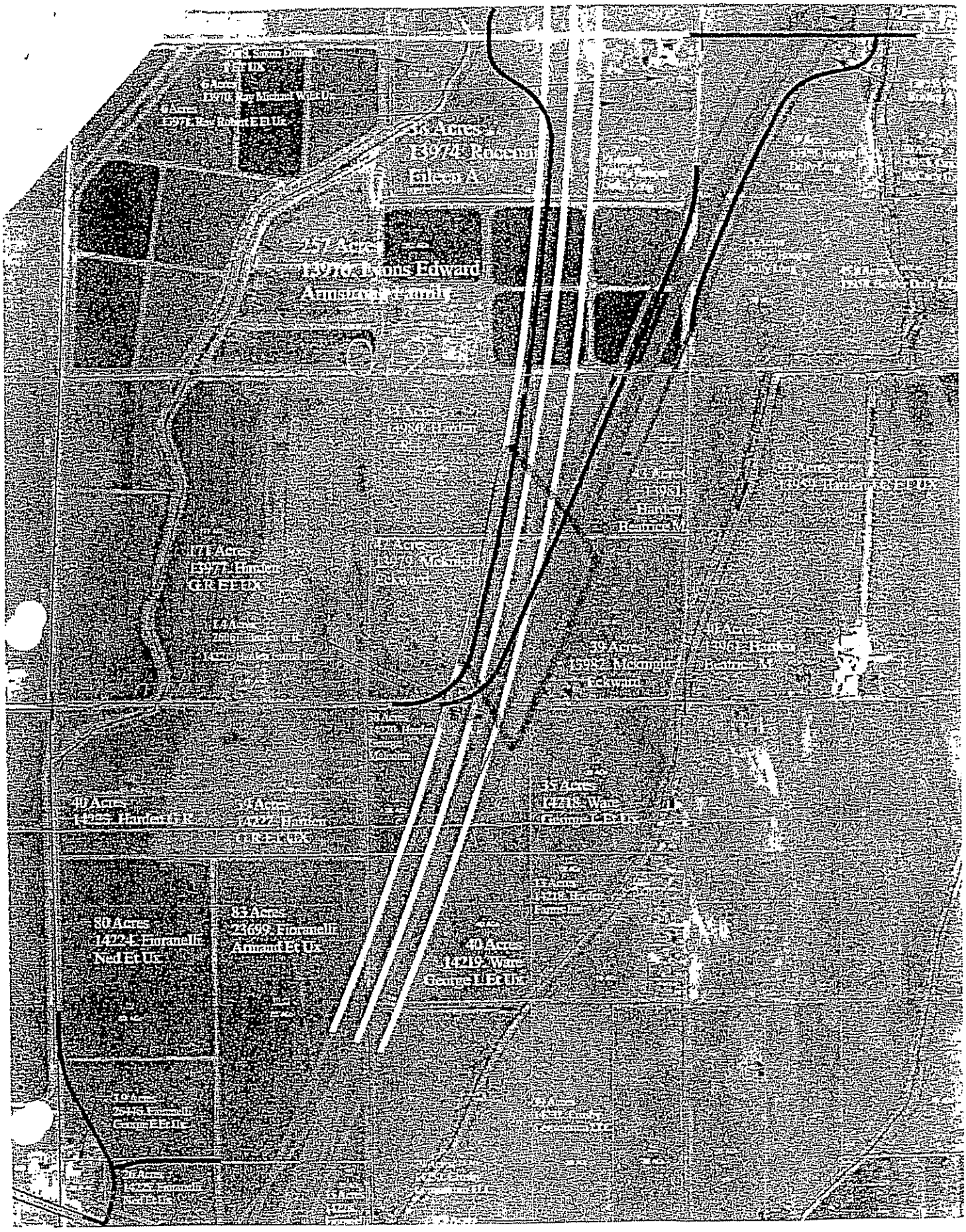
I would like to go on record in opposition to this proposed route. If the route could go west another couple of miles, there would be much lesser negative impact on this portion of the county.

Thank you for your help and understanding. Please feel free to contact me at 662-719-6200 during the day and evenings at 662-846-6332.

Sincerely,

G.R. Harden

478 McKnight Road, Cleveland, Mississippi 38732 Phone 662-846-6332


80 Acres
1422-L Fiorunelli
Ned Et Ux
83 Acres
23699 Fiorunelli
Armand Et Ux
40 Acres
14219 Ward
George L Et Ux
40 Acres
14225 Harden G R
55 Acres
14218 Ward
George L Et Ux
30 Acres
23911 Hickingbot
Edward
30 Acres
23912 Hickingbot
Edward
51.71 Acres
13977 Hunton
G.R. Et Ux
23.7 Acres
13976 Lyons Edward
Anthony Et Ux
5K Acres
13974 Poissant
Eileen A

State of Mississippi

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

COMMISSIONER DICK HALL
CHAIRMAN

September 10, 2003

Mr. G. R. Harden
478 McKnight Road
Cleveland, MS 38732

Dear Mr. Harden:

Thank you for your August 15, 2003, letter and map relating to a proposed route for the I-69 Project in Bolivar County.

I appreciate your concern regarding the impact of the proposed route on your farm. For this reason, a member of the I-69 Study Team will contact you to discuss your situation. I cannot guarantee that your property will not be affected by this project; however, we will do what we can to cooperate with you to minimize the impact.

Also, from what I understand, either three or four public hearings regarding the I-69 Project will be held before the end of 2003 or in early 2004. One will be in Cleveland. Hopefully, by that time, your questions would have already been answered.

If you need to communicate with me further, please do not hesitate to do so.

Respectfully,

Dick Hall
Chairman, Transportation Commission

cc: Mr. Robert Walker
Mr. Claiborne Barnwell

SEP 16 2003
JACKSON, MS.

POST OFFICE BOX 1850 • JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39215-1850 • 601-359-7035 • FAX 601-359-7051

FILE 4/03/03 NEWSLETTER COMMENTS

Jimmy Shirley

From: Richard Thomas [rwt9@netdoor.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 09, 2003 5:10 PM
To: I69
Subject: Yellow route - Prichard, MS

Robert,

We would like to go on record to oppose the yellow route west of Prichard, between #3 Highway and Prichard Road. Please consider the following reasons for this opposition:

1) There would be loss of prime farmland especially in section 28,T4S,R10W. This land is some of the most productive for crops in Mississippi and these soils are class I.
2) This route would result in economic loss from income and rental fees.
3) There would also be loss of fish and wildlife along the Buck Island Bayou, with native trees and brush bordering the stream and drainage way.
4) There would be added costs in construction over Buck Island Bayou and encroachment of wetlands.
5) We believe that this route would effectively cut our farm in half without access from one side to the other.

Please note these as official objections to this particular proposed route.

Christy Jepsen Thomas

Delta State University

Office of the President Emeritus

December 13, 2004

Mississippi Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Dear Sir:

I am pleased to have the opportunity at the public hearing to express my desire to have I-69 follow the Central Route through Bolivar County. I am interested because this route would provide Delta State students the closest and safest route to Delta State University. The university has a larger percentage of its students commuting than ever before and it's imperative that they have the best roads available for their commute. The university, located on the west side of Cleveland, now requires the students to come thru downtown Cleveland to come to the campus. The Central Route would eliminate this and make it a safer and quicker commute for students. Delta State University enrolls approximately 4,000 students and approximately 500 employees, most of who commute daily.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express these concerns.

Sincerely,

Kent Wyatt

Kent Wyatt
President Emeritus

pwg

DSU Box 3144 • Cleveland, MS 38733 • Office 662-846-4850 • Fax 662-846-4852
Email: fkwyatt@deltastate.edu

Delta Health Center, Inc.

702 Martin Luther King Road • Mound Bayou, Mississippi 38762 • (662) 741-2151 • Fax (662) 741-2150

Mr. Robert Scott
Chairperson

Mr. Jack King
Vice Chairperson

Ms Brenda Broadnax
Secretary

Mr J L. Langdon
Treasurer

Ms Viola Wragga
Parliamentarian

December 13, 2004

Mr. Larry L. "Butch" Brown
Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 1850
Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1850

Dear Mr. Brown:

As Chief Executive Officer of the first community health center in the nation, **Delta Health Center, Inc.**, I am honored to have an opportunity to write this letter of support on behalf of the I-69 Central Alignment Project. I join other Bolivar County leadership in these efforts for the following reasons:

- The preferred Red-Central Alignment will have the greatest impact on community and economic development in the Delta area.
- The Central Alignment would be more cost effective.
- It is the only route that provides access to major communities such as Mound Bayou, Cleveland, Boyle, Merigold, Shelby, Winstonville, Alligator, Duncan, and others. These communities would realize great economic impacts. Without this access, these municipalities will likely not realize future economic and/or community development.
- As an economic development route, it is more feasible to locate in the most populated areas, which would result in the provision of more businesses and job opportunities.

I, along with the Board of Directors, Administration, and Staff of Delta Health Center, kindly appreciate your dedicated efforts to provide improved highway infrastructure to the Delta area.

It is with sincere hope, appreciation, and prayer that you give the Central Alignment your most positive considerations.

Sincerely,

Seymour Mitchell

Seymour Mitchell, MSW
Chief Executive Officer

SM/rs

Bolivar Medical Center

901 East Sunflower Road
P.O. Box 1380 / Cleveland, Mississippi 38732
Telephone (662) 846-0061

December 14, 2004

Mississippi Department of Transportation
Jackson, MS

Dear Sirs:

As CEO of Bolivar Medical Center, one of the major employers in Bolivar County, I write this letter of support for the proposed Central Route of Interstate 69.

There are many reasons why the Central Route is the best route for this highway

- It is less costly than the other routes.
- It provides a close proximity to existing population centers and presents a greater economic development potential for the Cleveland area.
- It follows existing US Highway 61 making it the least environmentally disruptive of the proposed routes.
- It serves more economically disadvantaged and minority residents.
- It would be more centrally located to the Cleveland Airport and the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port.
- It does more to develop the tourism and heritage efforts of the Blues Corridor by following Highway 61.
- It has closer proximity to Delta State, a regional university.

Thank you for your sincere consideration.

Respectfully,

Ruth McDaniel
Chief Executive Officer

COX & MOORE
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
116 SOUTH COURT STREET
P.O. BOX 608
CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI 38732-0608

ANCIL L. COX, JR.
DANA C. MOORE, JR.
JOHN C. COX

(662) 843 8351
(662) 843-8352 FAX

December 14, 2004

Mississippi Department of Transportation
Environmental Division
P. O Box 1850
Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1850

Re: Proposed I-69 Route, Clarksdale to Benoit

Gentlemen:

As Mississippi Co-Chairman of the Arkansas-Mississippi Great River Bridge Authority, I, along with many other fellow Bolivar Countians who are no longer with us, have spent many days and have traveled many miles to help bring the proposed Interstate 69 route through the Mississippi Delta.

In the initial stages of the interstate project, it was proposed that the new interstate route cross the Mississippi River at Memphis. Subsequently, delegates from the Mississippi counties of Desoto, Tunica, Coahoma and Bolivar were successful in having a National Highway Corridor selected which will bring the route for I-69 from Memphis south through the Counties of Desoto, Tunica, Coahoma and Bolivar to a bridge crossing on the Great River Bridge to be constructed near Benoit in Bolivar County, Mississippi.

It is generally understood that the existing improved U. S. Highway 61 will be utilized as much as possible in extending the new I-69 from Tunica down to Clarksdale. This makes good economic sense. Likewise, it makes good economic sense to select the proposed Central Alignment from Clarksdale to Benoit.

In your Draft Environmental Impact Statement, your agency has considered three alternate routes for I-69 from Clarksdale to the Great River Bridge crossing near Benoit: the Western Route, the Central Route, and the Eastern Route.

There is little to recommend the proposed Western Route. It would be located too far west of the existing population centers between Clarksdale and Cleveland to be of substantial economic development to the localities. The same may be said for the proposed Eastern Route. The Eastern Route would be located substantially east of the existing population centers south of Clarksdale. In addition, the Eastern Route would lengthen the route of I-69, it would limit economic growth to the East of Cleveland based on existing development in the area, and would require industrial traffic originating at the Port of Rosedale to travel through Cleveland to reach the interstate highway.

The US 61 alternative (Central Alignment B) is significantly better than either the Western Route or the Eastern Route. It is shorter than the Eastern Route, it is approximately sixty million dollars less expensive, it will benefit the existing population centers presently existing between Clarksdale and Cleveland, and will expedite access to the Port of Rosedale and to Delta State University. The probability of capturing economic development potential is much greater with the selection of Central Alignment B. This area does not need two four-lane highways paralleling within a few miles of each other, which will be the result if the Eastern Route is adopted.

Sincerely yours,

Ancil Cox

Delta State University

Office of the President

December 14, 2004

Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental/Location Division
Mississippi Department of Transportation
P O Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Dear Mr Barnwell:

I am writing to urge the Mississippi Department of Transportation to select the Central Route Alternative as the Interstate 69 route from Robinsonville to the bridge crossing at Benoit Throughout Mississippi, cities and towns located along interstate highway routes have experienced impressive growth and development, and I believe Cleveland and Bolivar County can achieve similar results with similar opportunities.

In addition, the Central Route Alternative is closer to Delta State University which offers new and exciting opportunities for advanced recruiting efforts in Arkansas, Louisiana, and other areas of Mississippi. Delta State University is striving to be the Best Regional University in America; and, the Central Route Alternative opens up many avenues for additional and stronger partnerships with other areas as well Also, Delta State has the only aviation program in the State of Mississippi and the Central Route Alternative would be closer to the DSU airport and aviation program; thereby, creating enhanced potential for multi-modal transportation.

Economic development today requires a modern transportation system, and the Central Route Alternative provides the best opportunity to help make the Delta competitive in its efforts to recruit new industries and jobs. Cleveland and Bolivar County have the leadership and the determination to improve its economic plight All we need are opportunities, and the Central Route Alternative would represent the greatest opportunity for economic development in our area.

Just a few more reasons why the Central Route is the best route:

- It is at least $60 million cheaper than the other routes.
- It has closer proximity to existing population centers and, therefore, presents greater economic development potential.
- It follows existing US Highway 61 through the northern half of Bolivar County and, therefore, makes it the least environmentally disruptive of the routes.
- It has more enhancement potential for multi-modal transportation with closer proximity to the Cleveland Airport and the Rosedale-Bolivar County Port.
- It does more to develop the tourism and heritage efforts of the Blues Corridor by following Highway 61.

Please let me know if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

John M. Hilpert
President

Box A-1 • Kent Wyatt Hall, Suite 255 • Cleveland, MS 38733

Phone: 662-846-4000 • Fax: 662-846-4014

HITER FARMS

P. O. Box 305

MERIGOLD, MISSISSIPPI 38759

Mr. Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
Jackson, Ms.

Dear Mr. Walker and all concerned parties:

I am writing in regard to the I-69 Interstate Project and the effect it will have in regard to Hiter Farms of Merigold, Ms. in Bolivar County.

First of all, I am the third generation of my family that has farmed this land. It is prime agricultural land in this part of the world with a high cotton base and yield. The total number of acres farmed, including rented land, is 1413.6 acres. The land directly affected by the I-69 project is approximately 285 acres. The land indirectly affected amounts to another 150 acres. This is a total of 435 acres which amounts to 30% of total land farmed. This is not a large farm by today's standards, in fact it is considered small. With a 30% plus cut in gross receipts, this farm will not continue to endure for very long.

The proposed Central Route will be detrimental to my family and all who depend on me. It is currently supporting my father, who is in an assisted-care living facility, my stepmother, my brother, me, my family, and my labor-force.

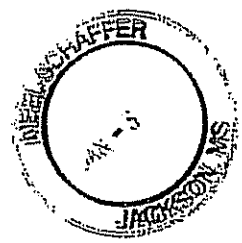
The Mississippi Delta is agriculturally based and I cannot see how destroying prime farm land, which is no longer available, will benefit the area when it will undoubtedly have a devastating effect on local farmers and residents. If the Central Route is chosen, it needs to be highly modified to utilize existing routes and therefore maintain the productivity and drainage systems currently in use as much as possible. Of course this will be true of any route chosen. It seems to me that the Eastern Route would be more beneficial to a larger area of the entire Delta region.

I would greatly appreciate your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Henry Park Hiter, Jr.

Henry Park Hiter, Jr.
Hiter Farms
P.O. Box 305
Merigold, Ms. 38759
662-748-2424
662-588-7834



December 30, 2004

Mr. Robert Walker
I-69 Project Manager
P O Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39225-2625

Re: I-69 Project

Dear Mr. Walker:

I have been in the farming business with my family for over 40 years. If the Central Route is chosen for the I-69, it will not only affect our prime farming land, but farm lands all across the Mississippi Delta. Our farmlands have been precision leveled so they can be irrigable, and the land has a great agricultural base

I think that the Eastern route that has been proposed would be much more beneficial to the economic growth of this area. This route would be on the Eastern side of Cleveland and would be nearer to the industrial area of Cleveland. This route would benefit Sunflower County and Bolivar County, and not just Cleveland, MS.

I know that good roads and highways do help communities grow, but if the Central Route is chosen, it will affect the livelihood of my family and other families as well.

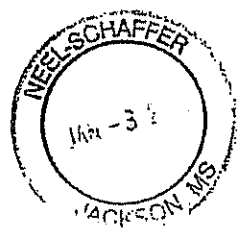
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jack Howarth

Jack Howarth

NEEL-SCHAFFER
JACKSON, MS



December 27, 2004

Mr. Robert R. Walker, P.E.
Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
Engineers – Planners
P.O. Box 22625
Jackson, MS 39202

Re: I-69

Dear Mr. Walker:

I recently attended one of the Public Hearings where MDOT presented several options for the I-69 through Bolivar County. The Central route is directly on the property that is co-owned by my brother and myself. This land has been in my family for many generations and has also been precisional leveled and has a tremendous agriculture base. The fields are square and irrigable and this land has a high productivity for this area. In order for our land to be in this top condition has not come cheap. The Central route will take over 150 acres of our farmland and leave cut up and odd shapes in the remainder of the fields.

Several years ago when the West bypass of Highway 61 was being built, my brother and I lost 40 acres of our land. The land that was left on either side of the 40 acres was virtually worthless from a productive agriculture state. The productivity dropped about 30% on the remainder of the property because of the angles the highway took.

I think that the Eastern route would be more beneficial to economic growth and faster transportation and divide whatever prosperity I-69 will bring to this area shared with businesses and agriculture in Sunflower and Bolivar County.

The Western Route is the straightest and stays on section lines better than the other two routes.

I understand that people in the Cleveland community are looking after their interest, but they need to take into consideration the "whole" Mississippi Delta. I am not against the I-69, but it is very difficult as a landowner to have other interest groups decide the fate of my livelihood for my family with the majority of these people having no economic loss involved.

I believe that newly constructed highways here in the Mississippi Delta should take the straightest route without any ridiculous crooks and turns to benefit towns and special interest groups The purpose of the I-69 is to support the movement of commodities, specifically goods and materials, faster and more efficient

Sincerely,

Lex Davis
Lex Davis

Beth Davis
Beth Davis

/lcd

Delma Furniss
Post Office Box 104
195 Bobo-Rena Lara Road
Rena Lara, Mississippi 38767

Mississippi House of Representatives 1984-1993
Mississippi Senate 1993-2003

Telephone: 662-624-8687
E-Mail: furnissd@bellsouth.net

April 1, 2005

Mr. E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer
Mississippi Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Dear Mr. Barnwell:

Thank you so very much for your letters of January 27, 2005 and March 14, 2005 (copies enclosed) in response to my earlier letters and comments concerning my strong support for the I-69 Western Alternative in the vicinity of the new Welcome Center near Lula.

I am so pleased that you and MDOT are supporting and pursuing the Western Alternative at this time. It is so very important for our entire region that the Western Alternative in this particular area be adopted so the traveling public will have easy access to the new Welcome Center. The other alternative will make it very difficult for the I-69 traveling public to stop and make use of the new Welcome Center.

I realize and understand that adopting this preferred Western Alternative depends a great deal on whether the archaeological conditions along the Western Alternative can be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate agencies and the Native American tribes who are participating in the review of the I-69 route.

The Native Americans have been very helpful and extremely cooperative during the entire process of archaeological work at the Welcome Center site and during the construction of the Welcome Center. I believe their support and understanding will continue through this last step of selecting this preferred Western Alternative in this Welcome Center area.

RECEIVED
APR 0 6 2005
Neel-Schaffer Inc.

Once again I would like to emphasize what I believe should be given very strong consideration in support of the preferred Western Alternative in regard to archaeological conditions in this particular area.

The archaeological conditions in the preferred Western Alternative are already mostly known and the "new" area needs for I-69 will be very limited. On the other hand, the shared Central and Eastern alternative would require several miles and many acres of "new" area that very likely will unearth many new, extensive archaeological findings that would require complex mitigation and excessive cost. Adopting the Western Alternative in this area, I believe, will result in much less mitigation.

Again, I thank you and MDOT for supporting and pursuing the Western Alternative in the vicinity of the new Welcome Center. And I thank all of you again for all your help in getting the new Welcome Center constructed, open and operating. It is such a wonderful facility and is meeting such a great need in our area.

Sincerely,

Delma Furniss

Delma Furniss

cc:
The Honorable William "Bill" Minor, Northern District Commissioner, MTC
The Honorable Dick Hall, Central District Commissioner, MTC
The Honorable Wayne H. Brown, Southern District Commissioner, MTC
Mr. Larry L. "Butch" Brown, Executive Director, MDOT
Mr. Harry Lee Jones, Deputy Director/Chief Engineer, MDOT
Mr. David Foster, Asst. Chief Engineer—Preconstruction, MDOT
Mr. James Q. Dickerson, III, District 2 Engineer, MDOT
Mr. Walter G. Lyons, District 3 Engineer, MDOT
Mr. Robert Walker, Project Manager, Neel-Schaffer, Inc.
Other Interested Parties

Villiam R. "Bill" Minor
lorthern District Commissioner

lick Hall
entral District Commissioner

Vayne H. Brown
outhern District Commissioner

MDOT
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Larry L. "Butch" Brown
Executive Director

Harry Lee James
Deputy Executive Director/
Chief Engineer

Brenda Znachko
Deputy Executive Director/
Administration

P. O. Box 1850 / Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1850 / Telephone (601) 359-7001 / FAX (601) 359-7110 / www.goMDOT.com

January 27, 2005

Copy

The Honorable Delma Furniss
Senator
P.O. Box 104
195 Bobo-Rena Lara Road
Rena Lara, MS 38767

Re: Project Number NCPD-1069-00(001)103104-101000
Interstate 69 from Robinsonville to Benoit, Segment of Independent Utility (SIU) # 11
Bolivar, Coahoma, Tunica, and Sunflower Counties

Dear Senator Furniss:

Thank you for your recent letter and the comments provided at public hearing, expressing support for the Western Alternative in the vicinity of the US 49 Welcome Center, which is located slightly west of US 61 in Coahoma County and named in your honor.

Because of the known archaeological features adjacent to US 61 in the vicinity of the US 49 intersection servicing the Welcome Center and other natural and human environmental constraints that were known north of the intersection near the Welcome Center where US 49 and US 61 separate, it was dictated early in this study that more than one alternative would be considered for connecting I-69 to US 49 in the vicinity of the Welcome Center. MDOT's consultants developed and performed the necessary studies to establish the shared Central and Eastern corridor, which is an acceptable alternative from an archaeological perspective.

You are correct in that the Western Alternative passes closer to the Welcome Center, and that the Western Alternative will make the Welcome Center easier for the I-69 traffic to access than the shared Central and Eastern alternative concept. However, there are still issues pertaining to the Western Alternative that need to be addressed; for example, determining if the archaeological conditions along the Western Alternative can be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate resource agencies and the Native American tribes who are participating in the review of this document as well as to the satisfaction of MDOT. If it is determined that the archaeology along the Western Alternative cannot be mitigated to the satisfaction of the agencies, the Native Americans, and the MDOT, MDOT would likely have to consider the shared Central and Eastern corridor. This corridor would require evaluation of providing the interstate motorist good access to the Welcome Center.

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Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

In summary, the Western Alternative as designed affords the interstate motorists convenient access to the Welcome Center. We will continue to work towards selecting the preferred alternative and we will keep you abreast throughout the decision-making process. If we can be of any assistance in the meantime, please let us know.

Sincerely,

E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer

ECB:KDT:tbs

pc: The Honorable Wayne H. Brown, Chairman & Southern District Commissioner, MTC
The Honorable William "Bill" Minor, Northern District Commissioner, MTC
The Honorable Dick Hall, Central District Commissioner, MTC
Mr. Larry L. "Butch" Brown, Executive Director, MDOT
Mr. Harry Lee James, Deputy Director/Chief Engineer, MDOT
Mr. David Foster, Asst. Chief Engineer – Preconstruction, MDOT
Mr. James Q. Dickerson, III, District 2 Engineer, MDOT
Mr. Walter G. Lyons, District 3 Engineer, MDOT
Mr. Robert Walker, Project Manager, Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

MDOT

ENVIRONMENTAL/LOCATION DIVISION

401 North West Street, Jackson, MS 39201

Date: 1-26-05

Fax To: Jimmy Shirley
N-S

From: Kim Thurman

RE: I-69

Tele: 601-359-7920
Fax: 601-359-7355

No. Pages: 4
(Including Cover Sheet)

Jimmy,

Please call me if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Kim

Delma Furniss
Post Office Box 104
195 Bobo-Rena Lara Road
Rena Lara, Mississippi 38767

Mississippi House of Representatives 1984-1993
Mississippi Senate 1993-2003

Telephone: 662-624-8687
E-Mail: furnissd@bellsouth.net

JANUARY 7, 2005

COMMISSIONER BILL MINOR
COMMISSIONER DICK HALL
COMMISSIONER WAYNE BROWN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BUTCH BROWN
ENVIRONMENTALIST CLAIBORNE BARNWELL
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
POST OFFICE BOX 1850
JACKSON, MS 39215-1850

DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES:

I WISH TO THANK ALL OF YOU AGAIN FOR ALL YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT IN GETTING THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION UP AND RUNNING. IT IS REALLY GREAT AND IS GOING TO BE A WONDERFUL ASSET TO OUR REGION AND OUR ENTIRE STATE. AND NOW I NEED YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT AGAIN. IN THE HOSPITALITY STATION AREA NEAR LULA THERE ARE TWO I-69 ALTERNATIVES PROPOSED. THE ONE I STRONGLY SUPPORT (AND MOST OF THE PEOPLE IN OUR AREA ALSO SUPPORT) IS THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE. THIS WESTERN ALTERNATIVE WOULD USE THE PRESENT Hy 61 IN FRONT OF THE HOSPITALITY STATION. THIS WOULD PROVIDE EASY ACCESS TO THE HOSPITALITY STATION.

WE STRONGLY OPPOSE THE OTHER ALTERNATIVE IN THIS AREA (CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE) AS I-69 WILL BYPASS THE HOSPITALITY STATION IF THIS CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IS USED. WE NEED EASY ACCESS (THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE) TO THE HOSPITALITY STATION.

THE ENCLOSED COPY OF MY COMMENTS TO I-69 PROJECT MANAGER ROBERT WALKER MORE FULLY EXPRESSES MY SUPPORT FOR THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN THE HOSPITALITY STATION AREA.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION AND SUPPORT FOR THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN THIS PARTICULAR AREA. IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO OUR ENTIRE REGION AND TO STATE TOURISM AS A WHOLE. SINCERELY, Delma Furniss

ENCLOSURE

COMMENT SHEET

PUBLIC HEARINGS
DECEMBER 13-16, 2004
BENOIT, CLEVELAND, CLARKSDALE AND TUNICA, MS

I-69 SECTION 11 – ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 12-15-03 04

NAME: DELMA FURNISS

ADDRESS: P.O BOX 104
195 BOBO-REMA LAURA ROAD
REMA LAURA, MS 38767

COMMENTS: MY COMMENTS APPLY ONLY TO THAT SEGMENT OF PROPOSED I-69 NEAR LULAMS IN FRONT OF THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION. I STRONGLY URGE THAT THE PRESENT U.S. 61 TO BE USED AS I-69 IN FRONT OF THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION. ON THE MAP THIS IS LISTED AS THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN FRONT OF THE HOSPITALITY STATION. ONE MAIN REASON I URGE YOU TO SUPPORT THE PRESENT U.S. 61 IN FRONT OF THE HOSPITALITY STATION IS SO THE HOSPITALITY STATION WILL BE EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO VISITORS AND TOURISTS. IF THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IS USED, IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR VISITORS AND TOURISTS TO GET OFF I-69 TO THE HOSPITALITY STATION -- IT SEEMS THEY WOULD HAVE TO GET OFF I-69 ON TO HY. 315, THEN CROSS HY 61, THEN ON TO HY 49, THEN TO THE HOSPITALITY STATION. THIS WOULD MAKE IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR VISITORS AND TOURISTS TO USE THE HOSPITALITY STATION. WE NEED ALL THE VISITORS AND TOURISTS THAT WE CAN GET TO STOP IN MISSISSIPPI.

After completing the above information, please fold, staple and place stamp as indicated on the back of this form and mail to Mr. Robert Walker, I-69 Project Manager.

I AM STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE CENTRAL ALTERNATIVE IN THIS PARTICULAR AREA. I STRONGLY SUPPORT THE WESTERN ALTERNATIVE IN THIS AREA FOR EASY ACCESS TO THE NEW HOSPITALITY STATION. PLEASE SEE PAGE 2 ENCLOSED.

Pg. 2.
Delma Furniss
12-15-03 04

Some Concern as Been Expressed That Native American Artifacts may be encountered on the Western Alternative and that may cause some delay. I am convinced that the opposite is true. I believe that much, much more Native American Artifacts will be encountered if the Central Alternative is used. The Central Alternative in this area will be all new construction and the chances to encounter Native American Artifacts is much, much greater. There may be miles of Native American Artifacts. If the present U.S. 61 (Western Alternative) is used in this particular area, the chances of encountering Native American Artifacts will be much, much less. By using this Western Alternative in this area, U.S. 61 is already there, it just needs upgrading. This upgrading of present U.S. 61 will probably not encounter any Native American Artifacts -- but very little, if any.

I also support the Western Alternative because there will only be one interchange at this location -- I-69 (Hy 61) + Hy 49 + Hy 315. If the Central Alternative is used there would have to be two interchanges at this location -- the one described above and also a new one on the Central Alternative. I urge you to adopt the present U.S. 61 (Western Alternative) in front of the new Hospitality Station -- Thank you -- Delma Furniss

William R. "Bill" Minor
Northern District Commissioner

Dick Hall
Central District Commissioner

Wayne H. Brown
Southern District Commissioner

MDOT
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Larry L. "Butch" Brown
Executive Director

Harry Lee James
Deputy Executive Director/
Chief Engineer

Brenda Znachko
Deputy Executive Director/
Administration

P. O. Box 1850 / Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1850 / Telephone (601) 359-7001 / FAX (601) 359-7110 / www.goMDOT.com

March 14, 2005

Copy

Mr. Delma Furniss
P.O. Box 104
195 Bobo-Rena Lara Road
Rena Lara, MS 38767

Re: Interstate 69 Project Study, SIU 11
From the SR 304 Spur near Robinsonville
To the Great River Bridge near Benoit

Dear Mr. Furniss:

Reference is made to your recent letter and the public hearing comment forms you submitted expressing support for the Western Alternative in the vicinity of the US 49 Welcome Center, which is located slightly west of US 61 in Coahoma County and named in your honor.

The Middle Section of this study is located from the southern portion of the Clarksdale Bypass to slightly north of the Coahoma-Rich Road, and the Middle Section has only one alternative which uses as much of the existing US 61 and the shared US 49-US 61 corridor as possible. Because of the known archaeological findings adjacent to US 61 in the vicinity of the US 49 intersection servicing the Welcome Center and other natural and human environmental constraints that were known north of the intersection near the Welcome Center where US 49 and US 61 separate, it was decided early in this study that more than one alternative was needed for connecting I-69 to US 49 in the vicinity of the Welcome Center. Therefore, the change from the one alternative in the Middle Section to the three alternatives studied for the Northern Section occurs at a point on US 61 slightly north of the Coahoma-Rich Road.

In the southern part of the Northern Section, the Western Alternative proceeds north using the existing US 49-US 61 corridor to the intersection with US 49. North of the US 49 intersection, the Western Alternative continues to use the US 61 corridor until near Dundee in Tunica County where the alternative leaves the US 61 corridor and proceeds northeast on new location.

In the southern part of the Northern Section, the Central and Eastern alternatives share the same corridor. South of the US 49 intersection, the shared corridor leaves the US 49-US 61 corridor on new location. The shared alternative proceeds northeast on new location on a routing that passes the corridor a sufficient distance to provide an interchange with a new US 49 connector slightly southeast of the intersection where US 49 and US 61 join.

Because of the known archaeology that exists on the Western Alternative along US 61 in this area, the

MDOT's consultants have performed the necessary studies to verify the shared Central and Eastern corridor is an acceptable alternative from an archaeological perspective.

The Western Alternative will have an interchange at the current US 61-US 49 intersection. The shared Central and Eastern alternative would require an extension of US 49 across US 61 to an interchange with I-69. Because the shared Central and Eastern alternative becomes concurrent with US 61 slightly south of the US 49 intersection, there will not be any through US 61 northbound traffic at the current US 49 intersection, and through southbound US 61 traffic will be required to turn east on the US 49 connector to continue southbound on the overlapping section of I-69, US 61, and US 49. For the shared Central and Eastern alternative, the I-69 traffic exiting to the Welcome Center would have to use the US 49 connector to cross US 61 to access the Welcome Center.

You are correct in that the Western Alternative passes closer to the Welcome Center, and that the Western Alternative will make the Welcome Center easier for the I-69 traffic to access than the shared Central and Eastern alternative concept. For this reason, the MDOT at this time also supports pursuing the Western Alternative over the other concept. However, this support can only be maintained if it is determined the archaeological conditions along the Western Alternative can be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate agencies and the Native American tribes who are participating in the review of this document and to the satisfaction of the MDOT. If the archaeology along the Western Alternative cannot be mitigated to the satisfaction of the agencies, the Native Americans, and the MDOT, the MDOT must pursue the shared Central and Eastern corridor, and evaluate available options for providing the interstate motorist good access to the Welcome Center.

In summary, we agree with you that the Western Alternative is a better alternative for the interstate motorist to access the Welcome Center, and we intend to work towards recommending the Western Alternative as the Preferred Alternative in this area. If the archaeological conditions of the Western Alternative cannot be mitigated, or the cost to perform the required mitigation is excessive, the shared Central and Eastern alternatives would be pursued in a manner that would provide the interstate motorist good access to the Welcome Center.

We intend to notify you when a decision is made on which alternative will be used in this area. If we can be of any assistance in the meantime, please let us know.

Sincerely,

E. Claiborne Barnwell
Environmental Division Engineer

Cc: Mr. Larry L. "Butch" Brown, Executive Director
Mr. Harry L. James, Deputy Director/Chief Engineer
Mr. Jimmy Dickerson, District Engineer, Batesville
Mr. David Foster, Asst. Chief Engineer-Preconstruction
Mr. Robert Walker, Neel-Schaffer

Appendix D
Public Involvement

Comment response summary

ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTIONS

EASTERN LOOP ALTERNATIVE / SR8 CONNECTOR

There were numerous comments that requested a combination of the Eastern and Central Alternatives between Merigold and Cleveland in the Southern Section. This combination, called the Eastern Loop or Modified Eastern Alternative, had previously been eliminated. However, following the DEIS public hearing there were numerous requests that further study be given to the possibility of an Eastern Loop alternative around Cleveland that would branch off the Central Alternative at Merigold and go east of Cleveland to join the Eastern Alternative. As part of the Eastern Loop Alternative, it was suggested that a Western Highway 8 Connector from Merigold be included for the Port of Rosedale. The project team's re-assessment of the project is described below.

Response:

At the Initial Series of Public Meetings held in September 2001, the project team presented a combination of the Central and Eastern Alternatives. The combination alternative would use US 61, or the Central Alternative, north of Merigold and connect to the Eastern Alternative in the vicinity of the Steam Plant between Merigold and SR 8. At that time, the connecting segment between these two alternatives was referred to as Segment B5.

After the Initial Series of Public Meetings, comments from the public were reviewed, further coordination occurred between the project team and the appropriate state and federal resource agencies, and decisions were made on the alternative corridors that would be taken forward for detailed study.

During the process of selecting the alternative corridors for presentation at the Second Series of Public Meetings, the alternative corridor Segment B5 was eliminated for some of the following reasons:

- The support that Segment B5 received in response to the Initial Series of Public Meetings was generally from people with connections to Sunflower County or by Bolivar County residents whose family's property was directly impacted by a crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland.
- For a through interstate motorist not having Cleveland as a destination, it is approximately five miles shorter to use the Central Alternative than the B5 Segment. Based on the projected traffic for the 2030 Design Year of 26,000 vehicles per day, an additional five miles of travel will result in a substantial increased cost to these road users.
- The people with Sunflower County interests were requesting an alternative that crossed SR 8 east of Cleveland and proceeded north on new location to pass as close as possible to the State Penal Farm.
- The local governmental officials in the Cleveland area were supporting a crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland over a crossing of SR 8 to the east of Cleveland.
- To limit the number of alternatives in the Southern Section to three distinct alternatives and avoid the cost associated with further studying alternatives that lacked public support.

A Third Series of Public Meetings were held on April 30 and May 1, 2003. In response to the Third Series of Public Meetings, the project team was not asked, nor did they deem it necessary, to reconsider the B5 Segment to connect the Eastern and Central Alternatives.

After the Third Series of Public Meetings the project team was confident of the alternatives recommended and selected for detailed study. The DEIS was approved for presentation at the public hearings, and the Series of Public Hearings held n December 2004.

In response to the DEIS Public Hearings, a number of comments were received suggesting a new alternative be considered by connecting the Eastern Alternative north of SR 8 to the Central Alternative at Merigold. As part of the review of the Modified Eastern Alternative, it was requested that a connector to SR 8 West from Merigold be included in the analysis. This SR 8 West Connector was suggested to provide southbound traffic on I-69 and US 61 good access to the Port of Rosedale.

After the DEIS Public Hearings were conducted, the project team adjusted the Central Alternative from the Litton Road area to Merigold. By making these adjustments less prime farmland was divided, residential relocations reduced, more length of parallel county roads were incorporated as frontage roads, and an overall improved alternative was obtained. This became known as the Modified Central Alternative.

A study was conducted **comparing** the Modified Eastern Alternative with the Modified Central Alternative in the Southern Section. The results of this comparison study showed that the Modified Eastern Alternative was not a better alternative than the Modified Central Alternative.

Furthermore, in regards to SR 8, in August of 2004, the project team was provided a survey of a 57 residential lot subdivision and golf course development proposed for the south side of SR 8. It would be located in the same general location as the Eastern Alternative Interchange's for SR 8. It is important to note that the comparison study of these two modified alternatives does not take into account that avoiding most of the 57 residential lots and the golf course would require moving the Eastern Alternative to near the western property line of the development, relocating SR 8 to overlap the county road immediately north of SR 8, and placing the interchange all on the north side of relocated SR 8. Additional discussion on the elimination of the Modified Eastern Alternative and the survey results are in the "Elimination of the Eastern Loop Alternative" section of Appendix D.

Other Previously Eliminated Alternative Suggestions:
The following were alternatives suggested at or following the DEIS public hearing that were previously eliminated:

- An alternative that would cross Lake Bolivar at Pat Specter Cemetery, then go west of Benoit to the section line just north of Benoit, then go south of Dahomey, and then continue east to the central alternative.
- An alternative that would turn southwest from near Shelby, cross SR 8 at Symonds/Malvina, hit SR 1 south of Beulah, turn southwest at Dahomey, and go west of Benoit to the upper part of Lake Bolivar.
- An alternative closer to Gunnison, Pace, Beulah, and Rosedale.

Response: Due to planned expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, these alternatives were eliminated. In addition, an alternative west of SR 1 and south of Litton Road east of SR 1 would add unnecessary mileage by creating an out of direction loop around Benoit.

Segment Consideration
Comment: Consider the support for Segments B1-B2-B3-B10-B13-B15-C2-C4

Response: The above segments, as described in the EIS, were given due consideration when deciding on the Preferred Alternative.

Pace Bypass
Comment: The Pace Bypass Alternative as it would have more impacts.

Response: As a result of the Public Hearing comments received on the SR 8 widening in the vicinity of Pace and because considering the Pace Bypass alternative would open a new environmental corridor, the Pace Bypass Alternative was eliminated. The Preferred Alternative **would widen SR 8 along the existing alignment at Pace**.

US 61 Route in Tunica
Comment: Consider having the Western Alternative continue north along US 61 to the SR 4 East intersection before proceeding northeast on new location around Tunica.

Response: The following are some of the reasons **for being** unable to comply with **the** request to extend the Western Alternative north along US 61 to the SR 4 East intersection near Tunica:

- Due to the constraints that exist north and south of SR 4 East, the present location of the Western Alternative interchange with SR 4 East is the closest point to US 61 at which an interchange can be recommended. This recommended interchange location is in the curve approximately 3 miles east of US 61 near Limerick Road.
- With the SR 4 East Interchange location as a control and based on the opportunities and constraints that the human and natural environment provides for developing a Western Alternative corridor along US 61, the Western Alternative needs to leave US 61 at its present location.

Jonestown-Coahoma Interchange
Comment: Please describe the current location of the proposed interchange providing service to Jonestown, Coahoma, SR 1, and Friars Point in Coahoma County in the project's Middle Section.

Response: This interchange was originally located in a manner that centered it on the existing intersection. Archaeologists discovered sites that they recommended for avoidance. Therefore, modifications were made to the original Jonestown Interchange. The modified concept was developed to better accommodate the interchange's traffic, lessen farmland impacts, and to create an interchange that would align with the crossroad in a manner that would avoid archaeological resources. The MDAH representatives reviewed the modified concept and gave their concurrence. The modified interchange is part of the Preferred Alternative.

Mound Bayou Interchange
Comment: Consider moving the Mound Bayou interchange north to the main US 61 intersection servicing the City at West Mound Bayou Street.

Response: West Mound Bayou Street between US 61 and Old US 61 is primarily a residential street. An interchange at West Bayou Street would generate more traffic over this residential street because it would be the most direct route for east-west traffic to enter and exit the interstate between present US 61 and Old US 61.

For safety and traffic operations concerns, increasing traffic on West Mound Bayou Street between US 61 and Old US 61 was not in the best interest of the residents who live on West Mound Bayou Street or the citizens of Mound Bayou. Instead, the interchange was located approximately three quarters of a mile south of West Mound Street and **a new high quality connector was provided to the east between the I-69 / US 61 Interchange and Old US 61**. The project team's plan provided a bridge at West Mound Street over the interstate, and a frontage road on the east and west side of the interstate to provide good access between the new connector road and West Mound Street. The project team's plan also minimizes the number of people whose residence or business would have

to be relocated if the interchange were provided at West Mound Street, and the plan provides new areas for economic development.

Welcome Center Comment

Comment: I-69 should follow the Western Alternative in the vicinity of the US 49 Welcome Center near Lula. The Western Alternative is located closer and provides easier access to the Welcome Center near Lula. Being closer to the Welcome Center could generate more tourists.

Response: Known archaeological sites exist on the Western Alternative in this area. The archaeological conditions of the Western Alternative cannot be mitigated/the cost to perform the required mitigation is excessive. The Preferred Alternative is an acceptable alternative from an archaeological perspective and would provide the interstate motorist good access to the Welcome Center.

FARMLAND

Quality Farmland Impact/ Central Alternative Modification

Consider modifying Central Alternative between Litton Road and Merigold to **lessen prime farmland impacts and to divide farmland impacts more equitably between landowners**.

Response:

Since the DEIS public hearing, the alternatives crossing SR 8 west and east of Cleveland have been reviewed, not only relatively to quality farmland impacts but other impacts as well. Modifications were made between the Litton Road area to Merigold. By making these adjustments, less prime farmland would be divided, the residences requiring relocation were reduced, more length of parallel county roads were incorporated as frontage roads, and an overall improved alternative was obtained. These modifications are part of the Preferred Alternative.

Alternative Development / Access

Comment: Please identify the approach used **for addressing impacts associated with** disruptions to neighborhoods, farming operations and community cohesion. Maximum consideration should be given to providing frontage roads, overpasses, etc to farmland that will be divided by the interstate.

Response: Within the human and natural environments opportunities and constraints, the following approach was used to develop the alternatives in a manner that took into account disruptions to neighborhoods or farming operations, community cohesion, and possible frontage roads.

- Alternative corridors were generally placed at the fringe areas of municipalities and communities, and a grade separation bridge or interchange was placed at a nearby U.S. highway, state highway, or county road to provide access for local traffic to cross the interstate;
- The typical spacing between interchanges or grade separations was kept to nor more than two miles when a property owner's access to the other side of the interstate was divided;
- In most cases where county road bridges were proposed, the county roads would be bridged over the interstate. This approach meant only one bridge would be needed instead of the two bridges that would be required if the interstate were taken over the county roads;
- The alternative corridors were placed adjacent to or nearby the existing road network. This approach maintained existing traffic patters, lessened, the need for providing frontage roads, and was an effort to lessen the impact to farming operations divided by the interstate;
- The locations of primary drainage ditches were considered when refining the alternatives because these ditches tend to naturally divide farming operations; and

- When bisecting of farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative. The property retained by the owner after the I-69 right of way was acquired could then hopefully be large enough to farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would be an uneconomical remnant.

It was recognized from the beginning of this study that the Farmer/Producer needs were very important, and the following are some of the measures that were used to address these needs.

- As much as the natural and human environmental constraints allowed, the I-69 alternatives were developed along property lines to avoid dividing farmland.
- When the natural and human environmental constraints prevented an alternative from being placed on a property line and dividing farmland was unavoidable, efforts were made to locate the alternative as close as possible to parallel drainage ditches, because these ditches tend to naturally divide farming operations; and, efforts were also made to locate the alternative in a manner that would not leave the landowner an uneconomical remnant of property on one or both sides of the interstate.
- Alternatives were located in a manner that the existing county road network, needed frontage roads, and bridges at county road crossings of the interstate could provide a means for the Farmer/Producer to access property owned on both sides of the interstate.
- Interchanges were proposed on reasonable spacings to provide the local traffic good access to the interstate.

The following describes the frontage road concept used for new location alternatives and for alternatives using US 61.

- For new location alternatives, the alternatives followed and paralleled the county roads when possible.
- When new location alternative were proceeding east to west or north to south, efforts were made to follow section lines and property lines as much as possible to eliminate the need for providing frontage roads.
- For new location alternatives, a combination of parallel county roads and added frontage roads was used in conjunction with the grade separation bridges and interchanges as the means of providing access to large parcels of property divided by alternatives.
- For alternatives using US 61, one of the two lanes of US 61 would become a frontage road and the other set of lanes of US 61 would be reconstructed to become one of the sets of lanes for I-69.

Farmland breakup

Comment: Consider adjustments to the Crenshaw Road Interchange to lessen impact on farmland.
Response: Very little, if any, adjustments can be made at the Crenshaw Road Interchange to lessen farmland impact. The relocation of Crenshaw Road at this interchange location is necessary for the following reasons:

- to provide an acceptable interchange crossing that will meet design standards;
- to avoid the aviation airstrip in the interchange's northwest quadrant;
- to avoid the farm headquarters in the interchange's northeast quadrant;
- to connect an East Frontage Road to Bill Pegram Road in the interchange's northeast quadrant;
- to join and have Bill Pegram Road serve as an East Frontage Road as the alternative continues north; and,
- to avoid known archaeological sites along the east side of Bill Pegram Road north of the interchange.

The Preferred Alternative (NSCA) has an interchange at relocated Crenshaw Road and a bridge over the interstate at Six Mile Lake Road. The distance between these two county road crossings is approximately two and a quarter miles. Our records indicate Taylor Road crosses the Preferred Alternative roughly halfway between the alternative's crossings of relocated Crenshaw Road. To address local access needs and the dividing farmland in accordance with the procedures described above, the following revisions will be made in the alternative between the Six Mile Lake Bridge and the Crenshaw Road Interchange.

- A bridge will be added to take Taylor Road over the interstate; and,
- The East Frontage Road in the southeast quadrant of the interchange will be eliminated.

COST

Comment: Please explain why the Central Alternative would be less expensive than the Eastern or Western Alternatives.

Response: A modified version of the Central Alternative was chosen as the Preferred Alternative. It is cheaper than the Eastern and Western alternatives for the following reasons:

- It uses as much of US 61 as possible between Merigold and the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line. When using US 61 in the Southern Section for I-69, the existing northbound lanes of US 61 would become the southbound lanes of I-69, the existing southbound lanes would become a two-lane West Frontage Road, and the I-69 northbound lanes and any needed East Frontage Road would be constructed to the east of US 61. When comparing the cost of acquiring the needed right of way, and completing the grading, drainage, and paving work for building a complete facility on new location with the cost of building a facility on existing alignment where much of the needed right of way, and grading, drainage, and paving work has already been accomplished, there are cost savings.
- Although the Preferred Alternative has more interchanges, the cost of providing adequate connecting roads to the interchanges for the Western Alternative and Eastern Alternative more than offset the interchange costs for the Preferred Alternative.
- When highway and bridge contracts are built on new location, contractors must take into account in their bid a cost of repairing any damage to access roads the contractor causes when building the project. County roads are usually not capable of supporting the volume of high weight construction traffic that road-working contracts generate. Any increase in maintenance of traffic costs associated with using US 61 would probably be offset by the cost bidders must include for repairing damage they cause to roads accessing the project.
- When the Preferred Alternative uses US 61, the construction plan would maintain four-lane traffic during most of the construction except when single lane closures were needed to perform work on a shoulder. Flagging operations requiring traffic to stop would only be used in short-term or emergency situations
- **Either the southbound or the northbound lanes of US 61 would become a continuous frontage road. The continuous frontage road addresses farmland access needs, provides economic development potential, and could serve as a detour should the mainline interstate be closed**.

Cost Clover Leaves/Controlled Access

Comment: As far as the Central Alternative saving in construction cost, why not stay on Highway 61 and build clover leaves and make it controlled access?

Response: Except for the segment from the north part of Shelby to the south part of the Hushpuckena community, the Central Alternative, the Preferred Alternative in this section of the project, would utilize US 61 between Merigold and the Bolivar-Coahoma County Line. To maintain four-lane traffic during the conversion of US 61 to I-69, a construction sequencing would

be required that would eventually result in the southbound lanes of US 61 becoming a two-way, West Frontage Road for I-69, the northbound lanes of US 61 becoming the southbound lanes of I-69, and the northbound lanes of I-69 and any needed East Frontage Road being constructed to the east of the existing northbound lanes of US 61. When the conversion of US 61 to I-69 would be completed, traffic would only be allowed to access I-69 at interchange locations.

Litton Road Access / Cost

Comment: For the I-69 corridor, existing Litton Road should be the access road rather than constructing a new access road. The new access road would destroy prime acres of farmland and cost millions of dollars in unnecessary expenditures.

Response: Based on the traffic projections, a four-lane connector would be needed for the Central and Western alternatives from an interchange at Litton Road to US 61 north of Shaw, where an interchange would also be needed. The severe crossing angle at Litton Road for the Central and Western Alternatives requires Litton Road to be relocated within the limits of the interchange in order to provide an acceptable crossing angle meeting design standards. The severe angle in which these two alternatives cross Litton Road is caused by the limited crossing locations – due to archaeological findings – that are available between Litton Road and SR 448 at the Bogue Phalia, the location of the natural gas pipeline crossing of Litton Road east of the proposed interchange, and the interchange crossing location of SR 446 slightly west of Skene. There is a church with adjoining cemetery, several residences, and a farm headquarters that serve as constraints to four-laning Litton Road along existing alignment outside of that portion of Litton Road that would have to be relocated within the limits of the interchange. Upgrading Litton Road to four-lane standards would also cause serious disruptions to the local traffic, require detours to upgrade bridges unless the road was closed, and still require relocating Litton Road at the Litton Road interchange. Based on these findings, the new four-lane connector between the Litton Road Interchange and the US 61 Interchange north of Shaw will remain the recommended connector instead of trying to upgrade Litton Road to four-lanes and have Litton Road serve as the connector.

PROPERTY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Residential Relocation

Comment: What determines a residential relocation?
Response: Residences located within the right-of-way required to construct the project would be relocated; and, in some instances, residences could also be relocated if the project's design results in eliminating the access to the residence. If the corridor passes through a property requiring the MDOT to acquire some or all of the property, the appraisal and acquisition are addressed in accordance with Federal Law.

Property Values

Comment: Will the I-69 corridor cause property values to increase or decrease?
Response: It is impossible for us to predict whether or not land values will drastically increase or decrease because that is dependent upon too many unknown variables. Please be mindful that the completion of this study will result in an approved location for the section of Interstate 69 in Mississippi from near Benoit to near Robinsonville. There is presently not any funding to advance this project to the next stage of developing right of way plans. Before any property can be acquired, residences and businesses relocated, and before any utilities can be adjusted, right-of-way plans are necessary.

Environmental Impacts

Comment: Is there specified distance (east-west) from the interstate where an environmental impact can be anticipated.

Response: This FEIS, as did the DEIS, discusses the methodology used to evaluate environmental impact. Impacts have been addressed within a width of 450 feet for each alternative studied. In addition, there are other impacts outside the 450-foot-wide study area that are also addressed in the DEIS; Noise, Cumulative, and Secondary Impacts are examples.

Emotional Impacts

Comment: Are there results available for assessing the emotional impact that I-69 will have on the individual, the family, and or the household?

Response: The requirements for completing an Environmental Impact Statement were established so that a completed study would fairly balance the negative impacts and positive benefits of the project on the human and natural environments. Emotional impacts are fairly addressed by completing the study in accordance with the study's requirements, and the study does not require the emotional impacts to be measured because these impacts vary too much from individual to individual.

Direct Impacts and Impacts to Adjoining Properties

Comment: Is there information available on the exact number of individuals, families, and or households that will be personally impacted as a direct result of I-69 being in their yards and or farmlands (anywhere from 100 yards to ½ mile) or to those with adjoining properties?

Response: This FEIS, as did the DEIS, provides information on the natural and human environmental impacts of this project. The Noise Section addresses those facilities that would not be relocated by an alternative, but could have a noise impact. These facilities are outside the required right-of-way for the project and are located closer than 300 feet from the nearest traffic lane of the proposed project. It is not necessary to provide a summary of the residences, businesses, etc., located from the extreme limit of the noise study requirement for an alternative to a distance of approximately one-half mile from an alternative. However, the FEIS does reference the locations of residential subdivisions, industrial parks, ect., bordering an alternative.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Comment: Consider moving the alternative further west/east of Cleveland
Response: One of the purposes of I-69 is to enhance the opportunity for economic development in the Lower Mississippi Delta portion of the study area. As part of our study on this section of I-69, an economic study was also conducted. That economic study identified Cleveland and Clarksdale as key cities for creating an environment for economic development opportunities. Not taking into account the human and natural environmental opportunities and constraints that existed in locating an alternative east or west of Cleveland, the economic study determined I-69 should be located as close as possible to Cleveland.

The alternatives were located as close to Cleveland as human and natural environmental constraints allowed. We are unable to move the alternatives any closer to the City because such a move would result in a large increase in the number of people whose residents would require relocation, and result in more noise impacts to residents **living** near the interstate.

Below are some considerations as to why the Preferred Alternative was considered over the Eastern Alternative:

- Although there is an industrial area on the east side of Cleveland, it might not be of sufficient size to accommodate the long-term needs of industrial sites at Cleveland for I-69.
- It is common for industrial areas to develop nearby the airport or near water ports. The Cleveland Airport and the Port at Rosedale are located west of Cleveland.

- Although the Eastern Route crossing of SR 8 is closer to Delta State University than the shared crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland used by the **Western Alternative and Modified Central (Preferred) Alternative**, it could be quicker to travel to Delta State University for the majority of its daily traffic from the crossing of SR 8 west of the city than the one east of the city.
- The Preferred Alternative has a four-lane connector from US 61 north of Shaw to an interchange south of Skene at Litton Road. The connector provides excellent access to Washington County via US 61, as well as Indianola and Greenwood in Sunflower and Leflore counties respectively via SR 448 and US 61. Like Cleveland is a key city in Bolivar County, Indianola and Greenwood are key cities in those two counties.
- It is also important to remember that the needs of the through traffic on the interstate. Out of direction unnecessary length of highway will result in higher construction costs to build the facility, higher cost to the road user after the facility is open to traffic, and higher costs to maintain the facility.
- The Eastern Route has the potential to negatively impact more residences than the Preferred Alternative.

Cleveland-SR 8 Interchange
Comment: Consider moving the alternative as well as SR 8 interchange closer to Cleveland.

Response: The alternative crossings of SR 8 for I-69 at Cleveland were located as close to Cleveland as human and natural environmental constraints allowed. Recognizing that an interchange would have to be provided at the I-69 crossing of SR 8 in the vicinity of Cleveland, the project team analyzed the opportunities and constraints, in both the human and natural environments, that existed north and south of SR 8 to determine the interchange locations. The Preferred Alternative's interchange is approximately two and a half miles west of the Cleveland Airport and approximately four miles east of Pace.

The following are some of the reasons we will be unable to move the interchange for the Western and Central alternatives any further west.

- To provide an environment for stimulating economic development in the Cleveland area, I-69 needs to be as close to Cleveland as possible.
- Along with the Bolivar County Correctional Facility, there are major drainage ditches and two major natural gas pipeline corridors located in the Victor area west of the present SR 8 interchange location for the Western and Central alternatives.
- Moving the interchange to the west to another suitable location would move I-69 farther away from Cleveland, add unnecessary out of direction length to the Western and Central alternatives, and require unnecessary additional crossings of these major drainage ditches and natural gas pipelines.
- The costs associated with moving the interchange to the west cannot be justified.
- Based on the opportunities and constraints, which the human and natural environments provide for the Preferred Alternative north and south of SR 8, the interchange does not need to be any closer to Cleveland.

With the Preferred Alternative, there would be an interchange at the crossing of SR 8 to provide traffic an opportunity to enter and exit the interstate. This would be the only location in this area where traffic would be able to access or exit the interstate. The closest interchange to the north for these two alternatives would be in the vicinity of Hiter Road, and the closest interchange to the south would be at SR 446 near Skene. These two alternatives cross Township Road between SR 8 and Hiter Road. Where these two alternatives cross Township Road, direct access to the interstate would not be allowed; however, a bridge over the interstate would probably be provided to address the need that local traffic would have to travel from one side of the interstate to the other.

TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS OUTSIDE THIS PROJECT

Hiter Road Paving

Comment: There are unpaved parts of Hiter Road that should be paved.
Response: The paving of Hiter Road is not part of this EIS project. The Bolivar County Board of Supervisors is responsible for maintaining Hiter Road.

Connector to Greenville

Comment: I am in support of a connector to Greenville that would join into SR 1.
Response: A connector to Greenville is not part of this EIS project. However, MDOT has another active environmental and location study for the connector.

Suggested Improvements That Are Outside This Project

Comment: The following comments were made in support of transportation projects/ improvements that are not part of this EIS:

- A four-lane connector from I-69 at Shaw to Indianola;
- High priority to four-lane Highway 49 from Clarksdale to Indianola;
- High priority to four-laning Highway 8 from Rosedale to Ruleville;
- Four-lane US 49W between Drew and Ruleville;
- An improved two-lane connector from Merigold to Drew;
- An improved two-lane connector from Shelby to Parchman;
- Highway 448 be four-laned in its entirety;
- Four-lane connector from Clarksdale to Jackson connecting with US 49W at Indianola along SR 448; and
- Improve Highway 32 from Parchman to Shelby.

Response: The above transportation projects/improvements are not part of this EIS. They would require referencing the Laws of the State of Mississippi, and MDOT policies and procedures both statewide and in the Third District. Walter Lyons, the MDOT Third District Engineer has been informed of your support for these projects/improvements.

Mississippi Bridge

Comment: The South Section Eastern Alternative should be used to route I-69 to Greenville and cross the Mississippi Bridge

Response: Section 12 of the Interstate 69 Corridor is defined as the segment from McGhee, Arkansas to the Mississippi River Bridge site near Benoit. Therefore, the western limits of this study on Section 11 of Interstate 69 from near Benoit to near Robinsonville cannot be changed to cross the Mississippi River at the new US 82 Bridge south of Greenville.

Appendix E
Farmland Evaluation Forms

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS-CPA-106
(Rev. 1-91)

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS

PART I *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	3. Date of Land Evaluation Request 5/2/03	4. Sheet 1 of 1
1. Name of Project INTERSTATE 69	5. Federal Agency Involved FHWA	
2. Type of Project INTERSTATE DEVELOPMENT	6. County and State SUNFLOWER COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI	

PART II *(To be completed by NRCS)*	1. Date Request Received by NRCS 5-14-03	2. Person Completing Form TOMMY STEPHENSON
3. Does corridor contain prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form)	YES ☒ NO ☐	4. Acres Irrigated 0 Average Farm Size 2
5. Major Crop(s) SOYBEANS	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres 427,474.00 %	7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres 328,236 74%
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used LESA	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System N/A	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS 05/21/2003

PART III *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	Alternative Corridor For Segment SEA	Corridor B	Corridor C	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	812			
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services	0			
C. Total Acres In Corridor	0 812	0	0	0
PART IV *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information*				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	812			
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland				
C. Percentage Of Farmland In County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted	0.0022738			
D. Percentage Of Farmland In Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value	97			
PART V *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative Value Of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)*	80			

PART VI *(To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))*	Maximum Points				
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15	15			
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10	10			
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20	15			
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	10			
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	10			
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	20			
7. Availability Of Farm Support Services	5	5			
8. On-Farm Investments	20	15			
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25	20			
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	10			
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	0	0	0	0
PART VII *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100				
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	0	0	0	0
TOTAL POINTS *(Total of above 2 lines)*	260	0	0	0	0

1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Reason For Selection:

Signature of Person Completing this Part: DATE

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS-CPA-106
(Rev. 1-91)

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS

PART I *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	3. Date of Land Evaluation Request 6/30/2003	4. Sheet 1 of 2
1. Name of Project INTERSTATE-69 (SIU #11)	5. Federal Agency Involved FHWA	
2. Type of Project INTERSTATE DEVELOPMENT	6. County and State COAHOMA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI	
PART II *(To be completed by NRCS)*	1. Date Request Received by NRCS 05/03/02	2. Person Completing Form CURTIS L. GODFREY
3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form): YES ☑ NO ☐	4. Acres Irrigated / Average Farm Size 117400 / 840 Ac.	
5. Major Crop(s) SOY BEANS	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres: 274,000 % 74%	7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: 234,834 %64%
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used LESA	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System ROUTINE ON-SITE	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS 05/18/04

PART III *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	Alternative Corridor For Segment SSWA	SSEA	NSEA	NCSA
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	1095	1995	289	289
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services				
C. Total Acres In Corridor	0 1095	0 1995	0 289	0 289
PART IV *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information*				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	1095	1995	289	289
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland	0	0	0	0
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted	0.4%	0.7%	0.1%	0.1%
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value	50%	55%	70%	70%
PART V *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)*	80	83	85	85

PART VI *(To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))*	Maximum Points				
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15	15	15	15	15
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10	9	9	9	9
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20	20	20	20	20
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	20	20	20	20
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	10	10	10	10
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	12	12	12	12
7. Availablility Of Farm Support Services	5	5	5	5	5
8. On-Farm Investments	20	14	14	14	14
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25	12	12	12	12
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	9	9	9	9
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	126	126	126	126
PART VII *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	80	83	85	85
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	126	126	126	126
TOTAL POINTS *(Total of above 2 lines)*	260	206	209	211	211

1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used?
			YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Reason For Selection:

Signature of Person Completing this Part: | DATE

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS-CPA-106
(Rev. 1-91)

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS

PART I *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	3. Date of Land Evaluation Request 6/30/2003	4. Sheet 2 of 2
1. Name of Project INTERSTATE-69 (SIU #11)	5. Federal Agency Involved FHWA	
2. Type of Project INTERSTATE DEVELOPMENT	6. County and State COAHOMA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI	
PART II *(To be completed by NRCS)*	1. Date Request Received by NRCS 05/03/04	2. Person Completing Form
3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form). YES ☑ NO ☐	4. Acres Irrigated 117,400	Average Farm Size 840 Ac.
5. Major Crop(s) SOY BEANS	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres: 274,000 % 74%	7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: 234,835 % 64%
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used LESA	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System ROUTINE ON-SITE	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS 05/18/04

PART III *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	Alternative Corridor For Segment			
	SSCA	CSCA	NSWA	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	620	1200	219	
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services	0	0	0	
C. Total Acres In Corridor	620	0 1200	0 219	0
PART IV *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information*				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	620	1200	249	
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland	0	0	0	
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted	0.2%	0.4%	0.09%	
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value	65%	55%	40	
PART V *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)*	75	83	90	

PART VI *(To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))*	Maximum Points				
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15	15	15	15	
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10	9	9	9	
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20	20	20	20	
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	20	20	20	
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	10	10	10	
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	12	12	12	
7. Availablility Of Farm Support Services	5	5	5	5	
8. On-Farm Investments	20	14	14	14	
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25	12	12	12	
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	9	9	9	
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	126	126	126	0
PART VII *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	75	83	90	
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	126	126	126	0
TOTAL POINTS *(Total of above 2 lines)*	260	201	209	216	0

1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Reason For Selection:

Signature of Person Completing this Part: | DATE

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS-CPA-106
(Rev. 1-91)

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS

PART I *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*

3. Date of Land Evaluation Request: 6/30/2003
4. Sheet 1 of 1

1. Name of Project: INTERSTATE 69 - (STU # 11)
5. Federal Agency Involved: FHWA

2. Type of Project: INTERSTATE DEVELOPMENT
6. County and State: TUNICA COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

PART II *(To be completed by NRCS)*

1. Date Request Received by NRCS: 05/03/04
2. Person Completing Form: CURTIS L. GODFREY

3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? YES ☑ NO ☐
(If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form)
4. Acres Irrigated: N/A | Average Farm Size: 1100

5. Major Crop(s): SOY BEANS
6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction: Acres: 182,200 % 67.2
7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA: Acres: 143,020 %53

8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used: LESA
9. Name of Local Site Assessment System: ROUTINE ON-SITE
10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS: 05/18/04

PART III *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*

	Alternative Corridor For Segment NSEA	NSCA	NCWA	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	2609	2802	2696	
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services	0	0	0	
C. Total Acres In Corridor	2609	2802	2696	0
PART IV *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information*				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	2059	2059	2059	
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland	0	0	0	
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted	73	73	73	
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value	45	45	45	
PART V *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)*	87	87	87	
PART VI *(To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))*	Maximum Points			
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15	15	15	15	
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10	9	9	9	
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20	20	20	20	
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	20	20	20	
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	10	10	10	
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	12	12	12	
7. Availablility Of Farm Support Services	5	5	5	5	
8. On-Farm Investments	20	14	14	14	
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25	12	12	12	
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	9	9	9	
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	126	126	126	0
PART VII *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*				
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	87	87	87	
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	126	126	126	0
TOTAL POINTS *(Total of above 2 lines)*	260	213	213	213	0

1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used?
			YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Reason For Selection:

Signature of Person Completing this Part: | DATE

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS-CPA-106
(Rev. 1-91)

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING
FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS

PART I *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*		3. Date of Land Evaluation Request 9/9/03	4. Sheet 1 of 1
1. Name of Project INTERSTATE 69		5. Federal Agency Involved FHWA	
2. Type of Project INTERSTATE DEVELOPMENT		6. County and State SUNFLOWER COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI	
PART II *(To be completed by NRCS)*		1. Date Request Received by NRCS July 3, 2003	2. Person Completing Form David Brunson
3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form)		Yes ☒ No ☐	4. Acres Irrigated — Average Farm Size 35
5. Major Crop(s) Soybeans	6. Farmable Land In Government Jurisdiction: Acres: 447,414 100 %		7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA: Acres: 328,236 74 %
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used LESA	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System N/A		10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS 07/21/2003

PART III *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	Alternative Corridor For Segment SEE Corridor	Corridor B	Corridor C	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	812			
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services	0			
C. Total Acres In Corridor	812	0	0	0
PART IV *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information*				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	812			
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland	0			
C. Percentage Of Farmland In County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted	0.0024753			
D. Percentage Of Farmland In Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value	73			
PART V *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)*	80			

PART VI *(To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))*	Maximum Points				
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15	15			
2. Perimeter In Nonurban Use	10	10			
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20	15			
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	10			
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	10			
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	20			
7. Availability Of Farm Support Services	5	5			
8. On-Farm Investments	20	15			
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25	20			
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	10			
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	120	0	0	0
PART VII *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	80			
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	120	0	0	0
TOTAL POINTS *(Total of above 2 lines)*	260	200	0	0	0

1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used?
			YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Reason For Selection:

Signature of Person Completing this Part: DATE

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS-CPA-106
(Rev. 1-91)

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS

PART I *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	3. Date of Land Evaluation Request 4/2/03	4. Sheet 1 of 1
1. Name of Project INTERSTATE-69	5. Federal Agency Involved FHWA	
2. Type of Project INTERSTATE DEVELOPMENT	6. County and State BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI	
PART II *(To be completed by NRCS)*	1. Date Request Received by NRCS 03/29/04	2. Person Completing Form CURTIS L. GODFREY
3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form)	YES ☑ NO ☐	4. Acres Irrigated 138,000 / Average Farm Size 340 ac
5. Major Crop(s) COTTON, CORN, SOY BEANS	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres: 76,632 % 13	7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: 433,850 % 74
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS

PART III *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	Alternative Corridor For Segment SSWA	SSEA	SSCA	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	4353	2566	3323	
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services	0	0	0	
C. Total Acres In Corridor	4353	2566	3323	0
PART IV *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information*				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	3,998	2130	2750	
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland	0	0	0	
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted	5.23	2.78	3.68	
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value	65.28	55.82	56.28	
PART V *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)*	80	85	83	

PART VI *(To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))*	Maximum Points				
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15	15	15	15	
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10	10	10	10	
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20	15	15	15	
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	10	10	10	
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	10	10	10	
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	20	20	20	
7. Availablility Of Farm Support Services	5	5	5	5	
8. On-Farm Investments	20	15	15	15	
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25	20	20	20	
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	10	10	10	
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	126	126	126	0
PART VII *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	80	85	83	
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	126	126	126	0
TOTAL POINTS *(Total of above 2 lines)*	260	206	211	209	0

1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used?
			YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Reason For Selection:

Signature of Person Completing this Part: | DATE

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS-CPA-106
(Rev. 1-91)

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS

PART I *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	3. Date of Land Evaluation Request 6/30/2003	4. Sheet 1 of 1
1. Name of Project INTERSTATE 69 - (SIG # 11)	5. Federal Agency Involved FHWA (NRCS)	
2. Type of Project INTERSTATE DEVELOPMENT	6. County and State TALLAHATCHIE, MISSISSIPPI	
PART II *(To be completed by NRCS)*	1. Date Request Received by NRCS 05/03/04	2. Person Completing Form CURTIS L. GODFREY
3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form)	YES ☑ NO ☐	4. Acres Irrigated N/A / Average Farm Size 602
5. Major Crop(s) SOY BEANS	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres: 221,171 % 53.6	7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: 323,000 x783
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used LESA	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System ROUTINE ON-SITE	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS 05/18/04

PART III *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	Alternative Corridor For Segment SSEA	Corridor B	Corridor C	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	65			
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services	0			
C. Total Acres In Corridor	65	0	0	0
PART IV *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information*				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	65			
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland	0			
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted	.0038			
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value	.3056			
PART V *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)*	90			
PART VI *(To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))*	Maximum Points			
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15	15		
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10	9		
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20	20		
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	20		
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	10		
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	10		
7. Availablility Of Farm Support Services	5	5		
8. On-Farm Investments	20	14		
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25	12		
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	9		
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	126	0	0	0
PART VII *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*				
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	90		
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	126	0	0	0
TOTAL POINTS *(Total of above 2 lines)*	260	216	0	0	0

1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used?
			YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Reason For Selection:

Signature of Person Completing this Part. | DATE

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS-CPA-106
(Rev. 1-91)

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS

PART I *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	3. Date of Land Evaluation Request 7/2/03	4. Sheet 1 of 1
1. Name of Project INTERSTATE-69 (SR 8)	5. Federal Agency Involved FHWA	
2. Type of Project INTERSTATE DEVELOPMENT	6. County and State BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI	
PART II *(To be completed by NRCS)*	1. Date Request Received by NRCS 05/03/04	2. Person Completing Form CURTIS L. GODFREY
3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form).	YES ☑ NO ☐	4. Acres Irrigated 138,000 / Average Farm Size 340 AC
5. Major Crop(s) COTTON, CORN, SOY BEANS	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres: 76,632 % 13	7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: 433,850 % 74
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used LESA	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System ROUTINE ON-SITE	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS 05/18/04

PART III *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	Alternative Corridor For Segment SR-8	Corridor B	Corridor C	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	1062			
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services	0			
C. Total Acres In Corridor	1062	0	0	0
PART IV *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information*				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland	705			
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland	0			
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted	.0992			
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value	75			
PART V *(To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)*				
PART VI *(To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))*	Maximum Points			
1. Area in Nonurban Use	15	15		
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use	10	10		
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed	20	13		
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	10		
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	10		
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	20		
7. Availability Of Farm Support Services	5	5		
8. On-Farm Investments	20	15		
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25	20		
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	10		
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	126	0	0	0
PART VII *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*				
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)	100	73		
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)	160	126	0	0	0
TOTAL POINTS *(Total of above 2 lines)*	260	201	0	0	0

1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used?
			YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Reason For Selection:

Signature of Person Completing this Part: | DATE

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor

Appendix F
Noise Impact Forms/Details

MDOT
MMR - 7-27-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: <Project Name?>
RUN: I-69, Section1
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 70 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	With Barrier Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Mobile Home (REC 1)	4	1	0.0	58.2	66	58.2	15	----	58.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Brick House (REC 2 - NAC5H)	5	1	0.0	64.7	66	64.7	15	----	64.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Verner Rd Park (REC 3)	6	1	0.0	59.3	66	59.3	15	----	59.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Verner Rd Park (REC 4)	8	1	0.0	59.0	66	59.0	15	----	59.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Verner Rd Park (REC 5)	9	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	15	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA9H	11	1	0.0	63.2	66	63.2	15	----	63.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA8H	12	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Oak Grove Church3 - NA408C	14	1	0.0	55.9	66	55.9	15	----	55.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Oak Grove Church1 - NA408C	15	1	0.0	56.6	66	56.6	15	----	56.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Oak Grove Church2 - NA408C	16	1	0.0	56.1	66	56.1	15	----	56.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA10H	18	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP4	20	1	0.0	51.0	66	51.0	15	----	51.0	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	12	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

MDOT
MMR 7-27-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69 Section 2
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	With Barrier Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Farm - NB215B	1	1	0.0	62.7	66	62.7	15	----	62.7	0.0	10	-10.0
House - NB216H	3	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	10	-10.0
Mobile Home - NB219MH	5	1	0.0	64.1	66	64.1	15	----	64.1	0.0	10	-10.0
Barn - ND236BS	9	1	0.0	64.2	66	64.2	15	----	64.2	0.0	10	-10.0
House - ND237H	10	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	10	-10.0
Church - ND240C	12	1	0.0	56.1	66	56.1	15	----	56.1	0.0	10	-10.0
Shed - ND230BS	14	1	0.0	61.4	66	61.4	15	----	61.4	0.0	10	-10.0
Business - ND231B	15	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	10	-10.0
Shed - ND232BS	16	1	0.0	56.4	66	56.4	15	----	56.4	0.0	10	-10.0
House - ND233H	17	1	0.0	57.1	66	57.1	15	----	57.1	0.0	10	-10.0
House - ND234H	18	1	0.0	55.7	66	55.7	15	----	55.7	0.0	10	-10.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	11	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

MDOT
MMR 7-29-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 3
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Increase over existing Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Noise Reduction Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Noise Rec - NRECP11	1	1	0.0	59.4	66	59.4	15	----	59.4	0.0	10	-10.0
Noise Rec - NRECP12	3	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	10	-10.0
House - NA26H	5	1	0.0	65.2	66	65.2	15	----	65.2	0.0	10	-10.0
Storage Bldg - NA32B	6	1	0.0	64.7	66	64.7	15	----	64.7	0.0	10	-10.0
House - NA27H	7	1	0.0	62.0	66	62.0	15	----	62.0	0.0	10	-10.0
Shed - NA29BS	8	1	0.0	63.4	66	63.4	15	----	63.4	0.0	10	-10.0
Shed - NA30BS	9	1	0.0	62.2	66	62.2	15	----	62.2	0.0	10	-10.0
Shed - NA31BS	10	1	0.0	60.9	66	60.9	15	----	60.9	0.0	10	-10.0
Business - NA34B	12	1	0.0	56.9	66	56.9	15	----	56.9	0.0	10	-10.0
Business - NA35B	14	1	0.0	58.7	66	58.7	15	----	58.7	0.0	10	-10.0
Noise Rec - NRECP13	16	1	0.0	56.6	66	56.6	15	----	56.6	0.0	10	-10.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction Min	Noise Reduction Avg	Noise Reduction Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	11	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

KHA

MDOT
MMR 7-30-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0
* INCLUDES EASTERN, CENTRAL, & WESTERN ALIGNMENTS @ US 61 NEAR NEW AFRICAN RD

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 4
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS

ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h		Increase over existing		Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction		
				Calculated	Crit'n	Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc			Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Home - NE38H	1	1	0.0	65.9	66	65.9	15	----	65.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NE106B	3	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE105BS	6	1	0.0	64.8	66	64.8	15	----	64.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Home - NE107MH	9	1	0.0	54.9	66	54.9	15	----	54.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE108H	11	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE109BS	13	1	0.0	50.0	66	50.0	15	----	50.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE110BS	14	1	0.0	51.0	66	51.0	15	----	51.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE111HV	16	1	0.0	65.1	66	65.1	15	----	65.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE112HV	17	1	0.0	59.1	66	59.1	15	----	59.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NA40C	19	1	0.0	61.6	66	61.6	15	----	61.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA37H	20	1	0.0	62.4	66	62.4	15	----	62.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA39BR	22	1	0.0	62.3	66	62.3	15	----	62.3	0.0	8	-8.0
X Church - NA36BR (NOT EXCEED)	24	1	0.0	73.5	66	73.5	15	Snd Lvl	73.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Truck Scale - NA52B	27	1	0.0	66.7	66	66.7	15	Snd Lvl	66.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Storage - NA51B	29	1	0.0	66.6	66	66.6	15	Snd Lvl	66.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA50H	33	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA49H	35	1	0.0	63.0	66	63.0	15	----	63.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NA53B	39	1	0.0	65.3	66	65.3	15	----	65.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NA55B	41	1	0.0	64.5	66	64.5	15	----	64.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA56H	43	1	0.0	64.6	66	64.6	15	----	64.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA59HR (RELO)	45	1	0.0	67.5	66	67.5	15	Snd Lvl	67.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA60B	48	1	0.0	63.2	66	63.2	15	----	63.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA62B	50	1	0.0	64.9	66	64.9	15	----	64.9	0.0	8	-8.0

House - NA61H	52	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA63HV	56	1	0.0	60.9	66	60.9	15	----	60.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA64MH	58	1	0.0	63.6	66	63.6	15	----	63.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA65H	60	1	0.0	60.5	66	60.5	15	----	60.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA66H	62	1	0.0	63.0	66	63.0	15	----	63.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NA68C	64	1	0.0	65.1	66	65.1	15	----	65.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA67H	66	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP18	68	1	0.0	46.5	66	46.5	15	----	46.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA69HV	69	1	0.0	64.5	66	64.5	15	----	64.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA70H	70	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF102H	72	1	0.0	58.2	66	58.2	15	----	58.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF101H	74	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	15	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF100H	76	1	0.0	51.3	66	51.3	15	----	51.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NF99B	78	1	0.0	50.4	66	50.4	15	----	50.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise Rec - NRECP15	80	1	0.0	51.2	66	51.2	15	----	51.2	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	**# DUs**	**Noise Reduction**		
		Min	**Avg**	**Max**
		dB	**dB**	**dB**
All Selected	38	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	4	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

KHA

MDOT
MMR 7-30-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0
* INCLUDES EASTERN ONLY ALIGNMENT @ US 61 NEAR NEW AFRICAN RD.

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 4A
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS

ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Increase over existing Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Noise Reduction Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Home - NE38H	1	1	0.0	65.2	66	65.2	15	----	65.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NE106B	3	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE105BS	6	1	0.0	64.8	66	64.8	15	----	64.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Home - NE107MH	9	1	0.0	54.9	66	54.9	15	----	54.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE108H	11	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE109BS	13	1	0.0	50.0	66	50.0	15	----	50.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE110BS	14	1	0.0	51.0	66	51.0	15	----	51.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE111HV	16	1	0.0	65.1	66	65.1	15	----	65.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE112HV	17	1	0.0	59.1	66	59.1	15	----	59.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NA40C	19	1	0.0	55.4	66	55.4	15	----	55.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA37H	20	1	0.0	56.9	66	56.9	15	----	56.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA39BR	22	1	0.0	54.3	66	54.3	15	----	54.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NA36BR (GOOD)	24	1	0.0	64.2	66	64.2	15	----	64.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Truck Scale - NA52B	27	1	0.0	66.7	66	66.7	15	Snd Lvl	66.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Storage - NA51B	29	1	0.0	66.6	66	66.6	15	Snd Lvl	66.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA50H	33	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA49H	35	1	0.0	63.0	66	63.0	15	----	63.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NA53B	39	1	0.0	65.3	66	65.3	15	----	65.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NA55B	41	1	0.0	64.5	66	64.5	15	----	64.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA56H	43	1	0.0	64.6	66	64.6	15	----	64.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA59HR	45	1	0.0	67.5	66	67.5	15	Snd Lvl	67.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA60B	48	1	0.0	63.2	66	63.2	15	----	63.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA62B	50	1	0.0	64.9	66	64.9	15	----	64.9	0.0	8	-8.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

House - NA61H	52	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA63HV	56	1	0.0	60.9	66	60.9	15	----	60.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA64MH	58	1	0.0	63.6	66	63.6	15	----	63.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA65H	60	1	0.0	60.5	66	60.5	15	----	60.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA66H	62	1	0.0	63.0	66	63.0	15	----	63.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NA68C	64	1	0.0	65.1	66	65.1	15	----	65.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA67H	66	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP18	68	1	0.0	46.5	66	46.5	15	----	46.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA69HV	69	1	0.0	64.5	66	64.5	15	----	64.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA70H	70	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF102H	72	1	0.0	58.2	66	58.2	15	----	58.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF101H	74	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	15	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF100H	76	1	0.0	51.3	66	51.3	15	----	51.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NF99B	78	1	0.0	50.4	66	50.4	15	----	50.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise Rec - NRECP15	80	1	0.0	51.1	66	51.1	15	----	51.1	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction		
		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	38	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	3	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

MDOT
MMR - 7-31-03

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 5
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Increase over existing Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Noise Reduction Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Noise REC - NRECP20	1	1	0.0	51.8	66	51.8	15	----	51.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE115H	3	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NE117H	5	1	0.0	63.3	66	63.3	15	----	63.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NE116H	6	1	0.0	61.4	66	61.4	15	----	61.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA71H	8	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA73MH	10	1	0.0	62.7	66	62.7	15	----	62.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA74H	11	1	0.0	60.6	66	60.6	15	----	60.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA75H	13	1	0.0	58.1	66	58.1	15	----	58.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA76BS	16	1	0.0	64.6	66	64.6	15	----	64.6	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	9	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

MDOT
MMR 7-31-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 6
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS

ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Business - NE124BABANDONED	1	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE123B	3	1	0.0	61.8	66	61.8	15	----	61.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE125H	5	1	0.0	57.1	66	57.1	15	----	57.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP25	7	1	0.0	50.7	66	50.7	15	----	50.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE126H	8	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE139H	10	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE140H	12	1	0.0	61.9	66	61.9	15	----	61.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE141B	14	1	0.0	61.7	66	61.7	15	----	61.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE142H	15	1	0.0	58.7	66	58.7	15	----	58.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG365B	25	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	15	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG364B	26	1	0.0	56.0	66	56.0	15	----	56.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG363H	27	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG362B	28	1	0.0	61.4	66	61.4	15	----	61.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG361MH	29	1	0.0	57.8	66	57.8	15	----	57.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG368B	31	1	0.0	63.6	66	63.6	15	----	63.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG369B	32	1	0.0	63.7	66	63.7	15	----	63.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG367B	34	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG360H	36	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG366H	37	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG357BS	38	1	0.0	60.3	66	60.3	15	----	60.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG359BS	39	1	0.0	62.2	66	62.2	15	----	62.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG351B	41	1	0.0	63.1	66	63.1	15	----	63.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG352B	42	1	0.0	63.1	66	63.1	15	----	63.1	0.0	8	-8.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

Business - NG353B	43	1	0.0	58.8	66	58.8	15	----	58.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG354B	44	1	0.0	57.1	66	57.1	15	----	57.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG355B	45	1	0.0	54.0	66	54.0	15	----	54.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG350H	47	1	0.0	60.6	66	60.6	15	----	60.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG349H	49	1	0.0	62.9	66	62.9	15	----	62.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG348H	50	1	0.0	61.8	66	61.8	15	----	61.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG344H	51	1	0.0	61.0	66	61.0	15	----	61.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed- NG346BS	52	1	0.0	59.5	66	59.5	15	----	59.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG347B	53	1	0.0	55.0	66	55.0	15	----	55.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG343H	54	1	0.0	62.1	66	62.1	15	----	62.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG342H	56	1	0.0	60.3	66	60.3	15	----	60.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG341H	58	1	0.0	58.6	66	58.6	15	----	58.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG407H	60	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG406H	62	1	0.0	55.7	66	55.7	15	----	55.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG337B	64	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG405H	66	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG335B	68	1	0.0	57.8	66	57.8	15	----	57.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG336H	69	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP26	71	1	0.0	52.6	66	52.6	15	----	52.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG333B	73	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG331H	74	1	0.0	60.3	66	60.3	15	----	60.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG332H	75	1	0.0	62.7	66	62.7	15	----	62.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG330H	76	1	0.0	60.8	66	60.8	15	----	60.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG329H	77	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG327H	79	1	0.0	56.1	66	56.1	15	----	56.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG328MH	80	1	0.0	62.4	66	62.4	15	----	62.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG326H	81	1	0.0	62.3	66	62.3	15	----	62.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG325H	82	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	15	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG324H	83	1	0.0	60.7	66	60.7	15	----	60.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG323H	85	1	0.0	64.4	66	64.4	15	----	64.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA206H	87	1	0.0	66.0	66	66.0	15	Snd Lvl	66.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA205H	88	1	0.0	64.8	66	64.8	15	----	64.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG402H	90	1	0.0	60.7	66	60.7	15	----	60.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG401H	92	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG403BS	94	1	0.0	57.3	66	57.3	15	----	57.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG404B	95	1	0.0	62.7	66	62.7	15	----	62.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG400H	97	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG399H	98	1	0.0	63.7	66	63.7	15	----	63.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG398H	99	1	0.0	63.4	66	63.4	15	----	63.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG397H	100	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0

House - NG395H	101	1	0.0	64.9	66	64.9	15	----	64.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG396H	102	1	0.0	61.6	66	61.6	15	----	61.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG393BS	104	1	0.0	58.5	66	58.5	15	----	58.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG392BS	105	1	0.0	58.9	66	58.9	15	----	58.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG394BS	106	1	0.0	61.2	66	61.2	15	----	61.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG310H	108	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG391BS	110	1	0.0	60.7	66	60.7	15	----	60.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG390B	112	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG386H	114	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG387H	115	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG388BS	116	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	15	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG389BS	117	1	0.0	58.3	66	58.3	15	----	58.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG384MH	119	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	15	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG414BS	121	1	0.0	54.3	66	54.3	15	----	54.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG415MH	122	1	0.0	61.1	66	61.1	15	----	61.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG416MH	123	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG418MH	124	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG417MH	125	1	0.0	55.6	66	55.6	15	----	55.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG419H	126	1	0.0	58.9	66	58.9	15	----	58.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG413H	128	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG312H	130	1	0.0	52.4	66	52.4	15	----	52.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG383H	131	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	15	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG314MH	133	1	0.0	59.6	66	59.6	15	----	59.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG310H	135	1	0.0	59.1	66	59.1	15	----	59.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG377H	136	1	0.0	54.9	66	54.9	15	----	54.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG378BS	137	1	0.0	52.8	66	52.8	15	----	52.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG311B	138	1	0.0	53.0	66	53.0	15	----	53.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG382BS	139	1	0.0	52.4	66	52.4	15	----	52.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG379BS	140	1	0.0	50.0	66	50.0	15	----	50.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG380BS	141	1	0.0	50.6	66	50.6	15	----	50.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG381BS	142	1	0.0	49.8	66	49.8	15	----	49.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG305B	144	1	0.0	58.7	66	58.7	15	----	58.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG306B	145	1	0.0	55.9	66	55.9	15	----	55.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG307B	146	1	0.0	54.4	66	54.4	15	----	54.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG308H	147	1	0.0	52.8	66	52.8	15	----	52.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG309H	148	1	0.0	56.3	66	56.3	15	----	56.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG297H	150	1	0.0	56.7	66	56.7	15	----	56.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NG300C	151	1	0.0	52.9	66	52.9	15	----	52.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG301HAbandoned	152	1	0.0	54.4	66	54.4	15	----	54.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG302MH	153	1	0.0	55.0	66	55.0	15	----	55.0	0.0	8	-8.0

House - NG298H	154	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG295H	156	1	0.0	57.2	66	57.2	15	----	57.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG296H	157	1	0.0	56.7	66	56.7	15	----	56.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG290B	159	1	0.0	57.2	66	57.2	15	----	57.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG291H	160	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG292H	161	1	0.0	56.9	66	56.9	15	----	56.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG293H	162	1	0.0	53.0	66	53.0	15	----	53.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG287B	164	1	0.0	56.8	66	56.8	15	----	56.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG276MH	166	1	0.0	56.4	66	56.4	15	----	56.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG277H	167	1	0.0	60.8	66	60.8	15	----	60.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG278H	168	1	0.0	59.5	66	59.5	15	----	59.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG279H	169	1	0.0	55.5	66	55.5	15	----	55.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG274H	171	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG275MH	172	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG281MH	173	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	15	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG273H	175	1	0.0	55.4	66	55.4	15	----	55.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG271B	176	1	0.0	52.3	66	52.3	15	----	52.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG268H	178	1	0.0	56.9	66	56.9	15	----	56.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG269H	179	1	0.0	57.0	66	57.0	15	----	57.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG265MH	181	1	0.0	54.4	66	54.4	15	----	54.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG251MH	183	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG252HAbandoned	184	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG253H	185	1	0.0	64.3	66	64.3	15	----	64.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG254H	186	1	0.0	63.4	66	63.4	15	----	63.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG255H	187	1	0.0	64.3	66	64.3	15	----	64.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG256B	188	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NG191C	190	1	0.0	60.5	66	60.5	15	----	60.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG249B	192	1	0.0	57.3	66	57.3	15	----	57.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG250B	193	1	0.0	50.9	66	50.9	15	----	50.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG247B	195	1	0.0	57.4	66	57.4	15	----	57.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG248B	196	1	0.0	54.6	66	54.6	15	----	54.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG245B	197	1	0.0	56.7	66	56.7	15	----	56.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG246B	198	1	0.0	58.2	66	58.2	15	----	58.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG242MH	199	1	0.0	49.4	66	49.4	15	----	49.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NG243C	201	1	0.0	46.6	66	46.6	15	----	46.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG241B	203	1	0.0	47.8	66	47.8	15	----	47.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NG244C	205	1	0.0	49.1	66	49.1	15	----	49.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA85H	207	1	0.0	61.6	66	61.6	15	----	61.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA78H	209	1	0.0	63.3	66	63.3	15	----	63.3	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction

		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	142	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	1	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

MDOT
MMR 8-3-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

INCLUDES MIDDLE AND TOP SECTIONS OF EASTERN ALIGNMENT JUST WEST OF US 61 INTERCHANGE

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 7A
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
House - NE160H	1	1	0.0	50.3	66	50.3	15	----	50.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE421H	4	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE422H	5	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE423H	6	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE424H	7	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE146H	8	1	0.0	52.1	66	52.1	15	----	52.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE147H	9	1	0.0	51.3	66	51.3	15	----	51.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE148H	10	1	0.0	49.8	66	49.8	15	----	49.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE149H	11	1	0.0	49.1	66	49.1	15	----	49.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE150H	12	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE151H	13	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE152H	14	1	0.0	48.1	66	48.1	15	----	48.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE153H	15	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE154H	16	1	0.0	47.6	66	47.6	15	----	47.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE155H	18	1	0.0	47.9	66	47.9	15	----	47.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE156H	19	1	0.0	47.2	66	47.2	15	----	47.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE157H	20	1	0.0	47.5	66	47.5	15	----	47.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE158H	21	1	0.0	47.3	66	47.3	15	----	47.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE159H	23	1	0.0	47.3	66	47.3	15	----	47.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP30	25	1	0.0	43.7	66	43.7	15	----	43.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE161H	26	1	0.0	49.6	66	49.6	15	----	49.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA62B	28	1	0.0	52.4	66	52.4	15	----	52.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE164H	30	1	0.0	61.2	66	61.2	15	----	61.2	0.0	8	-8.0

RESULTS: SOU... LEVELS

KHA

Church - NE169C USE 7B	32	1	0.0	64.0	66	64.0	15	----	64.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE167BS	34	1	0.0	65.1	66	65.1	15	----	65.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE168BS	35	1	0.0	62.7	66	62.7	15	----	62.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE166B	36	1	0.0	63.5	66	63.5	15	----	63.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE165B	37	1	0.0	60.8	66	60.8	15	----	60.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE170B	39	1	0.0	58.9	66	58.9	15	----	58.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE171BS	40	1	0.0	63.2	66	63.2	15	----	63.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE174H	42	1	0.0	63.6	66	63.6	15	----	63.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE175MH	43	1	0.0	63.5	66	63.5	15	----	63.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG194BS	45	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG195H	46	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG193H	48	1	0.0	53.6	66	53.6	15	----	53.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP31	50	1	0.0	50.0	66	50.0	15	----	50.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA199B	52	1	0.0	60.8	66	60.8	15	----	60.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA198H	54	1	0.0	59.3	66	59.3	15	----	59.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA197B	56	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP29	58	1	0.0	51.4	66	51.4	15	----	51.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA196MH	60	1	0.0	65.5	66	65.5	15	----	65.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House(Relo) - NE162HR	62	1	0.0	54.8	66	54.8	15	----	54.8	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction		
		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	42	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

KHA

MDOT
MMR 8-3-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

Includes top & Bottom Sections of Eastern Alignment just west of US 61 Interchange

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 7B
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS

ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h		Increase over existing		Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction		
				Calculated	Crit'n	Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc			Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
House - NE160H	1	1	0.0	50.3	66	50.3	15	----	50.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE421H	4	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE422H	5	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE423H	6	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE424H	7	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE146H	8	1	0.0	52.1	66	52.1	15	----	52.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE147H	9	1	0.0	51.3	66	51.3	15	----	51.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE148H	10	1	0.0	49.8	66	49.8	15	----	49.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE149H	11	1	0.0	49.1	66	49.1	15	----	49.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE150H	12	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE151H	13	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE152H	14	1	0.0	48.1	66	48.1	15	----	48.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE153H	15	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE154H	16	1	0.0	47.6	66	47.6	15	----	47.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE155H	18	1	0.0	47.9	66	47.9	15	----	47.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE156H	19	1	0.0	47.2	66	47.2	15	----	47.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE157H	20	1	0.0	47.5	66	47.5	15	----	47.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE158H	21	1	0.0	47.3	66	47.3	15	----	47.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE159H	23	1	0.0	47.3	66	47.3	15	----	47.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP30	25	1	0.0	43.7	66	43.7	15	----	43.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE161H	26	1	0.0	49.6	66	49.6	15	----	49.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA62B	28	1	0.0	52.4	66	52.4	15	----	52.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE164H	30	1	0.0	61.2	66	61.2	15	----	61.2	0.0	8	-8.0

Church - NE169C Good	32	1	0.0	62.9	66	62.9	15	----	62.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE167BS	34	1	0.0	63.5	66	63.5	15	----	63.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE168BS	35	1	0.0	64.0	66	64.0	15	----	64.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE166B	36	1	0.0	64.2	66	64.2	15	----	64.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE165B	37	1	0.0	65.9	66	65.9	15	----	65.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE170B	39	1	0.0	58.9	66	58.9	15	----	58.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE171BS	40	1	0.0	63.2	66	63.2	15	----	63.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE174H	42	1	0.0	63.6	66	63.6	15	----	63.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE175MH	43	1	0.0	63.5	66	63.5	15	----	63.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG194BS	45	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG195H	46	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG193H	48	1	0.0	53.6	66	53.6	15	----	53.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP31	50	1	0.0	50.0	66	50.0	15	----	50.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA199B	52	1	0.0	60.7	66	60.7	15	----	60.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA198H	54	1	0.0	59.3	66	59.3	15	----	59.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA197B	56	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP29	58	1	0.0	51.4	66	51.4	15	----	51.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA196MH	60	1	0.0	65.5	66	65.5	15	----	65.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House(Relo) - NE162HR	62	1	0.0	54.8	66	54.8	15	----	54.8	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction		
		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	42	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

MDOT
MMR 8-5-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 8
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Noise REC - NRECP33	1	1	0.0	48.4	66	48.4	15	----	48.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NJ183H	3	1	0.0	57.0	66	57.0	15	----	57.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NJ182H	4	1	0.0	57.0	66	57.0	15	----	57.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NJ181H	5	1	0.0	56.4	66	56.4	15	----	56.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NJ184BS	6	1	0.0	56.0	66	56.0	15	----	56.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NJ185MH	7	1	0.0	54.9	66	54.9	15	----	54.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NJ186C	9	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE180H	11	1	0.0	58.1	66	58.1	15	----	58.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NK373C	13	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NK376BS	15	1	0.0	58.6	66	58.6	15	----	58.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NK374H	17	1	0.0	56.7	66	56.7	15	----	56.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NK375B	18	1	0.0	57.2	66	57.2	15	----	57.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NK372H	21	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
School - NK371B1	22	1	0.0	58.9	66	58.9	15	----	58.9	0.0	8	-8.0
School - NK371B2	23	1	0.0	58.5	66	58.5	15	----	58.5	0.0	8	-8.0
School - NK371B3	24	1	0.0	58.1	66	58.1	15	----	58.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B1	25	1	0.0	56.5	66	56.5	15	----	56.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B2	26	1	0.0	62.1	66	62.1	15	----	62.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B3	27	1	0.0	61.2	66	61.2	15	----	61.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B4	28	1	0.0	60.5	66	60.5	15	----	60.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B5	29	1	0.0	59.6	66	59.6	15	----	59.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B6	30	1	0.0	59.5	66	59.5	15	----	59.5	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction

		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	22	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

MDOT
MMR - 7-27-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: <Project Name?>
RUN: I-69, Section1
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 70 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Mobile Home (REC 1)	4	1	0.0	58.2	66	58.2	15	----	58.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Brick House (REC 2 - NAC5H)	5	1	0.0	64.7	66	64.7	15	----	64.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Verner Rd Park (REC 3)	6	1	0.0	59.3	66	59.3	15	----	59.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Verner Rd Park (REC 4)	8	1	0.0	59.0	66	59.0	15	----	59.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Verner Rd Park (REC 5)	9	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	15	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA9H	11	1	0.0	63.2	66	63.2	15	----	63.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA8H	12	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Oak Grove Church3 - NA408C	14	1	0.0	55.9	66	55.9	15	----	55.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Oak Grove Church1 - NA408C	15	1	0.0	56.6	66	56.6	15	----	56.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Oak Grove Church2 - NA408C	16	1	0.0	56.1	66	56.1	15	----	56.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA10H	18	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP4	20	1	0.0	51.0	66	51.0	15	----	51.0	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	12	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

MDOT
MMR 7-27-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69 Section 2
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	With Barrier Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Farm - NB215B	1	1	0.0	62.7	66	62.7	15	----	62.7	0.0	10	-10.0
House - NB216H	3	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	10	-10.0
Mobile Home - NB219MH	5	1	0.0	64.1	66	64.1	15	----	64.1	0.0	10	-10.0
Barn - ND236BS	9	1	0.0	64.2	66	64.2	15	----	64.2	0.0	10	-10.0
House - ND237H	10	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	10	-10.0
Church - ND240C	12	1	0.0	56.1	66	56.1	15	----	56.1	0.0	10	-10.0
Shed - ND230BS	14	1	0.0	61.4	66	61.4	15	----	61.4	0.0	10	-10.0
Business - ND231B	15	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	10	-10.0
Shed - ND232BS	16	1	0.0	56.4	66	56.4	15	----	56.4	0.0	10	-10.0
House - ND233H	17	1	0.0	57.1	66	57.1	15	----	57.1	0.0	10	-10.0
House - ND234H	18	1	0.0	55.7	66	55.7	15	----	55.7	0.0	10	-10.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	11	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

MDOT
MMR 7-29-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 3
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	With Barrier Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Noise Rec - NRECP11	1	1	0.0	59.4	66	59.4	15	----	59.4	0.0	10	-10.0
Noise Rec - NRECP12	3	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	10	-10.0
House - NA26H	5	1	0.0	65.2	66	65.2	15	----	65.2	0.0	10	-10.0
Storage Bldg - NA32B	6	1	0.0	64.7	66	64.7	15	----	64.7	0.0	10	-10.0
House - NA27H	7	1	0.0	62.0	66	62.0	15	----	62.0	0.0	10	-10.0
Shed - NA29BS	8	1	0.0	63.4	66	63.4	15	----	63.4	0.0	10	-10.0
Shed - NA30BS	9	1	0.0	62.2	66	62.2	15	----	62.2	0.0	10	-10.0
Shed - NA31BS	10	1	0.0	60.9	66	60.9	15	----	60.9	0.0	10	-10.0
Business - NA34B	12	1	0.0	56.9	66	56.9	15	----	56.9	0.0	10	-10.0
Business - NA35B	14	1	0.0	58.7	66	58.7	15	----	58.7	0.0	10	-10.0
Noise Rec - NRECP13	16	1	0.0	56.6	66	56.6	15	----	56.6	0.0	10	-10.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	11	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

5 August 2003

MDOT
MMR 7-30-03
TNM 2.0
* INCLUDES EASTERN, CENTRAL, & WESTERN ALIGNMENTS @ US 61 NEAR NEW AFRICAN RD

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 4
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Increase over existing Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Noise Reduction Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Home - NE38H	1	1	0.0	65.9	66	65.9	15	----	65.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NE106B	3	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE105BS	6	1	0.0	64.8	66	64.8	15	----	64.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Home - NE107MH	9	1	0.0	54.9	66	54.9	15	----	54.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE108H	11	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE109BS	13	1	0.0	50.0	66	50.0	15	----	50.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE110BS	14	1	0.0	51.0	66	51.0	15	----	51.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE111HV	16	1	0.0	65.1	66	65.1	15	----	65.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE112HV	17	1	0.0	59.1	66	59.1	15	----	59.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NA40C	19	1	0.0	61.6	66	61.6	15	----	61.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA37H	20	1	0.0	62.4	66	62.4	15	----	62.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA39BR	22	1	0.0	62.3	66	62.3	15	----	62.3	0.0	8	-8.0
X Church - NA36BR (NOT EXCEED)	24	1	0.0	73.5	66	73.5	15	Snd Lvl	73.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Truck Scale - NA52B	27	1	0.0	66.7	66	66.7	15	Snd Lvl	66.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Storage - NA51B	29	1	0.0	66.6	66	66.6	15	Snd Lvl	66.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA50H	33	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA49H	35	1	0.0	63.0	66	63.0	15	----	63.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NA53B	39	1	0.0	65.3	66	65.3	15	----	65.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NA55B	41	1	0.0	64.5	66	64.5	15	----	64.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA56H	43	1	0.0	64.6	66	64.6	15	----	64.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA59HR (RELO)	45	1	0.0	67.5	66	67.5	15	Snd Lvl	67.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA60B	48	1	0.0	63.2	66	63.2	15	----	63.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA62B	50	1	0.0	64.9	66	64.9	15	----	64.9	0.0	8	-8.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

KHA

House - NA61H	52	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA63HV	56	1	0.0	60.9	66	60.9	15	----	60.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA64MH	58	1	0.0	63.6	66	63.6	15	----	63.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA65H	60	1	0.0	60.5	66	60.5	15	----	60.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA66H	62	1	0.0	63.0	66	63.0	15	----	63.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NA68C	64	1	0.0	65.1	66	65.1	15	----	65.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA67H	66	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP18	68	1	0.0	46.5	66	46.5	15	----	46.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA69HV	69	1	0.0	64.5	66	64.5	15	----	64.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA70H	70	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF102H	72	1	0.0	58.2	66	58.2	15	----	58.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF101H	74	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	15	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF100H	76	1	0.0	51.3	66	51.3	15	----	51.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NF99B	78	1	0.0	50.4	66	50.4	15	----	50.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise Rec - NRECP15	80	1	0.0	51.2	66	51.2	15	----	51.2	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction		
		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	38	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	4	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

5 August 2003

MDOT
MMR 7-30-03
TNM 2.0

* INCLUDES EASTERN ONLY ALIGNMENT @ US 61 NEAR NEW AFRICAN RD.

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 4A
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS

ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Increase over existing Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Noise Reduction Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Home - NE38H	1	1	0.0	65.2	66	65.2	15	----	65.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NE106B	3	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE105BS	6	1	0.0	64.8	66	64.8	15	----	64.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Home - NE107MH	9	1	0.0	54.9	66	54.9	15	----	54.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE108H	11	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE109BS	13	1	0.0	50.0	66	50.0	15	----	50.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE110BS	14	1	0.0	51.0	66	51.0	15	----	51.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE111HV	16	1	0.0	65.1	66	65.1	15	----	65.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE112HV	17	1	0.0	59.1	66	59.1	15	----	59.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NA40C	19	1	0.0	55.4	66	55.4	15	----	55.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA37H	20	1	0.0	56.9	66	56.9	15	----	56.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA39BR	22	1	0.0	54.3	66	54.3	15	----	54.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NA36BR (GOOD)	24	1	0.0	64.2	66	64.2	15	----	64.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Truck Scale - NA52B	27	1	0.0	66.7	66	66.7	15	Snd Lvl	66.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Storage - NA51B	29	1	0.0	66.6	66	66.6	15	Snd Lvl	66.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA50H	33	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA49H	35	1	0.0	63.0	66	63.0	15	----	63.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NA53B	39	1	0.0	65.3	66	65.3	15	----	65.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NA55B	41	1	0.0	64.5	66	64.5	15	----	64.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA56H	43	1	0.0	64.6	66	64.6	15	----	64.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA59HR	45	1	0.0	67.5	66	67.5	15	Snd Lvl	67.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA60B	48	1	0.0	63.2	66	63.2	15	----	63.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA62B	50	1	0.0	64.9	66	64.9	15	----	64.9	0.0	8	-8.0

KHA

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

House - NA61H	52	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA63HV	56	1	0.0	60.9	66	60.9	15	----	60.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA64MH	58	1	0.0	63.6	66	63.6	15	----	63.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA65H	60	1	0.0	60.5	66	60.5	15	----	60.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA66H	62	1	0.0	63.0	66	63.0	15	----	63.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NA68C	64	1	0.0	65.1	66	65.1	15	----	65.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA67H	66	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP18	68	1	0.0	46.5	66	46.5	15	----	46.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA69HV	69	1	0.0	64.5	66	64.5	15	----	64.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA70H	70	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF102H	72	1	0.0	58.2	66	58.2	15	----	58.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF101H	74	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	15	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NF100H	76	1	0.0	51.3	66	51.3	15	----	51.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NF99B	78	1	0.0	50.4	66	50.4	15	----	50.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise Rec - NRECP15	80	1	0.0	51.1	66	51.1	15	----	51.1	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction		
		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	38	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	3	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

MDOT
MMR - 7-31-03

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 5
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	With Barrier Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Noise REC - NRECP20	1	1	0.0	51.8	66	51.8	15	----	51.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE115H	3	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NE117H	5	1	0.0	63.3	66	63.3	15	----	63.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Farm - NE116H	6	1	0.0	61.4	66	61.4	15	----	61.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA71H	8	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA73MH	10	1	0.0	62.7	66	62.7	15	----	62.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA74H	11	1	0.0	60.6	66	60.6	15	----	60.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA75H	13	1	0.0	58.1	66	58.1	15	----	58.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA76BS	16	1	0.0	64.6	66	64.6	15	----	64.6	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	9	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

MDOT
MMR 7-31-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 6
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS

ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Increase over existing Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Noise Reduction Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Business - NE124BABANDONED	1	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE123B	3	1	0.0	61.8	66	61.8	15	----	61.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE125H	5	1	0.0	57.1	66	57.1	15	----	57.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP25	7	1	0.0	50.7	66	50.7	15	----	50.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE126H	8	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE139H	10	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE140H	12	1	0.0	61.9	66	61.9	15	----	61.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE141B	14	1	0.0	61.7	66	61.7	15	----	61.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE142H	15	1	0.0	58.7	66	58.7	15	----	58.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG365B	25	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	15	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG364B	26	1	0.0	56.0	66	56.0	15	----	56.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG363H	27	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG362B	28	1	0.0	61.4	66	61.4	15	----	61.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG361MH	29	1	0.0	57.8	66	57.8	15	----	57.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG368B	31	1	0.0	63.6	66	63.6	15	----	63.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG369B	32	1	0.0	63.7	66	63.7	15	----	63.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG367B	34	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG360H	36	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG366H	37	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG357BS	38	1	0.0	60.3	66	60.3	15	----	60.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG359BS	39	1	0.0	62.2	66	62.2	15	----	62.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG351B	41	1	0.0	63.1	66	63.1	15	----	63.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG352B	42	1	0.0	63.1	66	63.1	15	----	63.1	0.0	8	-8.0

Business - NG353B	43	1	0.0	58.8	66	58.8	15	----	58.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG354B	44	1	0.0	57.1	66	57.1	15	----	57.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG355B	45	1	0.0	54.0	66	54.0	15	----	54.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG350H	47	1	0.0	60.6	66	60.6	15	----	60.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG349H	49	1	0.0	62.9	66	62.9	15	----	62.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG348H	50	1	0.0	61.8	66	61.8	15	----	61.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG344H	51	1	0.0	61.0	66	61.0	15	----	61.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed- NG346BS	52	1	0.0	59.5	66	59.5	15	----	59.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG347B	53	1	0.0	55.0	66	55.0	15	----	55.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG343H	54	1	0.0	62.1	66	62.1	15	----	62.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG342H	56	1	0.0	60.3	66	60.3	15	----	60.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG341H	58	1	0.0	58.6	66	58.6	15	----	58.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG407H	60	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG406H	62	1	0.0	55.7	66	55.7	15	----	55.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG337B	64	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG405H	66	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG335B	68	1	0.0	57.8	66	57.8	15	----	57.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG336H	69	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP26	71	1	0.0	52.6	66	52.6	15	----	52.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG333B	73	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG331H	74	1	0.0	60.3	66	60.3	15	----	60.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG332H	75	1	0.0	62.7	66	62.7	15	----	62.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG330H	76	1	0.0	60.8	66	60.8	15	----	60.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG329H	77	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG327H	79	1	0.0	56.1	66	56.1	15	----	56.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG328MH	80	1	0.0	62.4	66	62.4	15	----	62.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG326H	81	1	0.0	62.3	66	62.3	15	----	62.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG325H	82	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	15	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG324H	83	1	0.0	60.7	66	60.7	15	----	60.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG323H	85	1	0.0	64.4	66	64.4	15	----	64.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA206H	87	1	0.0	66.0	66	66.0	15	Snd Lvl	66.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA205H	88	1	0.0	64.8	66	64.8	15	----	64.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG402H	90	1	0.0	60.7	66	60.7	15	----	60.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG401H	92	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG403BS	94	1	0.0	57.3	66	57.3	15	----	57.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG404B	95	1	0.0	62.7	66	62.7	15	----	62.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG400H	97	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG399H	98	1	0.0	63.7	66	63.7	15	----	63.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG398H	99	1	0.0	63.4	66	63.4	15	----	63.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG397H	100	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

House - NG395H	101	1	0.0	64.9	66	64.9	15	----	64.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG396H	102	1	0.0	61.6	66	61.6	15	----	61.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG393BS	104	1	0.0	58.5	66	58.5	15	----	58.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG392BS	105	1	0.0	58.9	66	58.9	15	----	58.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG394BS	106	1	0.0	61.2	66	61.2	15	----	61.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG310H	108	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG391BS	110	1	0.0	60.7	66	60.7	15	----	60.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG390B	112	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG386H	114	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG387H	115	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG388BS	116	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	15	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG389BS	117	1	0.0	58.3	66	58.3	15	----	58.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG384MH	119	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	15	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG414BS	121	1	0.0	54.3	66	54.3	15	----	54.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG415MH	122	1	0.0	61.1	66	61.1	15	----	61.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG416MH	123	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG418MH	124	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG417MH	125	1	0.0	55.6	66	55.6	15	----	55.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG419H	126	1	0.0	58.9	66	58.9	15	----	58.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG413H	128	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG312H	130	1	0.0	52.4	66	52.4	15	----	52.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG383H	131	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	15	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG314MH	133	1	0.0	59.6	66	59.6	15	----	59.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG310H	135	1	0.0	59.1	66	59.1	15	----	59.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG377H	136	1	0.0	54.9	66	54.9	15	----	54.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG378BS	137	1	0.0	52.8	66	52.8	15	----	52.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG311B	138	1	0.0	53.0	66	53.0	15	----	53.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG382BS	139	1	0.0	52.4	66	52.4	15	----	52.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG379BS	140	1	0.0	50.0	66	50.0	15	----	50.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG380BS	141	1	0.0	50.6	66	50.6	15	----	50.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG381BS	142	1	0.0	49.8	66	49.8	15	----	49.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG305B	144	1	0.0	58.7	66	58.7	15	----	58.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG306B	145	1	0.0	55.9	66	55.9	15	----	55.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG307B	146	1	0.0	54.4	66	54.4	15	----	54.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG308H	147	1	0.0	52.8	66	52.8	15	----	52.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG309H	148	1	0.0	56.3	66	56.3	15	----	56.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG297H	150	1	0.0	56.7	66	56.7	15	----	56.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NG300C	151	1	0.0	52.9	66	52.9	15	----	52.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG301HAbandoned	152	1	0.0	54.4	66	54.4	15	----	54.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG302MH	153	1	0.0	55.0	66	55.0	15	----	55.0	0.0	8	-8.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

House - NG298H	154	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG295H	156	1	0.0	57.2	66	57.2	15	----	57.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG296H	157	1	0.0	56.7	66	56.7	15	----	56.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG290B	159	1	0.0	57.2	66	57.2	15	----	57.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG291H	160	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG292H	161	1	0.0	56.9	66	56.9	15	----	56.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG293H	162	1	0.0	53.0	66	53.0	15	----	53.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG287B	164	1	0.0	56.8	66	56.8	15	----	56.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG276MH	166	1	0.0	56.4	66	56.4	15	----	56.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG277H	167	1	0.0	60.8	66	60.8	15	----	60.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG278H	168	1	0.0	59.5	66	59.5	15	----	59.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG279H	169	1	0.0	55.5	66	55.5	15	----	55.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG274H	171	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG275MH	172	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG281MH	173	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	15	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG273H	175	1	0.0	55.4	66	55.4	15	----	55.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG271B	176	1	0.0	52.3	66	52.3	15	----	52.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG268H	178	1	0.0	56.9	66	56.9	15	----	56.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG269H	179	1	0.0	57.0	66	57.0	15	----	57.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG265MH	181	1	0.0	54.4	66	54.4	15	----	54.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG251MH	183	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG252HAbandoned	184	1	0.0	61.5	66	61.5	15	----	61.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG253H	185	1	0.0	64.3	66	64.3	15	----	64.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG254H	186	1	0.0	63.4	66	63.4	15	----	63.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG255H	187	1	0.0	64.3	66	64.3	15	----	64.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG256B	188	1	0.0	62.5	66	62.5	15	----	62.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NG191C	190	1	0.0	60.5	66	60.5	15	----	60.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG249B	192	1	0.0	57.3	66	57.3	15	----	57.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG250B	193	1	0.0	50.9	66	50.9	15	----	50.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG247B	195	1	0.0	57.4	66	57.4	15	----	57.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG248B	196	1	0.0	54.6	66	54.6	15	----	54.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG245B	197	1	0.0	56.7	66	56.7	15	----	56.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG246B	198	1	0.0	58.2	66	58.2	15	----	58.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG242MH	199	1	0.0	49.4	66	49.4	15	----	49.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NG243C	201	1	0.0	46.6	66	46.6	15	----	46.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NG241B	203	1	0.0	47.8	66	47.8	15	----	47.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NG244C	205	1	0.0	49.1	66	49.1	15	----	49.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA85H	207	1	0.0	61.6	66	61.6	15	----	61.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA78H	209	1	0.0	63.3	66	63.3	15	----	63.3	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

KHA

		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	142	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	1	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

MDOT
MMR 8-3-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

INCLUDES MIDDLE AND TOP SECTIONS OF EASTERN ALIGNMENT JUST WEST OF US 61 INTERCHANGE

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 7A
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS

ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	With Barrier Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
House - NE160H	1	1	0.0	50.3	66	50.3	15	----	50.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE421H	4	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE422H	5	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE423H	6	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE424H	7	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE146H	8	1	0.0	52.1	66	52.1	15	----	52.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE147H	9	1	0.0	51.3	66	51.3	15	----	51.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE148H	10	1	0.0	49.8	66	49.8	15	----	49.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE149H	11	1	0.0	49.1	66	49.1	15	----	49.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE150H	12	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE151H	13	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE152H	14	1	0.0	48.1	66	48.1	15	----	48.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE153H	15	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE154H	16	1	0.0	47.6	66	47.6	15	----	47.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE155H	18	1	0.0	47.9	66	47.9	15	----	47.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE156H	19	1	0.0	47.2	66	47.2	15	----	47.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE157H	20	1	0.0	47.5	66	47.5	15	----	47.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE158H	21	1	0.0	47.3	66	47.3	15	----	47.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE159H	23	1	0.0	47.3	66	47.3	15	----	47.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP30	25	1	0.0	43.7	66	43.7	15	----	43.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE161H	26	1	0.0	49.6	66	49.6	15	----	49.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA62B	28	1	0.0	52.4	66	52.4	15	----	52.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE164H	30	1	0.0	61.2	66	61.2	15	----	61.2	0.0	8	-8.0

Church - NE169C use 7B	32	1	0.0	64.0	66	64.0	15	----	64.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE167BS	34	1	0.0	65.1	66	65.1	15	----	65.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE168BS	35	1	0.0	62.7	66	62.7	15	----	62.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE166B	36	1	0.0	63.5	66	63.5	15	----	63.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE165B	37	1	0.0	60.8	66	60.8	15	----	60.8	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE170B	39	1	0.0	58.9	66	58.9	15	----	58.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE171BS	40	1	0.0	63.2	66	63.2	15	----	63.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE174H	42	1	0.0	63.6	66	63.6	15	----	63.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE175MH	43	1	0.0	63.5	66	63.5	15	----	63.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG194BS	45	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG195H	46	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG193H	48	1	0.0	53.6	66	53.6	15	----	53.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP31	50	1	0.0	50.0	66	50.0	15	----	50.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA199B	52	1	0.0	60.8	66	60.8	15	----	60.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA198H	54	1	0.0	59.3	66	59.3	15	----	59.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA197B	56	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP29	58	1	0.0	51.4	66	51.4	15	----	51.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA196MH	60	1	0.0	65.5	66	65.5	15	----	65.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House(Relo) - NE162HR	62	1	0.0	54.8	66	54.8	15	----	54.8	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction		
		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	42	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

MDOT
MMR 8-3-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

INCLUDES TOP & BOTTOM SECTIONS OF EASTERN ALIGNMENT JUST WEST OF US 61 INTERCHANGE

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 7 B
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS

ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
House - NE160H	1	1	0.0	50.3	66	50.3	15	----	50.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE421H	4	1	0.0	60.0	66	60.0	15	----	60.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE422H	5	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE423H	6	1	0.0	59.8	66	59.8	15	----	59.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE424H	7	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	15	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE146H	8	1	0.0	52.1	66	52.1	15	----	52.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE147H	9	1	0.0	51.3	66	51.3	15	----	51.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE148H	10	1	0.0	49.8	66	49.8	15	----	49.8	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE149H	11	1	0.0	49.1	66	49.1	15	----	49.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE150H	12	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE151H	13	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE152H	14	1	0.0	48.1	66	48.1	15	----	48.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE153H	15	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	15	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE154H	16	1	0.0	47.6	66	47.6	15	----	47.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE155H	18	1	0.0	47.9	66	47.9	15	----	47.9	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE156H	19	1	0.0	47.2	66	47.2	15	----	47.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE157H	20	1	0.0	47.5	66	47.5	15	----	47.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE158H	21	1	0.0	47.3	66	47.3	15	----	47.3	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE159H	23	1	0.0	47.3	66	47.3	15	----	47.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP30	25	1	0.0	43.7	66	43.7	15	----	43.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE161H	26	1	0.0	49.6	66	49.6	15	----	49.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA62B	28	1	0.0	52.4	66	52.4	15	----	52.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE164H	30	1	0.0	61.2	66	61.2	15	----	61.2	0.0	8	-8.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

KHA

Church - NE169C Good	32	1	0.0	62.9	66	62.9	15	----	62.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE167BS	34	1	0.0	63.5	66	63.5	15	----	63.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE168BS	35	1	0.0	64.0	66	64.0	15	----	64.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE166B	36	1	0.0	64.2	66	64.2	15	----	64.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE165B	37	1	0.0	65.9	66	65.9	15	----	65.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NE170B	39	1	0.0	58.9	66	58.9	15	----	58.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NE171BS	40	1	0.0	63.2	66	63.2	15	----	63.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE174H	42	1	0.0	63.6	66	63.6	15	----	63.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE175MH	43	1	0.0	63.5	66	63.5	15	----	63.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NG194BS	45	1	0.0	60.1	66	60.1	15	----	60.1	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG195H	46	1	0.0	60.4	66	60.4	15	----	60.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NG193H	48	1	0.0	53.6	66	53.6	15	----	53.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP31	50	1	0.0	50.0	66	50.0	15	----	50.0	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA199B	52	1	0.0	60.7	66	60.7	15	----	60.7	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA198H	54	1	0.0	59.3	66	59.3	15	----	59.3	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NA197B	56	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Noise REC - NRECP29	58	1	0.0	51.4	66	51.4	15	----	51.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NA196MH	60	1	0.0	65.5	66	65.5	15	----	65.5	0.0	8	-8.0
House(Relo) - NE162HR	62	1	0.0	54.8	66	54.8	15	----	54.8	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction		
		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	42	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

MDOT
MMR 8-5-03

5 August 2003
TNM 2.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS
PROJECT/CONTRACT: KHA
RUN: I-69, Section 8
BARRIER DESIGN: INPUT HEIGHTS
ATMOSPHERICS: 68 deg F, 50% RH

Average pavement type shall be used unless a State highway agency substantiates the use of a different type with approval of FHWA.

Receiver Name	No.	#DUs	Existing LAeq1h	No Barrier					With Barrier			
				LAeq1h Calculated	Crit'n	Increase over existing Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc	Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
Noise REC - NRECP33	1	1	0.0	48.4	66	48.4	15	----	48.4	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NJ183H	3	1	0.0	57.0	66	57.0	15	----	57.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NJ182H	4	1	0.0	57.0	66	57.0	15	----	57.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NJ181H	5	1	0.0	56.4	66	56.4	15	----	56.4	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NJ184BS	6	1	0.0	56.0	66	56.0	15	----	56.0	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NJ185MH	7	1	0.0	54.9	66	54.9	15	----	54.9	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NJ186C	9	1	0.0	62.6	66	62.6	15	----	62.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NE180H	11	1	0.0	58.1	66	58.1	15	----	58.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Church - NK373C	13	1	0.0	57.6	66	57.6	15	----	57.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Shed - NK376BS	15	1	0.0	58.6	66	58.6	15	----	58.6	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NK374H	17	1	0.0	56.7	66	56.7	15	----	56.7	0.0	8	-8.0
Business - NK375B	18	1	0.0	57.2	66	57.2	15	----	57.2	0.0	8	-8.0
House - NK372H	21	1	0.0	59.7	66	59.7	15	----	59.7	0.0	8	-8.0
School - NK371B1	22	1	0.0	58.9	66	58.9	15	----	58.9	0.0	8	-8.0
School - NK371B2	23	1	0.0	58.5	66	58.5	15	----	58.5	0.0	8	-8.0
School - NK371B3	24	1	0.0	58.1	66	58.1	15	----	58.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B1	25	1	0.0	56.5	66	56.5	15	----	56.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B2	26	1	0.0	62.1	66	62.1	15	----	62.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B3	27	1	0.0	61.2	66	61.2	15	----	61.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B4	28	1	0.0	60.5	66	60.5	15	----	60.5	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B5	29	1	0.0	59.6	66	59.6	15	----	59.6	0.0	8	-8.0
Ball Field - NK370B6	30	1	0.0	59.5	66	59.5	15	----	59.5	0.0	8	-8.0

Dwelling Units	# DUs	Noise Reduction

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

KHA

		Min	Avg	Max
		dB	dB	dB
All Selected	22	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Cost Estimates
For
MDOT Estimated Letting Dates

The cost estimates prepared for the DEIS were computed based on MDOT's 2001 cost data. A review of Mississippi Department of Transportation Construction Cost Index documents for each calendar year from 1987 through 2008 reflected a 3% average annual growth trend.

Applying an average 3% annual increase to estimated 2001 construction costs resulted in an increase of 101.3048% for the 2010 estimated construction costs.

Using the 2001 data, the costs were previously computed separately for the Southern, Middle, and Northern Sections of I-69 and the widening of SR 8 between Rosedale and Cleveland. The computed cost estimates for 2001 and the updated cost estimates for 2010 are shown in the table below.

A	B	C
Segment	2001 Computed Cost	2010 Updated Cost (B x 1.3048)
I-69 South Section	$473,567,853	$617,911,335
I-69 Middle Section	$91,899,462	$119,910,418
I-69 North Section	$336,766,072	$439,412,371
I-69 Totals	**$902,233,387**	**$1,177,234,124**
SR 8 Widening	$54,105,203	$70596469
Study Totals	**$956,338,590**	**$1,247,830,593**

Cost Estimates
For
MDOT Estimated Letting Dates

For the Final EIS, the MDOT revised the three sections used in the Draft EIS to the five segments shown on the attached map. The following anticipated letting date years were established by the MDOT for each of the five segments:

- Segment One – 2016
- Segment Two – 2022
- Segment Three – 2019
- Segment Four – 2026
- Segment Five – 2029

Since the anticipated letting date years are different, the cost factors used to compute the cost for the anticipated letting dates will be different. It was agreed that the procedure used to compute the 2010 estimated costs for the Southern, Central and Northern Section would be used for computing the anticipated letting date costs for the five segments. An annual increase of 3 % will be used to develop a cost factor based on the difference in years between the anticipated letting date for the five segments and Year 2010.

The following are the number of years between 2010 and the anticipated letting year for the five segments and the resulting letting year cost factor.

- Segment One: 6 years, Cost Factor of 1.1941
- Segment Two: 12 years, Cost Factor of 1.4258
- Segment Three: 9 years, Cost Factor of 1.3048
- Segment Four: 16 years, Cost Factor of 1.6047
- Segment Five: 19 years, Cost Factor of 1.7535

The Anticipated Letting Year Costs for the five segments are summarized in the table below.

Segment	Anticipated Letting Year	2001 Computed Cost	2010 Updated Cost	Cost Factor	Anticipated Letting Year Cost
One	2016	$176,590,440	$230,415,206	1.1941	$275,138,798
Two	2022	$247,033,494	$322,329,303	1.4258	$459,577,120
Three	2019	$283,787,549	$370,285,993	1.3048	$483,149,164
Four	2026	$194,821,904	$254,203,620	1.6047	$407,920,549
Five	2029	$54,105,203	$70,596,469	1.7535	$123,790,908

Legend

- Preferred Alternative with Spurs
- Upgrade
- Interchange
- Section Boundaries
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Water Bodies
- Cities

N W E S

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Northern Section

Middle Section

Southern Section

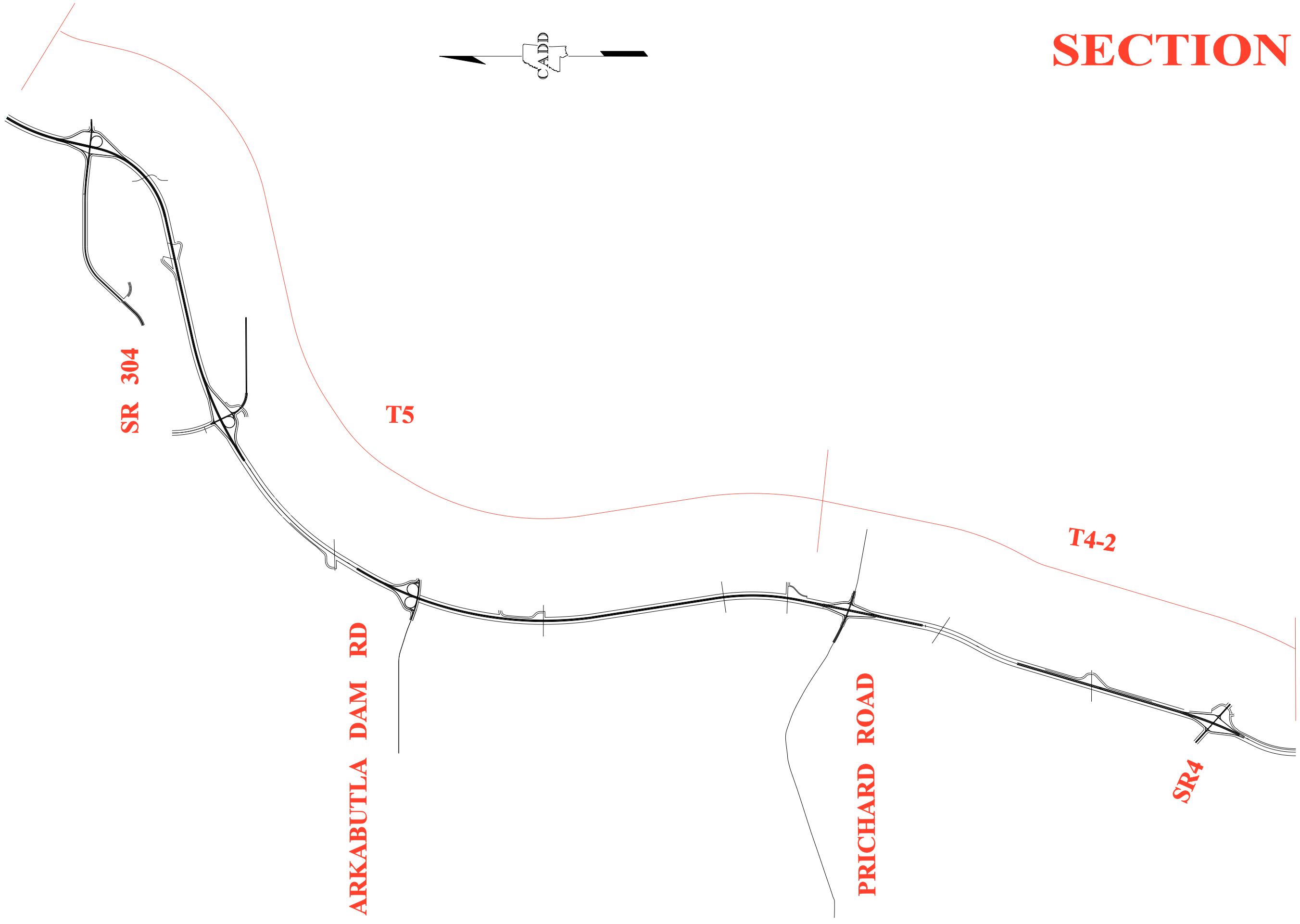
End SIU 11
Begin SIU 10

SR 304 Interchange and Spur
SR 304-Kirby Rd Spur
Robinsonville
1
Arkabutla Dam Rd Upgrade and Interchange
Kirby-Counce Rd Interchange and East Upgrade
North Tunica
Prichard Rd Interchange
Tunica
Prichard Rd East/West Upgrades
SR 4 Interchange
Tate Co.
Dubbs Rd Interchange and Upgrade
Askew WR
2
Dundee
Crenshaw Rd Interchange and Upgrade
Tunica
Quitman
Coahoma
Lula
Sledge
US 49 North-US 61 North-Interchange
County Road-SR 315 Upgrade
Rich
Falcon
Friars Point
Coahoma
Jonestown-Coahoma Interchange
SR 316 Upgrade
County Road Upgrade
Jonestown
Stovall
Eagles Nest Rd Spur
Eagles Nest Rd Interchange
Existing 61
Marks
Sherard
Clarksdale
SR 6 Interchange
Lambert
South State Street Interchange
US 49 South- DeSoto Ave Interchange
Rena Lara
New Africa Rd Existng Interchange
Coahoma
Bolivar
Bobo Interchange
3
Alligator
Mattson
Dublin
Quitman
Tallahatchie
Alligator Interchange
Duncan
Duncan Interchange
Tutwiler
Coahoma
Sunflower
Rome
Shelby
Shelby Interchange
Bolivar
Sumner
Webb
Gunnison
Hutton Rd Interchange and County Rd West Upgrade
State Penal Farm
Winstonville
Mound Bayou
Parchman
5
Mound Bayou Interchange and Spur
Merigold
Glendora
Rosedale
SR 8 Widening
US 61 South-Merigold Interchange
Drew
Tallahatchie
Leflore
Beulah
Pace
Renova
Sunflower
SR 8-Cleveland Interchange
Cleveland
Tallahatchie
Dahomey NWR
SR 446 Interchange
SR 446 Upgrade
4
Boyle
Ruleville
End SIU 12
Begin SIU 11
Skene
Doddsville
Schlater
Benoit
Litton Rd Interchange
Shaw- US 61 Spur
US 61 Interchange
Bolivar
Sunflower
SR 1 Interchange
Shaw
Sunflower
Indianola

MISSISSIPPI'S PRIORITY
I-69
ROBINSONVILLE TO BENOIT — SECTION 11

Preferred Alternative - Independent Phases

SECTION 1



EQUATION: Sta 1092+53.816 BK = Sta 1021+93.846 AH

PC Sta. 979+84.989

PT Sta. 970+92.954

PC Sta. 947+92.643

PT Sta. 837+64.260

PC Sta. 799+02.668

PT Sta. 790+18.374

County Rd

County Rd Bridged Over I-69

Relocated County Rd

I-69 Bridged Over Prichard Road

Upgrade Prichard Road

5-Lane Section on Prichard Rd Inside Interchange

I-69 Bridged Over Possible RR Spur

I-69 Bridged over Co Rd

East Frontage Rd

County Rd Bridge over I-69

County Rd Intersects East Frontage Rd

I-69 Cuts Co Rd

I-69 Bridged over SR 4 with SR 4 Widened to 4-Lane Divided or 5-Lane Section Inside Limits of Interchange

SR 4

BEAT LINE ROAD

PRICHARD ROAD

JOSEPHINE ROAD

HENDERSON ROAD

FISH LAKE ROAD

CRISTIAN GROVE ROAD

LITTLE TEXAS ROAD

JACK LAKE CROSSING

GOOD ROAD

LIMERICK ROAD

KIMBLES ROAD

HENRY DRIVE

BATTLE PAUL III ETAL

BILLY-BOB CIRCLE

MISSISSIPPI HIGHWAY 4

T4-2

VPI 1083+00.000 EL. 194.270
VPC 1077+00.000 EL. 200.008
VPT 1068+82.000 EL. 215.664
VPI 1061+32.000
VPC 1053+82.000 EL. 215.373
VPT 1045+00.000 EL. 200.121
VPI 1043+00.000
VPC 1040+00.000 EL. 194.270
VPT 1029+00.000 EL. 194.270
VPI 1026+00.000
VPC 1023+00.000 EL. 200.225
VPT 1014+00.000 EL. 218.090
VPI 1008+00.000
VPC 1002+00.000 EL. 218.960
VPT 990+00.000 EL. 196.880
VPI 987+00.000
VPC 984+00.000 EL. 191.360
VPT 816+41.000 EL. 191.360
VPI 813+41.000
VPC 810+41.000 EL. 197.360
VPT 808+09.000 EL. 202.000
VPI 802+09.000
207.172

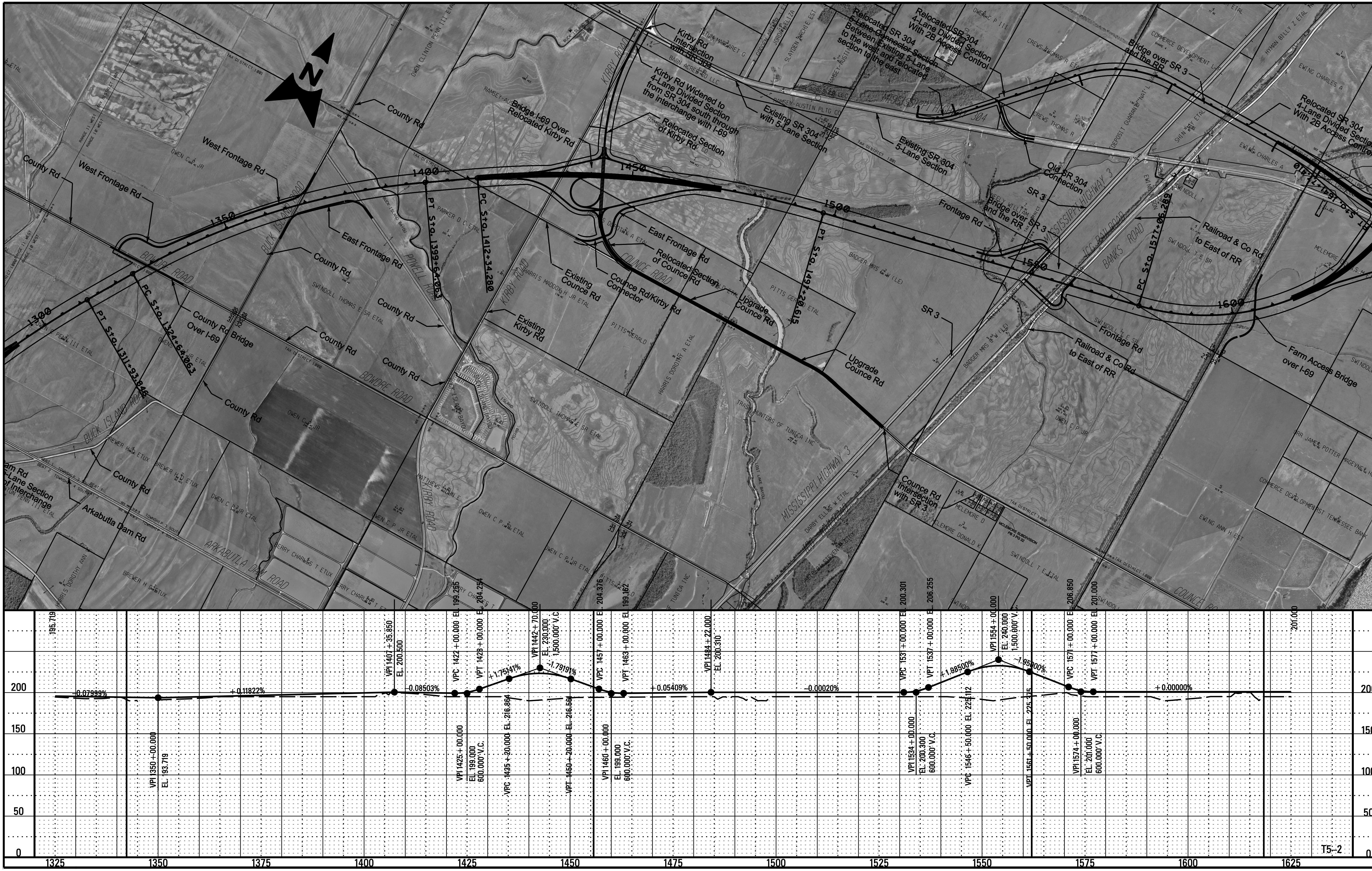
+0.00000%
-7.91274%
1,800.000' V.C.
+1.95033%
600.000' V.C.
+0.00000%
1,200.000' V.C.
-1.98500%
600.000' V.C.
+1.84000%
+0.00000%
+0.00000%
2.00000%
1,200.000' V.C.
-2.00000%

EL. 230.000
EL. 194.270
EL. 194.270
EL. 191.360
EL. 214.000

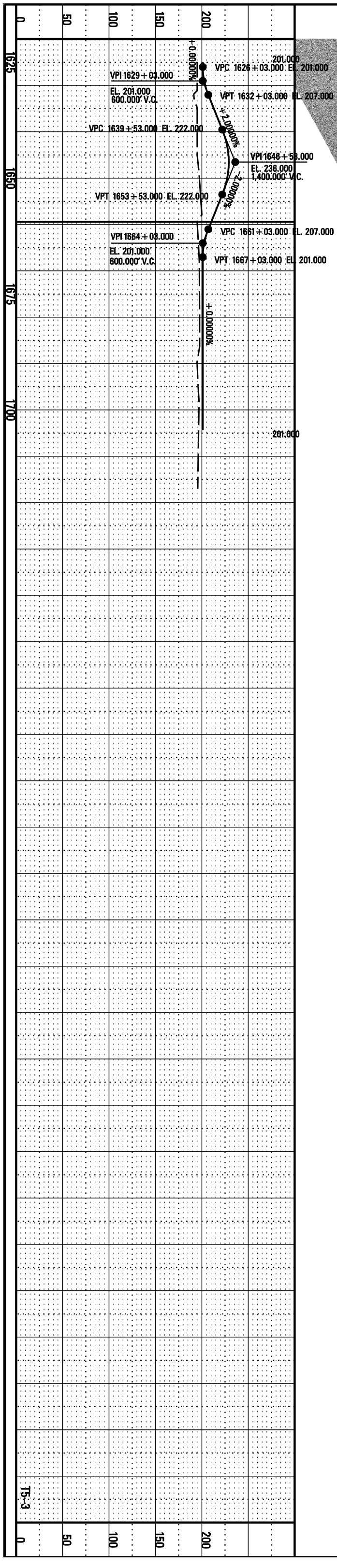
1075
1050
1025
1000
975
950
925
900
875
850
825
800

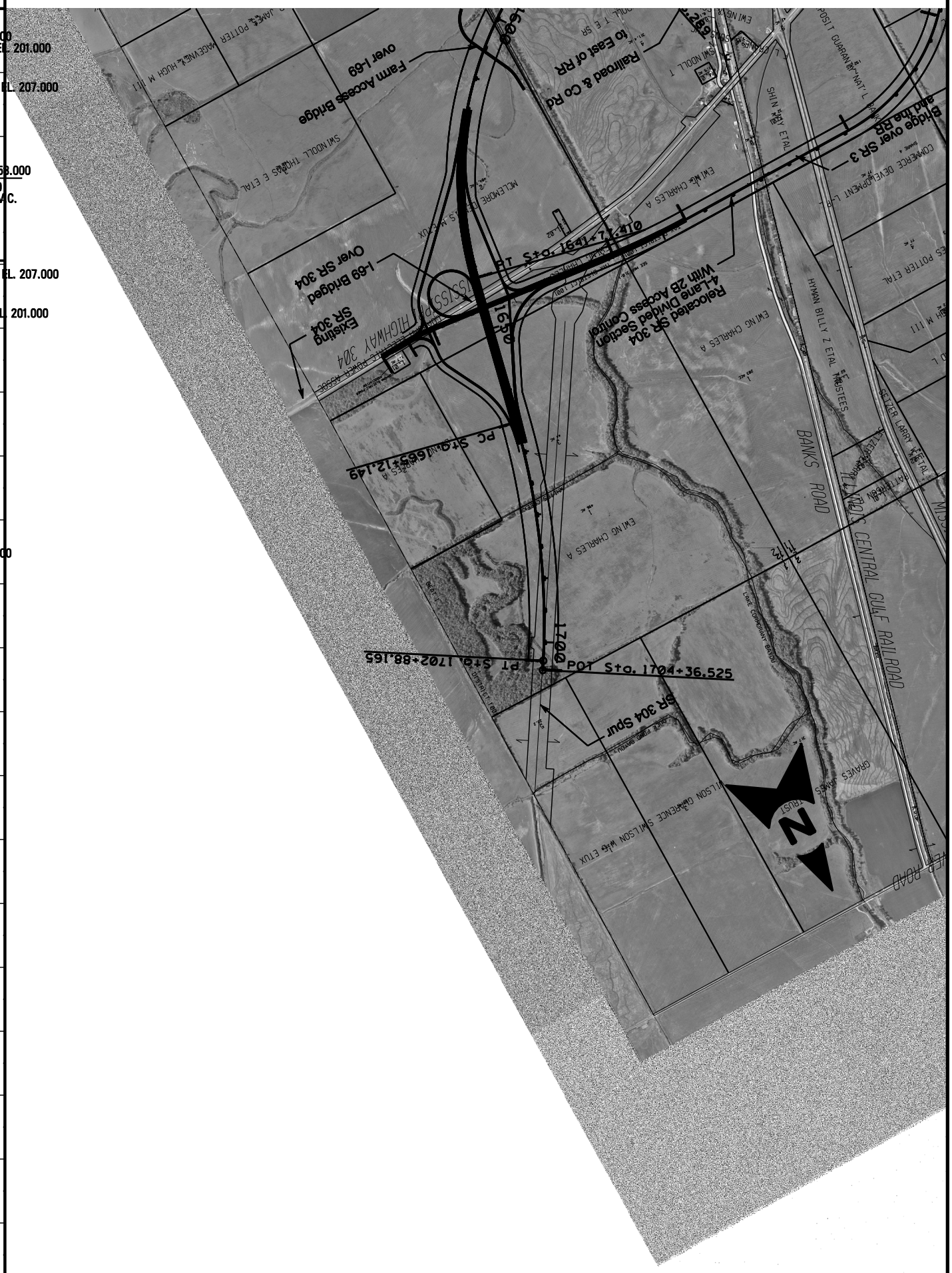
200
150
100
50
0

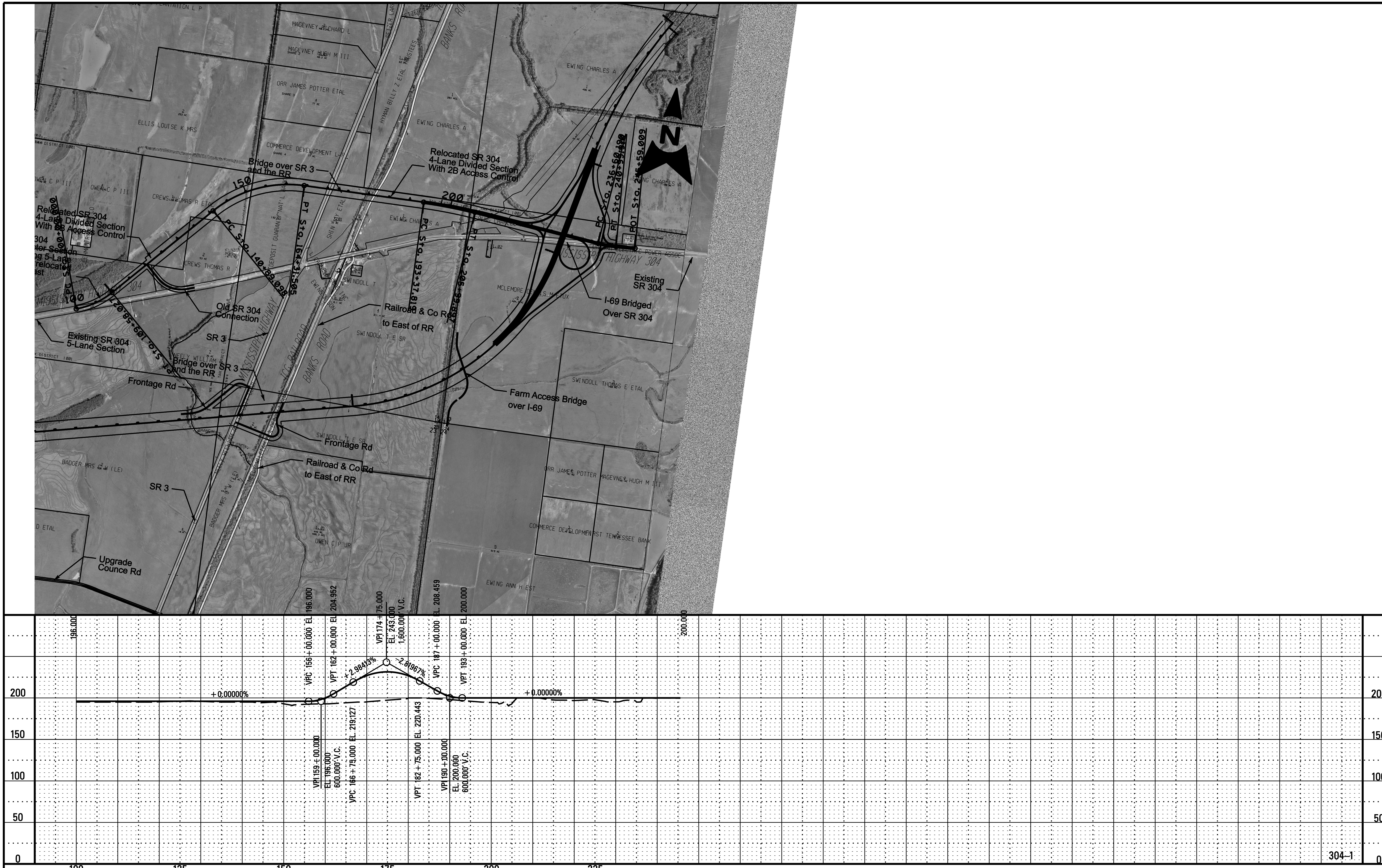
BOWDRE ROAD
HAMBRICK ROAD
BUCK ISLAND ROAD
ARKABUTLA DAM
STOVER ROAD
WOOLFOLK ROAD
ARNOLD ROAD
BOOTH ROAD
BONDS ROAD
GOOD ROAD
FRIEDS ROAD
VERNER ROAD
BRICHARD ROAD
UNDER
County Rd Bridge Over I-69
PC Sta. 1321+60.060
PT Sta. 1325+08.060
Ø.250
Arkabutla Dam Rd Widened to 5-Lane Section Within Limits of Interchange
Arkabutla Dam Rd
OVER
County Rd
County Rd Dead Ends
East Frontage Rd
PC Sta. 1161+65.969
Ø.375
County Rd Bridged Over I-69
Ø.750
EQUATION: Sta 1035+80.368 BK = Sta 1035+00.000 AH
Relocated County Rd
PC Sta. 1025+71.023
PT Sta. 1022+71.023
I-69 Bridged Over Pritchard Road Over County Rd
PT Sta. 1028+68.901
Verner Rd Park
Jack Lake Crossing
OWEN CLINTON PENN III ETAL
BREWER H D ETUX
ARNOLD SCOTT A JR TRUSTEE
ARNOLD FARMS INC
ARNOLD ANN K ETAL
ARNOLD KEYS M
BOOTH FAMILY FARM ETAL
HARRIS ROBERT A JR
PERRY GEORGE W ETUX
SAWYER RUTH S
BERRY FARM ENTERPRISES
CRAMP COMPANY
SEAWRIGHT JOHN D
SEAWRIGHT WILLIAM J
LAKE EARL J II
LAKE SHAWN ANN
BERRIGAN J
WHITTLE RALPH L ESTATE
SUGAR TERRELL E ETAL
JOHNSON ELIZABETH A ETVIR
ESTATE OF JULIA FERGUSON A-9
DUNN JAMES E
BOND ADAM JR ETAL
BERRY CHARLES T ETAL
PATTERSON MATTIE
BIBB JOHN ROEHLER ETAL
DULANEY WILLIAM P
DANIEL JAMES ETUX
THOMAS LUCILLE P
DORSEY RUSSELL KINNEL ETAL
TAYLOR CALVIN ETAL
JOHNSON ELIZABETH A ETVIR
DARBY ELLIS W ETAL
HARRIS DOROTHY ANN
FLOYD BAYOU
ANDERSON G W JR
BURNETT TROTH
FLYNN
MICHAEL JEAN F ETAL
HARRIS DOROTHY A
OWEN C PENN III ETAL
OWEN CLINTON PENN III ETAL
MILLIAMS P
YANCEY D
ARGROW D
RICE OSCAR JR
MILLER PAUL
HARRIS C
TAYLOR E
BROWN YVONNE M
RICE OSCAR JR
TAX DISTRICT 1000
TAX DISTRICT 1001
TAX DISTRICT 1800
RANGE 11 WEST
RANGE 10 WEST
TOWNSHIP 3 SOUTH
TOWNSHIP 4 SOUTH
BEAT 1
BEAT 2
N
1300
1250
1200
1150
1100
1050
T5-1
185.719
VPI 1227+50.000
EL. 198.000
0.07999%
VPT 1289+84.000 EL. 208.250
VPC 1290+85.620
VPI 1293+85.620
EL. 198.210
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1296+85.620 EL. 197.970
2.49667%
VPT 1282+34.000
EL. 227.000
1,500.000' V.C.
2.51004%
VPC 1274+84.000 EL. 208.250
VPT 1272+07.700 EL. 201.342
600.000' V.C.
VPI 1269+07.700
EL. 193.842
VPC 1266+07.700 EL. 194.142
-0.10001%
+0.07691%
VPI 1179+00.000
EL. 194.270
+0.00000%
194.270
1325
1300
1275
1250
1225
1200
1175
1150
1125
1100
1075
1050
1025
200
150
100
50
0



Relocated SR 304
4-Lane Divided Section
With 2B Access Control
Relocated SR 304
5-Lane Connector Section
Between Existing 5-Lane
to the west and relocated
section to the east
Bridge over SR 3
and the RR
Kirby Rd
Intersection
with SR 304
Kirby Rd Widened to
4-Lane Divided Section
from SR 304 south through
the interchange with I-69
Existing SR 304
with 5-Lane Section
Existing SR 304
5-Lane Section
Relocated Section
of Kirby Rd
Bridge I-69 Over
Relocated Kirby Rd
Old SR 304
Connection
SR 3
Bridge over SR 3
and the RR
Frontage Rd
Railroad & Co Rd
to East of RR
East Frontage Rd
Relocated Section
of Counce Rd
Counce Rd/Kirby Rd
Connector
Existing
Counce Rd
Upgrade
Counce Rd
Existing
Kirby Rd
Counce Rd
Intersection
with SR 3
Farm Access Bridge
over I-69
County Rd
West Frontage Rd
County Rd Bridge
Over I-69
Arkabutla Dam Rd
PC Sta. 1577+06.289
PT Sta. 1497+20.615
PC Sta. 1412+34.280
PT Sta. 1399+64.063
PC Sta. 1324+64.063
PT Sta. 1311+93.846
1300
1350
1400
1450
1500
1550
1600
KIRBY ROAD
BOWDRE ROAD
POWELL ROAD
COUNCE ROAD
BANKS ROAD
BUCK ISLAND ROAD
ARKABUTLA DAM ROAD
MISSISSIPPI HIGHWAY 3
LOST LAKE BAYOU
VPI 1407+35.850
EL. 200.500
VPC 1422+00.000 EL. 199.285
VPT 1428+00.000 EL. 204.254
VPI 1425+00.000
EL. 199.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 1435+20.000 EL. 216.864
VPI 1442+70.000
EL. 230.000
1,500.000' V.C.
VPT 1450+20.000 EL. 216.561
VPC 1457+00.000 EL. 204.376
VPT 1463+00.000 EL. 199.162
VPI 1460+00.000
EL. 199.000
600.000' V.C.
VPI 1484+22.000
EL. 200.310
VPC 1531+00.000 EL. 200.301
VPT 1537+00.000 EL. 206.255
VPI 1534+00.000
EL. 200.300
600.000' V.C.
VPC 1546+50.000 EL. 225.112
VPI 1554+00.000
EL. 240.000
1,500.000' V.C.
VPT 1561+50.000 EL. 225.375
VPC 1571+00.000 EL. 206.850
VPT 1577+00.000 EL. 201.000
VPI 1574+00.000
EL. 201.000
600.000' V.C.
VPI 1350+00.000
EL. 193.719
195.719
201.000
-0.07999%
+0.11822%
-0.08503%
+1.75141%
-1.79191%
+0.05409%
-0.00020%
+1.98500%
-1.95000%
+0.00000%
0
50
100
150
200
1325
1350
1375
1400
1425
1450
1475
1500
1525
1550
1575
1600
1625
T5-2


0
50
100
150
200
1625
1650
1675
1700
+0.00000%
201.000
VPC 1626+03.000 EL. 201.000
VPI 1629+03.000
EL. 201.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1632+03.000 EL. 207.000
+2.00000%
VPC 1639+53.000 EL. 222.000
VPI 1648+53.000
EL. 236.000
1,400.000' V.C.
-2.00000%
VPT 1653+53.000 EL. 222.000
VPI 1664+03.000
EL. 201.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 1661+03.000 EL. 207.000
VPT 1667+03.000 EL. 201.000
+0.00000%
201.000
T5-3


Farm Access Bridge over I-69
Railroad & Co Rd to East of RR
Bridge over SR 3 and the RR
I-69 Bridged Over SR 304
Existing SR 304
Relocated SR 304 4-Lane Divided Section With 2B Access Control
PT Sta. 1641+71.410
PC Sta. 1665+12.149
PT Sta. 1702+88.165
POT Sta. 1704+36.525
SR 304 Spur
BANKS ROAD
HYMAN BILLY Z ETAL TRUSTEES
SCHAFER LARRY
WILSON CLARENCE S WILSON W/E ETUX
GRAVES JAMES
TRUST
N


Relocated SR 304
4-Lane Divided Section
With 2B Access Control
Bridge over SR 3
and the RR
PT Sta. 164+31.505
PC Sta. 140+88.098
PC Sta. 193+37.819
PT Sta. 205+95.897
PC Sta. 236+60.190
PT Sta. 240+94.448
POT Sta. 245+59.009
Existing
SR 304
I-69 Bridged
Over SR 304
Railroad & Co Rd
to East of RR
Old SR 304
Connection
SR 3
Existing SR 304
5-Lane Section
Bridge over SR 3
and the RR
Frontage Rd
Farm Access Bridge
over I-69
Upgrade
Counce Rd
MISSISSIPPI HIGHWAY 304
BANKS ROAD
ICG RAILROAD
EWING CHARLES A
ELLIS LOUISE K MRS
COMMERCE DEVELOPMENT L
ORR JAMES POTTER ETAL
MAGEVNEY HUGH M III
MAGEVNEY RICHARD L
CREWS THOMAS R
SWINDOLL T E SR
SWINDOLL THOMAS E ETAL
MCLEMORE
BADGER MRS
OWEN C P JR
EWING ANN H EST
COMMERCE DEVELOPMENT
FIRST TENNESSEE BANK
VPC 156+00.000 EL 196.000
VPT 162+00.000 EL 204.952
VPI 174+75.000
EL 243.000
1,600.000' V.C.
VPC 187+00.000 EL 208.459
VPT 193+00.000 EL 200.000
+2.98413%
-2.81967%
+0.00000%
+0.00000%
VPI 159+00.000
EL 196.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 166+75.000 EL 219.127
VPT 182+75.000 EL 220.443
VPI 190+00.000
EL 200.000
600.000' V.C.
196.000
200.000
200
150
100
50
0
100
125
150
175
200
225
304–1

I-69 EIS
PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES
PREFERED ALTERNATE SECTION 1

ITEM	SUB-ITEMS	UNIT	UNIT COST	QUANTITY	TOTAL COST
GRADING	CLEARING AND GRUBBING	Acre	2,000	750	1,500,000
	EXCAVATION	CY	5	0	0
	BORROW (Est. at 6' = 174,500 CY/MI)	CY	7	3,823,382	26,763,674
	CHANNEL CHANGE (Perrineal)	CY	3	0	0
	STREAM CHANGE (Intermittent)	CY	0	0	0
				0	
				TOTAL	28,263,674
DRAINAGE	CROSS DRAIN (PIPES)	LF	100	0	0
	CROSS DRAIN (BOX CULVERTS)	LF	350	3,650	1,277,500
	CROSS DRAIN (BOX BRIDGES)	LF	600	0	0
	MEDIAN DRAIN (Avg 1200' spacings) (24 @ 100')	LF	30	9,400	282,000
				0	
				0	
				TOTAL	1,559,500
SURFACING	4-LANE FREEWAY W/GRASS MEDIAN	MI	1,664,000	22	35,852,544
	2-LANE COLLECTORS/ARTERIALS/HIGHWAYS	MI	329,000	5	1,548,932
	FRONTAGE ROAD (PAVED)	MI	329,000	5	1,638,749
	FRONTAGE ROAD (UNPAVED)	MI	200,000	0	0
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE DIAMOND W/5LN)	EA	2,400,000	1	2,400,000
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE DIAMOND WLOOP)	EA	2,600,000	4	10,400,000
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE CLOVERLEAF W/5LN)	EA	3,210,000	0	0
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE HALF CLOVERLEAF W/5LN)	EA	2,500,000	0	0
				TOTAL	51,840,225
MISCELLANEOUS	GUARD RAIL	LF	15	12,200	183,000
	SIGNALIZATION-INTERCHANGE (DIAMOND ONLY)	EA	150,000	0	0
	RETAINING WALLS	SF	30	0	0
	WIRE FENCE	LF	5	226,922	1,134,610
	EROSION CONTROL		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	1,633,268	1,633,268
	SIGNING AND PAVING MARKINGS		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	1,633,268	1,633,268
	MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	1,633,268	1,633,268
	UTILITY RELOCATION		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	1,633,268	1,633,268
	MAJOR UTILITY RELOCATION			1,905,750	1,905,750
				0	
				TOTAL	9,756,432
TOTAL ROADWAY CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	91,419,831
BRIDGES	GRADE SEPARATIONS	SF	85	318,120	27,040,200
	MAINLINE - (RAILROAD)	SF	75	94,560	7,092,000
	MAINLINE - (HYDRAULICS)	SF	65	229,440	14,913,600
TOTAL STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	49,045,800
				CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL	140,465,631
				CONTINGENCY @ 15% OF CONSTRUCTION	21,069,845
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	161,535,476
ROW	AGRICULTURAL LAND	ACRE	2,000	750	1,500,000
	RESIDENCE - TAKEN	RES	80,000	2	160,000
	MOBILE HOME - TAKEN	RES	25,000	6	150,000
	BUSINESS - TAKEN	RES	150,000	0	0
				ACQUISITION & RELOCATION (30% OF LAND + STRUCTURES)	543,000
				ROW SUBTOTAL	2,353,000
TOTAL RIGHT-OF-WAY COST				TOTAL	2,353,000
TOTAL UPGRADE/SPUR COST				TOTAL	12,701,965
GRAND TOTAL				TOTAL	176,590,440
Length Total				MILES	18.465

SECTION 2

CADD

T4-1

T9

T7

DUBBS ROAD

CRENSHAW RD.

C9

C7

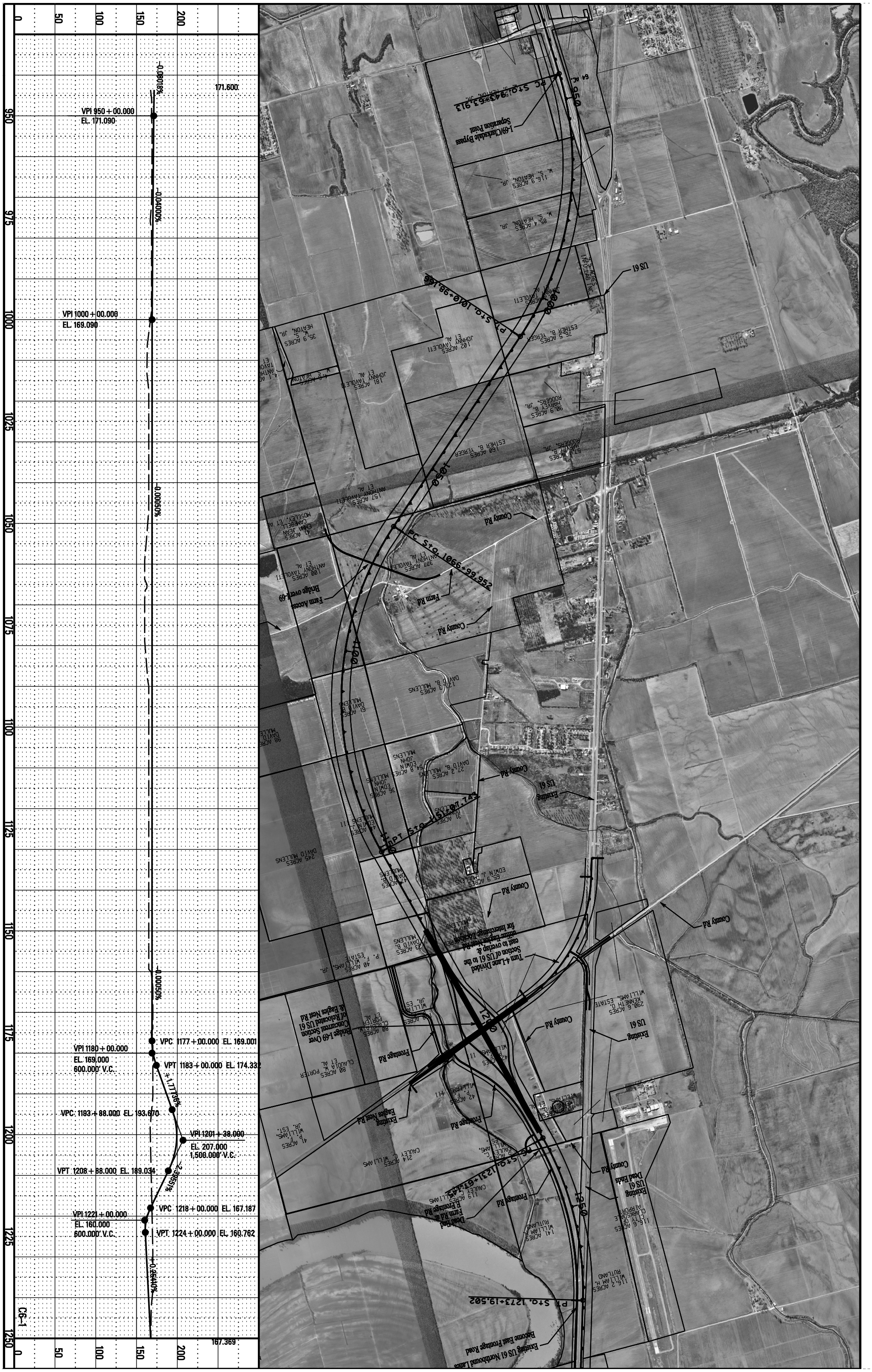
JONESTOWN RD

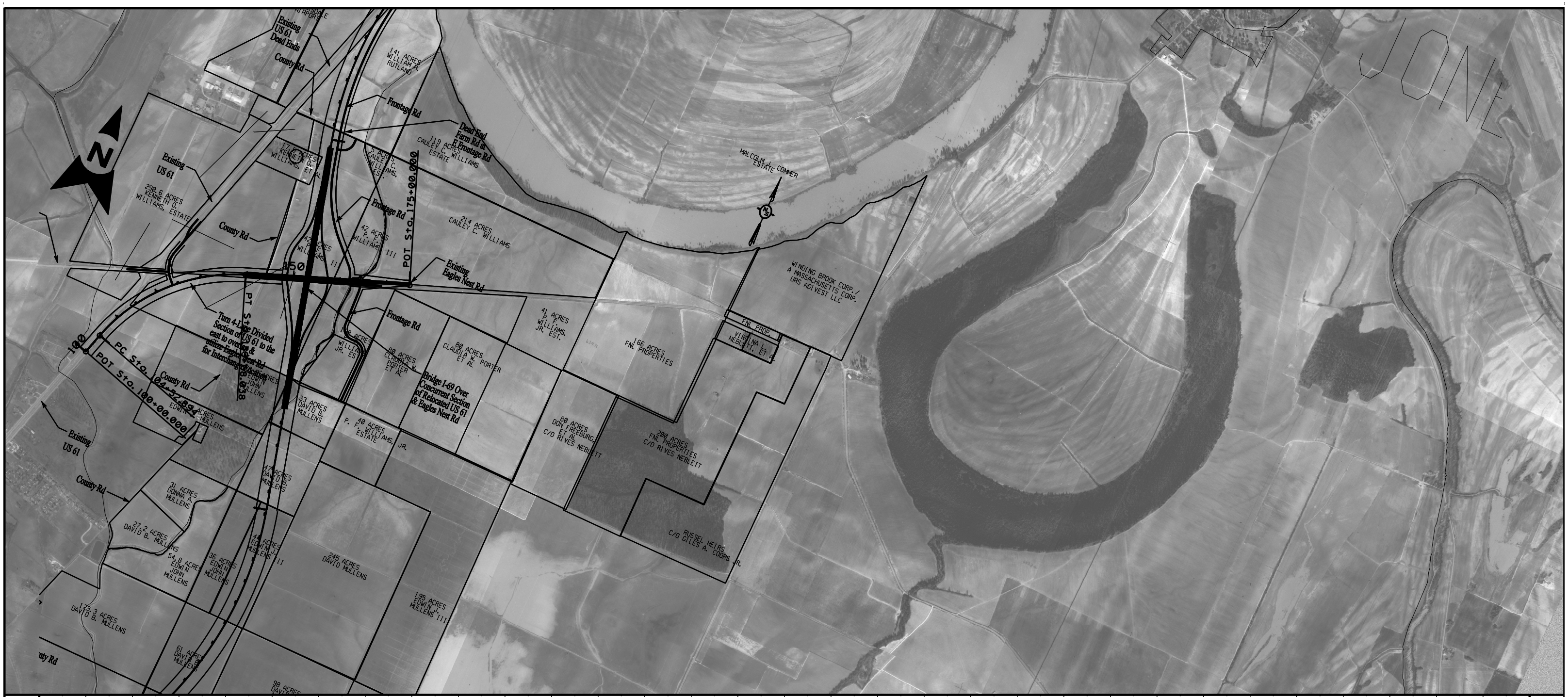
C6

US49

RENA LARA RD

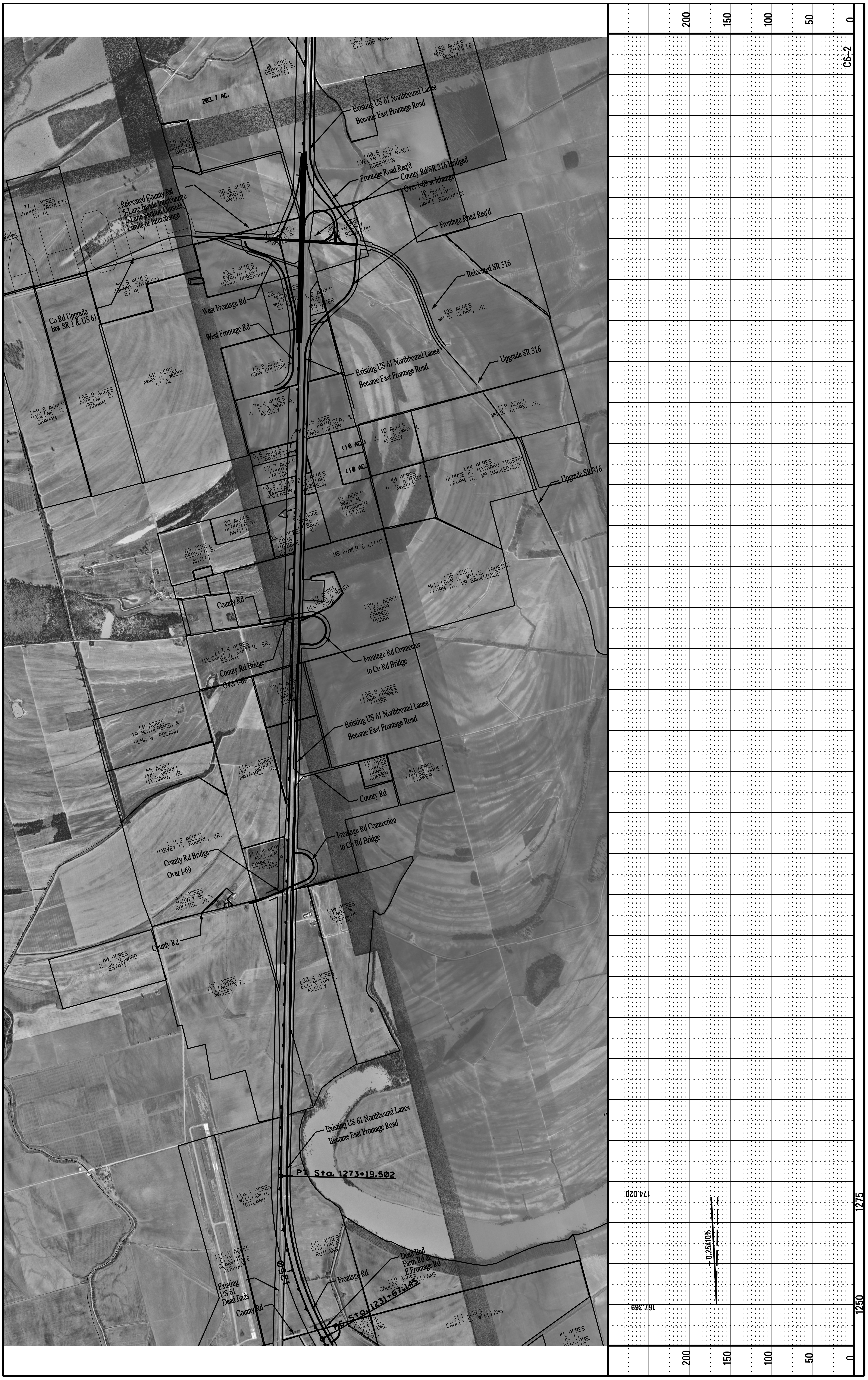
AIRPORT


0
50
100
150
200
950
975
1000
1025
1050
1075
1100
1125
1150
1175
1200
1225
1250
171.600
VPI 950 + 00.000
EL. 171.090
-0.00018%
-0.04000%
VPI 1000 + 00.000
EL. 169.090
-0.00050%
VPI 1180 + 00.000
EL. 169.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 1177 + 00.000 EL. 169.001
VPT 1183 + 00.000 EL. 174.332
+1.77736%
VPC 1193 + 88.000 EL. 193.670
VPI 1201 + 38.000
EL. 207.000
1,500.000' V.C.
-2.39857%
VPT 1208 + 88.000 EL. 189.034
VPC 1218 + 00.000 EL. 167.187
VPI 1221 + 00.000
EL. 160.000
600.000' V.C.
+0.26440%
C6-1
167.369
PC Sta. 940+63.913
PT Sta. 1010+98.166
PC Sta. 1066+99.952
PT Sta. 1231+67.245
PC Sta. 1273+19.502
L-69/Clarksdale Bypass
Separation Point
Bridge over I-69
Farm Access
Bridge I-69 Over
Countercurrent Section
Of Relocated US 61
& Eagles Nest Rd
Tum 4-Lane Divided
Section of US 61 to the
east to overlap &
utilize Future NB
for Interchange Ramps
Existing US 61 Northbound Lanes
Become East Frontage Road
Existing
Dead Ends
US 61
Frontage Rd
Farm Rd
County Rd
Eagles Nest Rd
950
1000
1050
1100
1150
1200
64 AC.
76.5 ACRES
ESTHER B. YERGER
102 ACRES
JOHNNY TAVOLETTI
ET AL
181 ACRES
JOHNNY TAVOLETTI
ET AL
35.9 ACRES
W. S. HEATON, JR.
4.8 ACRES
W. S. HEATON
90.9 ACRES
HARVEY B.
ROGERS, JR.
160 ACRES
ESTHER B. YERGER
57.4 ACRES
HARVEY B.
ROGERS, JR.
157 ACRES
ANTHONY TAVOLETTI
ET AL
41 ACRES
EMMA JEAN
CAMPBELL
MOSELEY, ET AL
100 ACRES
ANTHONY TAVOLETTI
ET AL
337 ACRES
ANTHONY TAVOLE
ET AL
61 ACRES
DAVID
MULLENS
98 ACRE
DAVID
MULLE
123.3 ACRES
DAVID B. MULLENS
54.8 ACRES
EDWIN
JOHN
MULLENS
36 ACRES
EDWIN
JOHN
MULLENS
27.2 ACRES
DAVID B. MULLENS
31 ACRES
DONNA
MULLENS
44 ACRES
EDWIN J.
MULLENS III
245 ACRES
DAVID MULLENS
47 ACRES
DAVID B.
MULLENS
65.9 ACRES
EDWIN J. MULLENS
23 ACRES
DAVID B.
MULLENS
40 ACRES
P. F. ESTATE
WILLIAMS, JR.
80 ACRES
CLAUDIA W.
ET AL
PORTER
80 ACRES
CLAUDIA W.
PORTER
ET AL
42 ACRES
P. F.
WILLIAMS
42 ACRES
P. F.
WILLIAMS
4 ACRES
P. F.
WILLIAMS, JR.
214 ACRES
C. WILLIAMS
5 ACRES
C.
WILLIAMS
119 ACRES
CAULEY C.
WILLIAMS
14 ACRES
WILLIAM R.
RUTLAND
116.6 ACRES
CITY OF
CLARKSDALE
AIRPORT
116.2 ACRES
WILLIAM H.
RUTLAND
290.6 ACRES
KENNETH O.
WILLIAMS, ESTATE
116.9 ACRES
W. S. HEATON, JR.
85.4 ACRES
W. S. HEATON, JR.
9.2 ACRES
INFO-LAB INC.
JOHNNY TAVOLETTI
ET AL

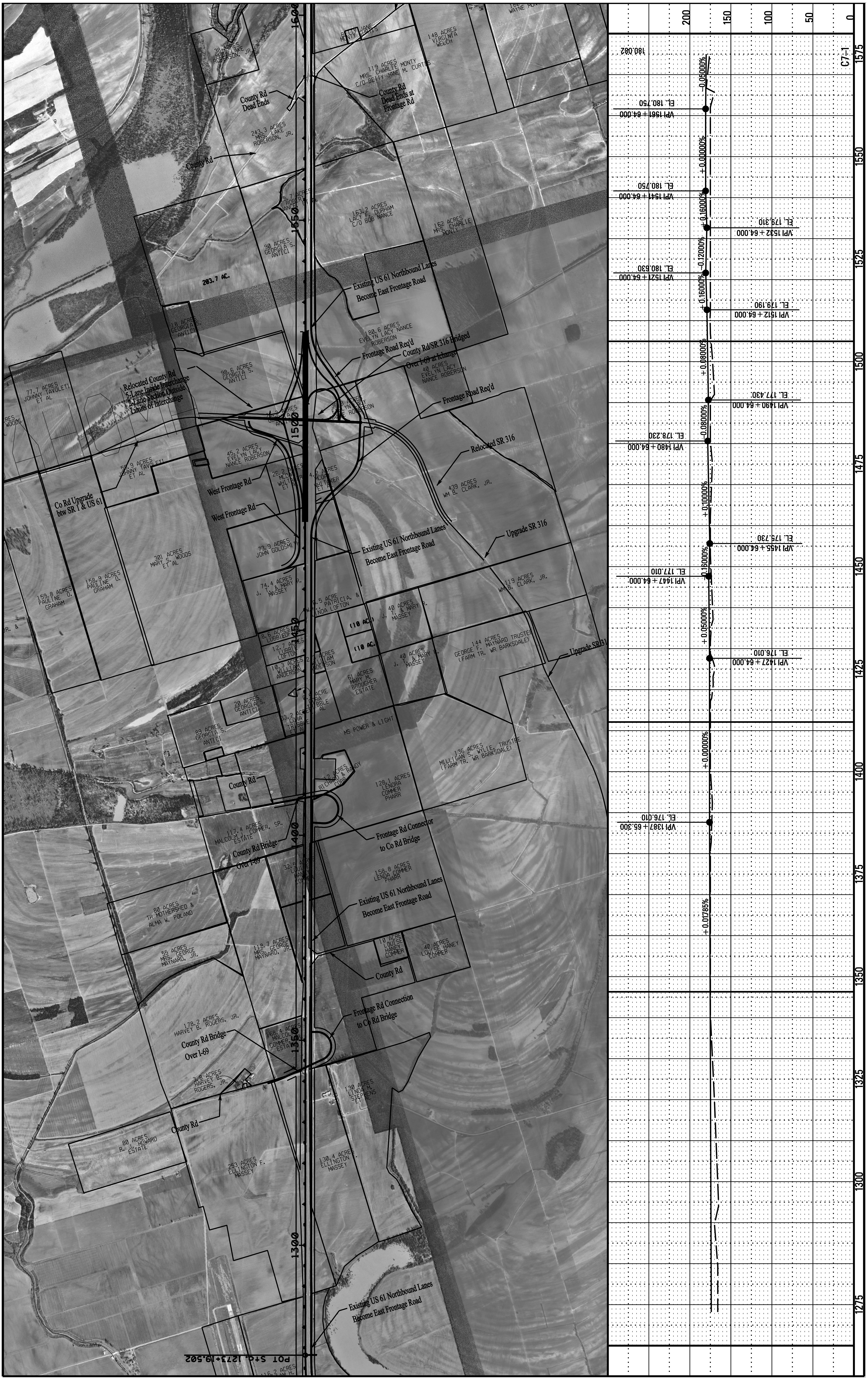


Note: Existing Roadway To Be Widened and Overlaid

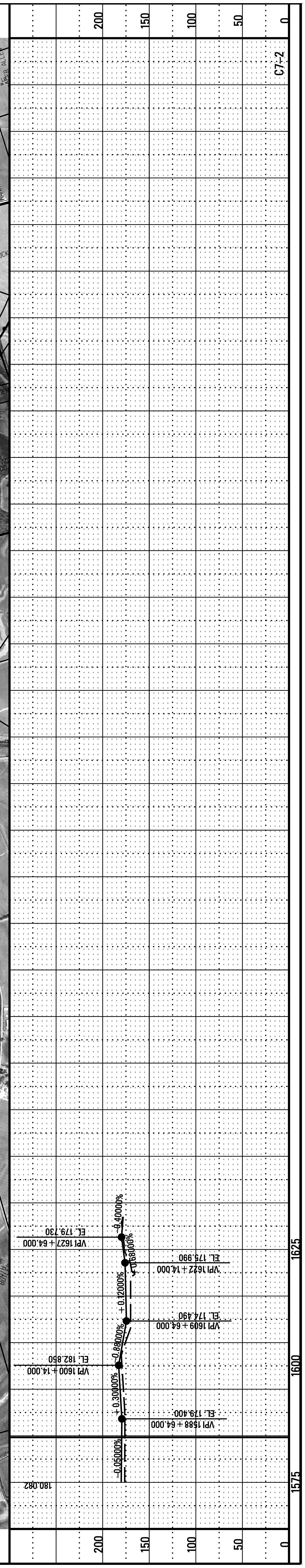
C6SPUR-1



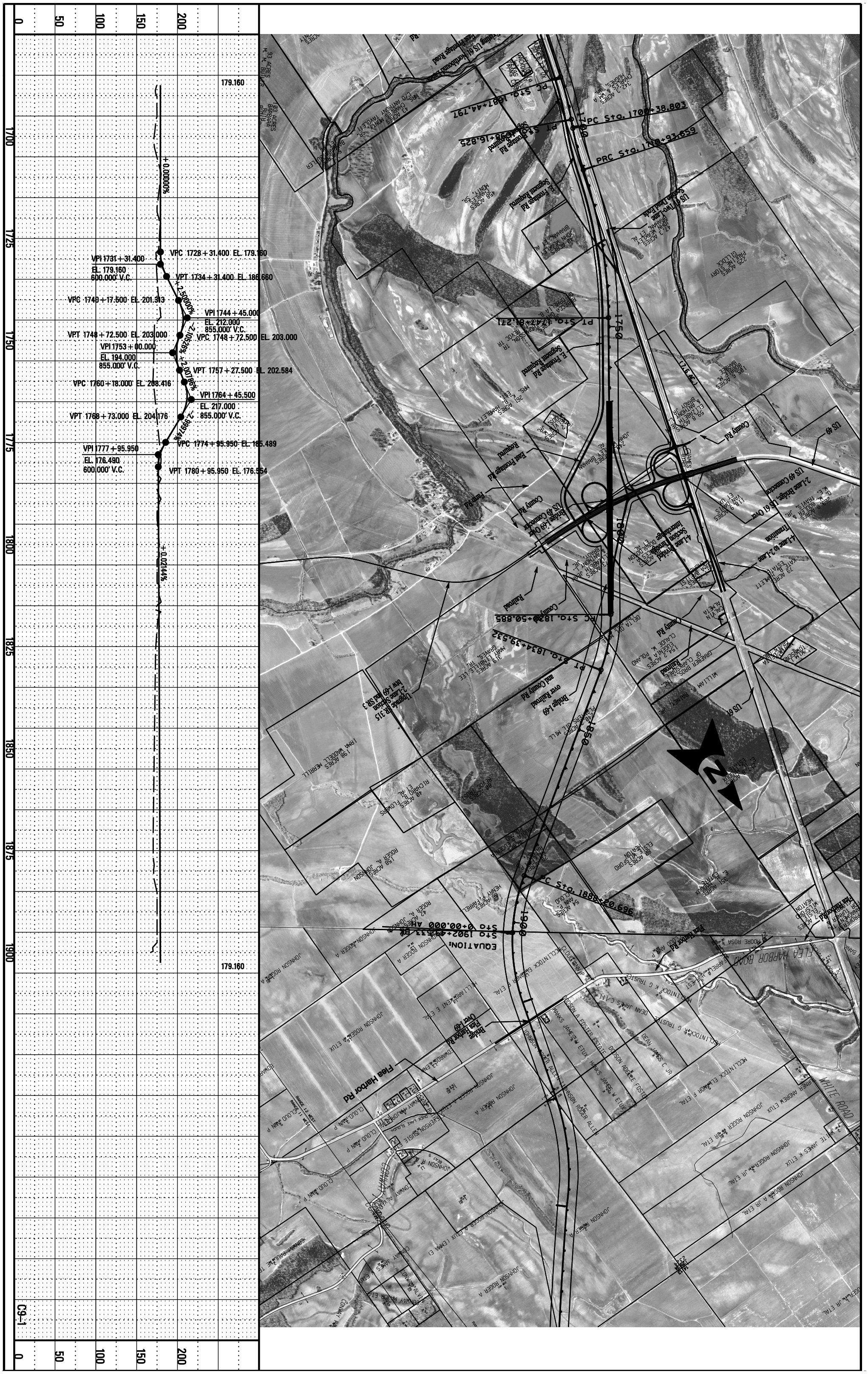
Existing US 61 Northbound Lanes Become East Frontage Road
203.7 AC.
Frontage Road Req'd
County Rd/SR 316 Bridged Over I-69 at Ichange
Relocated County Rd 5-Lane Inside Interchange 2-Lane Section Outside Limits of Interchange
Frontage Road Req'd
Relocated SR 316
West Frontage Rd
Co Rd Upgrade btw SR 1 & US 61
Upgrade SR 316
Upgrade SR 316
MS POWER & LIGHT
County Rd
Frontage Rd Connector to Co Rd Bridge
County Rd Bridge Over I-69
County Rd
Frontage Rd Connection to Co Rd Bridge
County Rd Bridge Over I-69
County Rd
PT Sta. 1273+19.502
Dead End Farm Rd @ E Frontage Rd
Frontage Rd
Existing US 61 Dead Ends
County Rd
PC Sta. 1231+67.145
77.7 ACRES JOHNNY TAVOLETI ET AL
98.6 ACRES GEORGIA S. ANTICI
90 ACRES GEORGIA S. ANTICI
180.6 ACRES EVELYN LACY NANCE ROBERSON
162 ACRES MRS. CHARLIE MONTY
40 ACRES EVELYN LACY NANCE ROBERSON
45.2 ACRES EVELYN LACY NANCE ROBERSON
58.9 ACRES JOHNNY TAVOLETI ET AL
439 ACRES WM B. CLARK, JR.
301 ACRES MARY S. WOODS ET AL
159.8 ACRES PAULINE O. GRAHAM
158.9 ACRES PAULINE O. GRAHAM
73.9 ACRES JOHN GOLDSMITH
74.4 ACRES J. T. & MARY R. MASSEY
119 ACRES WM B. CLARK, JR.
40 ACRES J. T. & MARY R. MASSEY
144 ACRES GEORGE F. MAYNARD TRUSTEE (FARM TR. WR BARKSDALE)
40 ACRES J. T. & MARY R. MASSEY
61 ACRES MARY M. BROUGHER ESTATE
20 ACRES GEORGIA S. ANTICI
89 ACRES GEORGIA S. ANTICI
136 ACRES MLLIJEAN S. WYLIE, TRUSTEE (FARM TR. WR BARKSDALE)
128.1 ACRES LENORA COMMER PHARR
117.4 ACRES MALCOLM V. COMMER, SR. ESTATE
158.8 ACRES LENORA COMMER PHARR
80 ACRES TR MOTHERSHED & ALMA W. POLAND
55 ACRES MRS. GEORGE MAYNARD, JR.
118.7 ACRES MRS. GEORGE MAYNARD, JR.
40 ACRES LOUISE HANEY COMPER
178.2 ACRES HARVEY B. ROGERS, JR.
130 ACRES LINDA M. STEPHENS
80 ACRES R. J. HOWARD ESTATE
253 ACRES ELLINGTON F. MASSEY
130.4 ACRES ELLINGTON F. MASSEY
116.2 ACRES WILLIAM H. RUTLAND
116.6 ACRES CITY OF CLARKSDALE AIRPORT
141 ACRES WILLIAM H. RUTLAND
119 ACRES CAULEY C. WILLIAMS
214 ACRES CAULEY C. WILLIAMS
41 ACRES P. F. WILLIAMS
C6-2
200
150
100
50
0
174.020
167.369
-0.25410%
1250
1275


County Rd Dead Ends
County Rd Dead Ends at Frontage Rd
County Rd
243.3 ACRES MRS. JAKE ROBERSON, JR.
119 ACRES MRS. CHARLIE MONTY C/O BETTY JANE M. CURTIS
148 ACRES VIRGINIA WELCH
163.2 ACRES LACY E. DURHAM C/O BOB NANCE
162 ACRES MRS. CHARLIE MONTY
90 ACRES GEORGIA S. ANTICI
203.7 AC.
Existing US 61 Northbound Lanes Become East Frontage Road
180.6 ACRES EVELYN LACY NANCE ROBERSON
18 ACRES GEORGIA S. ANTICI
Frontage Road Req'd
County Rd/SR 316 Bridged Over I-69 at Ichange
40 ACRES EVELYN LACY NANCE ROBERSON
98.6 ACRES GEORGIA S. ANTICI
77.7 ACRES JOHNNY TAVOLETI ET AL
Relocated County Rd 5-Lane Inside Interchange 2-Lane Section Outside Limits of Interchange
Frontage Road Req'd
45.2 ACRES EVELYN LACY NANCE ROBERSON
58.9 ACRES JOHNNY TAVOLETI ET AL
Relocated SR 316
West Frontage Rd
439 ACRES WM B. CLARK, JR.
Co Rd Upgrade btw SR 1 & US 61
West Frontage Rd
73.9 ACRES JOHN GOLDSMITH
Existing US 61 Northbound Lanes Become East Frontage Road
Upgrade SR 316
381 ACRES MARY S. WOODS ET AL
159.8 ACRES PAULINE O. GRAHAM
158.9 ACRES PAULINE O. GRAHAM
74.4 ACRES J. T. & MARY R. MASSEY
119 ACRES WM B. CLARK, JR.
(10 AC.)
(10 AC.)
40 ACRES J. T. & MARY R. MASSEY
40 ACRES J. T. & MARY R. MASSEY
144 ACRES GEORGE F. MAYNARD TRUSTEE (FARM TR. WR BARKSDALE)
Upgrade SR 1
61 ACRES MARY M. BROUGHER ESTATE
20 ACRES GEORGIA S. ANTICI
89 ACRES GEORGIA S. ANTICI
MS POWER & LIGHT
136 ACRES MILLIGAN S. WYLIE, TRUSTEE (FARM TR. WR BARKSDALE)
County Rd
128.1 ACRES LENORA COMMER PHARR
117.4 ACRES MALCOLM COMMER, SR. ESTATE
Frontage Rd Connector to Co Rd Bridge
County Rd Bridge Over I-69
158.8 ACRES LENORA COMMER PHARR
Existing US 61 Northbound Lanes Become East Frontage Road
80 ACRES TR MOTHERSHED & ALMA W. POLAND
55 ACRES MRS. GEORGE MAYNARD, JR.
118.7 ACRES MRS. GEORGE MAYNARD, JR.
10 ACRES LOUISE HANEY COMMER
40 ACRES LOUISE HANEY COOPER
County Rd
Frontage Rd Connection to Co Rd Bridge
178.2 ACRES HARVEY B. ROGERS, JR.
County Rd Bridge Over I-69
3.8 ACRES HARVEY B. ROGERS, JR.
130 ACRES LINDY M. STEPHENS
County Rd
80 ACRES R. V. HOWARD ESTATE
253 ACRES ELLINGTON F. MASSEY
130.4 ACRES ELLINGTON F. MASSEY
Existing US 61 Northbound Lanes Become East Frontage Road
POT Sta. 1273+19.502
1600
1550
1500
1450
1400
1350
1300
200
150
100
50
0
C7-1
180.082
EL. 180.750
VPI 1561 + 64.000
EL. 180.750
VPI 1541 + 64.000
EL. 179.310
VPI 1532 + 64.000
EL. 180.630
VPI 1521 + 64.000
EL. 179.190
VPI 1512 + 64.000
EL. 177.430
VPI 1490 + 64.000
EL. 178.230
VPI 1480 + 64.000
EL. 175.730
VPI 1455 + 64.000
EL. 177.010
VPI 1447 + 64.000
EL. 176.010
VPI 1427 + 64.000
EL. 176.010
VPI 1387 + 65.300
-0.05000%
+0.00000%
+0.16000%
-0.12000%
+0.16000%
+0.08000%
-0.08000%
+0.10000%
-0.15000%
+0.05000%
+0.00000%
+0.017855%
1575
1550
1525
1500
1475
1450
1425
1400
1375
1350
1325
1300
1275

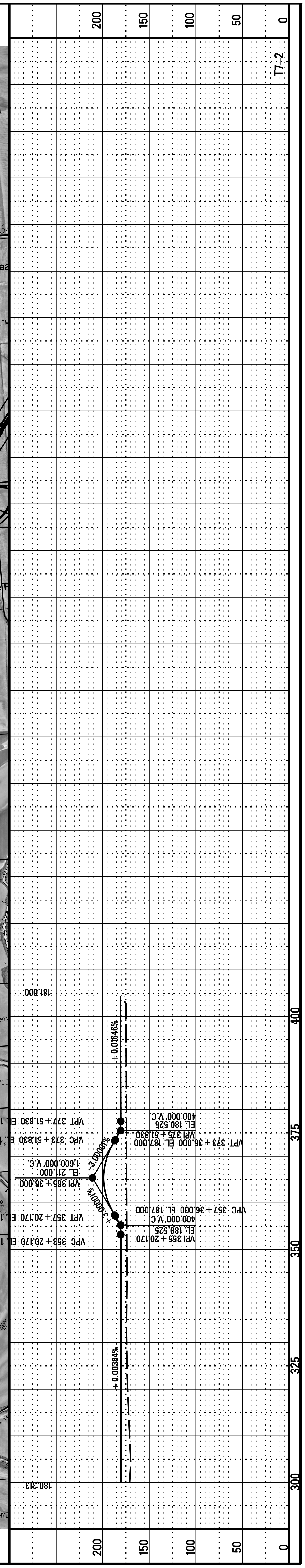
Flea Harbor Rd
FLEA HARBOR ROAD
US 61
Railroad
County Rd
Bridge I-69
over Railroad
and County Rd
4-Lane to 2-Lane
Transition
4-Lane Divided
Section Through
Interchange
2-Lane Bridge, US 61 Over
US 49 Connector
US 49
Bridge I-69 Over
US 49 Connector
Farm Rd
East Frontage Rd
Required
E. Frontage Rd
Segment Required
US 61 Two-Lane
Section Dead Ends
EQUATION:
Sta 1631+60.230 BK =
Sta 1687+44.797 AH
Existing US 61 Northbound Lane
Become East Frontage Road
County Rd
Dead Ends
County Rd
Dead Ends at
Frontage Rd
1600
225 ACRES
THOMAS M. BRAHAN
ET AL
160 ACRES
WEAKLEY BRAHAN
80 ACRES
ELSIE WILSFORD
HEATON
106 ACRES
ROGER A.
JOHNSON
97.3 ACRES
EULA MAE
ARMISTEAD
154.2 ACRES
EUGENIA &
CLAUDE W. POLAND
319 ACRES
MARY LINBILLE LEE
GRAVES, TR.
225 ACRES
PAULINE STORY
GILLOCK
458 ACRES
CHARLES
MONTY, SR.
160 ACRES
WAYNE MONTY
148 ACRES
VIRGINIA
WELCH
119 ACRES
MRS. CHARLIE MONTY
C/O BETTY JANE M. CURTIS
243.3 ACRES
MRS. LAKE
ROBERSON, JR.

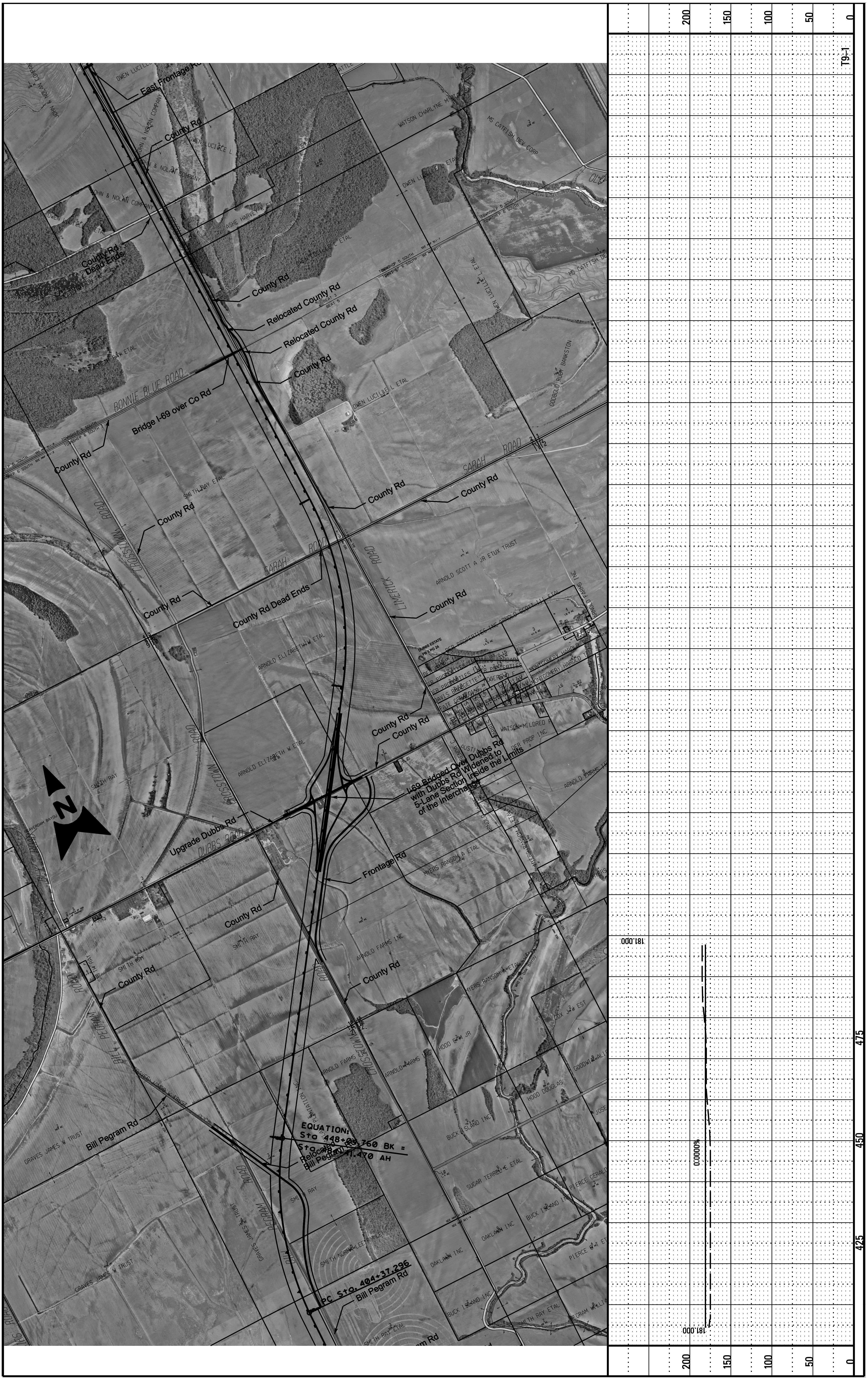


C7-2
200
150
100
50
0
EL. 179.730
VPI 1627 + 64.000
EL. 175.990
VPI 1622 + 14.000
EL. 174.490
VPI 1609 + 64.000
EL. 182.850
VPI 1600 + 14.000
EL. 179.400
VPI 1588 + 64.000
180.082
-0.40000%
+0.08000%
+0.12000%
-0.88000%
+0.30000%
-0.05000%
1625
1600
1575


179.160
VPC 1728+31.400 EL. 179.160
VPI 1731+31.400
EL. 179.160
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1734+31.400 EL. 186.660
+0.00000%
+2.50000%
VPC 1749+17.500 EL. 201.313
VPI 1744+45.000
EL. 212.000
855.000' V.C.
VPT 1748+72.500 EL. 203.000
VPC 1748+72.500 EL. 203.000
-2.10526%
VPI 1753+00.000
EL. 194.000
855.000' V.C.
+2.00786%
VPT 1757+27.500 EL. 202.584
VPC 1760+18.000 EL. 208.416
VPI 1764+45.500
EL. 217.000
855.000' V.C.
VPT 1768+73.000 EL. 204.176
-2.99974%
VPC 1774+95.950 EL. 185.489
VPI 1777+95.950
EL. 176.490
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1780+95.950 EL. 176.554
+0.02144%
179.160
0
50
100
150
200
1700
1725
1750
1775
1800
1825
1850
1875
1900
PC Sta. 1687+44.797
PT Sta. 1696+16.825
PRC Sta. 1700+38.803
PRC Sta. 1708+93.659
PT Sta. 1747+81.271
PC Sta. 1827+50.885
PT Sta. 1834+39.532
PC Sta. 1888+20.696
EQUATION:
Sta 1902+49.33 Ahd
= Sta 0+00.000 Ahd
Bridge #18 Harbor Rd Over I-69
Bridge I-69 over Railroad and County Rd
Topsoils Rt. 315 2-Lane Section thru I-69 and SR 3
Flea Harbor Rd
County Rd
Railroad
East Frontage Rd
US 41
US 49
WHITE ROAD
C9-1

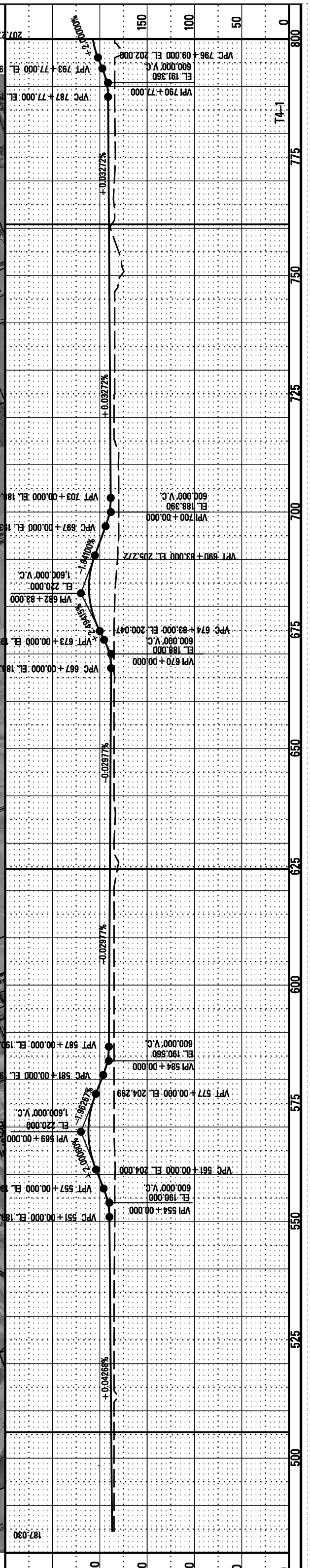
Six Mile Lake Rd
Bridge Six Mi Lake Road over I-69
Relocated County Rd
Relocated Co Rd Bridged Over I-69
Upgrade Crenshaw Rd
Connection to Crenshaw Rd
Frontage Rd Segment
Frontage Rd Required
Bridge Reloated Crenshaw Rd Over I-69 with 5 Lane Section Inside Limits of Interchange
Reloated Crenshaw Rd
Flee Harbor Rd
Bridge Flee Harbor Rd Over I-69
Reloated County Rd
County Rd
Six Mile Lake Road
TAYLOR ROAD
CRENSHAW ROAD
LAKE ROAD
WHITE ROAD
FLEE HARBOR ROAD
PT Sta. 135+15.010
PC Sta. 0+00.000
PRC Sta. 69+12.861
PRC Sta. 42+17.967
PC Sta. 290+75.211
179.160
180.525
0.00384%
T7-1

County Rd
County Rd
County Rd Dea
SMITH RAY ETAL
SMITH NORMA LEE R (LE)
CROSSTOWN ROAD
SMITH ROAD
BEAVERDAM BAYOU
ARNOLD ELIZABETH W ETAL
SMITH RAY
N
Upgrade Dubbs Rd
Dubbs Rd
DUBBS ROAD
County Rd
Frontage R
GRAVES JAMES W TRUST
BILL PEGRAM ROAD
MAUDE ROAD
ARNOLD FARMS INC
Bill Pegram Rd
ARNOLD FARMS
OAKLAWN PLANTATION INC
HOOD E M JR
Relocated Bill Pegram Rd
SUNRISE ROAD
BUCK ISLAND INC
SUGAR TERREL E ETAL
EQUATION:
Sta 403+56.439 BK =
Sta 404+37.296 AH
Bill Pegram Rd
OAKLAWN INC
SMITH RAY ETAL
Bill Pegram Rd
I-69 Bridged Over Anderson Rd Extension
Relocated Bill Pegram Rd
Anderson Rd
West Frontage Rd Req'd
ANDERSON ROAD
OVER
Bill Pegram Rd
PEGRAM WILLIAM E
PT Sta. 348+68.561
EAGLE LAKE FARMS INC
ANDERSON ROAD
Bill Pegram Rd
LARK MARY P
HOOD JAMES GREEN
Connection to Crenshaw Rd
CRENSHAW
BEREA ROAD
TOWNSHIP 6 SOUTH
TOWNSHIP 7 SOUTH
Frontage Rd Required

T7-2
200
150
100
50
0
181.600
+0.01646%
VPT 377+51.830 EL 180.558
VPC 373+51.830 EL 186.525
VPI 375+51.830
EL 180.525
400.000' V.C.
VPT 373+36.000 EL 187.000
-3.00000%
VPI 365+36.000
EL 211.000
1,600.000' V.C.
+3.00000%
VPT 357+20.170 EL 186.525
VPC 357+36.000 EL 187.000
400.000' V.C.
VPC 353+20.170 EL 180.517
VPI 355+20.170
EL 180.525
+0.00384%
180.313
400
375
350
325
300

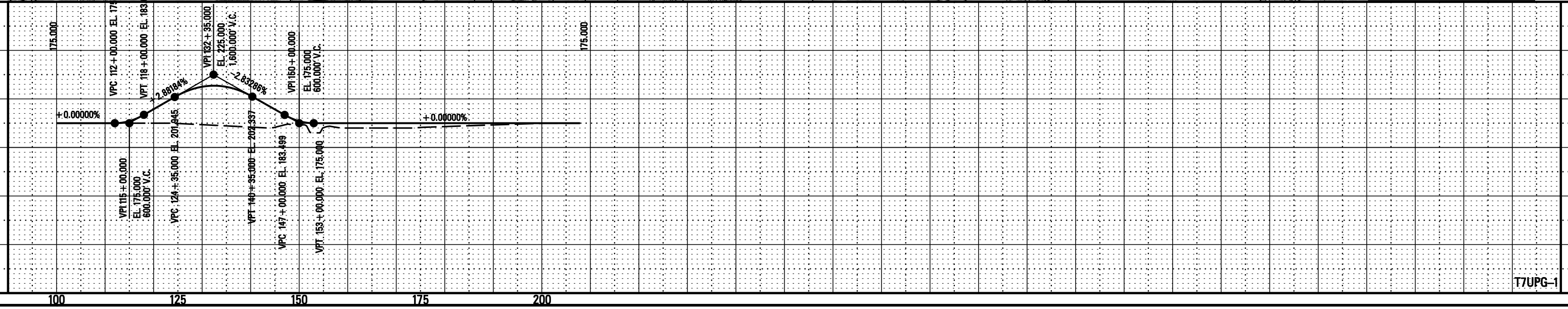


East Frontage Rd
County Rd
County Rd Dead Ends
Relocated County Rd
Relocated County Rd
BONNIE BLUE ROAD
Bridge I-69 over Co Rd
SARAH ROAD
CROSSTOWN ROAD
LIMERICK ROAD
County Rd Dead Ends
I-69 Bridged Over Dubbs Rd with Dubbs Rd Widened to 5-Lane Section Inside the Limits of the Interchange
Upgrade Dubbs Rd
DUBBS ROAD
Frontage Rd
BILL PEGRAM ROAD
Bill Pegram Rd
EQUATION:
PC Sta. 404+37.296
Bill Pegram Rd
N
T9-1
200
150
100
50
0
181.000
0.0000%
475
450
425

PC Sta. 799+02.668
County Rd
HURT ROAD
PT Sta. 787+48.468
East Frontage Rd
BILLY BOB CIRCLE
County Rd
Dead Ends
PC Sta. 751+11.456
East Frontage Rd
County Rd
MARCIE DRIVE
County Rd
Dead Ends
County Rd
Relocated County Rd
Relocated County Rd
County Rd
BONNIE BLUE ROAD
Bridge I-69 over Co Rd
County Rd
CROSSTOWN ROAD
PT Sta. 642+79.429
County Rd
County Rd
SARAH ROAD
County Rd
County Rd Dead Ends
LIMERICK ROAD
PC Sta. 595+51.278
County Rd
County Rd
Upgrade Dubbs Rd
DUBBS ROAD
Frontage Rd
County Rd
County Rd
BILL PEGRAM ROAD
MAUDE ROAD
Bill Pegram Rd
POT Sta. 484+41.470
Relocated
Pegram Rd
N
JOHN & NOLEN COMPANY
BATTLE PAUL
BATTLE PAUL III ETAL
CARRIER C A III
PEPPER MARIA
OWEN LUCILLE L ETAL
JOHN & NOLAN COMPANY
PAT RICHARD JOHN H JR ET AL
ASHE HARVEY K ET UX
OAKLAWN PLANTATION INC
SMITH RAY ETAL
MCLEAN KEITH S DOCKERY MRS
SILLS SIDNEY M (TRUSTEE)
SMITH NORMA LEE R (LE)
ARNOLD ELIZABETH W ETAL
ARNOLD FARMS INC
GRAVES JAMES W TRUST
BEAVERDAM BAYOU
BUCK SLAUGHTER
MYERS RAN
BEAT 3
BEAT 5
TOWNSHIP 5 SOUTH
TOWNSHIP 6 SOUTH


207.272
VPC 796+09.000 EL. 202.008
+2.27000%
EL. 191.360
600.000' V.C.
VPT 793+77.000 EL. 197.360
VPC 787+77.000 EL. 191.262
VPI 790+77.000
+0.03272%
T4-1
VPT 703+00.000 EL. 186.488
600.000' V.C.
EL. 188.390
VPI 700+00.000
VPC 697+00.000 EL. 193.913
VPT 690+83.000 EL. 205.272
-1.84100%
1,600.000' V.C.
EL. 220.000
VPI 682+83.000
-2.69415%
VPC 674+83.000 EL. 200.047
600.000' V.C.
EL. 188.000
VPI 670+00.000
VPT 673+00.000 EL. 195.482
VPC 667+00.000 EL. 183.089
-0.02977%
VPT 587+00.000 EL. 190.471
600.000' V.C.
EL. 190.560
VPI 584+00.000
VPC 581+00.000 EL. 196.448
VPT 577+00.000 EL. 204.299
-1.96267%
1,600.000' V.C.
EL. 220.008
VPI 569+00.000
+2.00000%
VPC 561+00.000 EL. 204.000
VPT 557+00.000 EL. 196.000
600.000' V.C.
EL. 196.000
VPI 554+00.000
VPC 551+00.000 EL. 189.872
+0.04268%
187.030
0
50
100
150
200
500
525
550
575
600
625
650
675
700
725
750
775
800

West Frontage Rd Req'd
Bill Pegram Rd
Bill Pegram Rd
Connection to Crenshaw Rd
Sta. 100+00.000
100
Frontage Rd Required
Relocated Crenshaw Rd
Crenshaw Rd
Bridge Relocated Crenshaw Rd Over I-69 with 5-Lane Section Inside Limits of Interchange
Frontage Rd Segment
PC Sta. 104+22.312
PT Sta. 121+85.105
POT Sta. 201+75.317
POT Sta. 207+88.562
ANDERSON ROAD
BEREA ROAD
DUBBS ROAD
BUFORD ROAD
CRENSHAW ROAD
BUTLER ROAD
MAYO ROAD
ROWE ROAD
TIBBS ROAD
HIBBLER ROAD
DAVIS JACKIE B
REED ROGERS W
36.7 AC
MCDONALD OTIS WAYNE FAMILY
MYERS RANSOM ETAL
HEDERMAN T M JR TRUST
HEDERMAN T M JR (TRUST)
RULE DEWORD M ETAL
WESTBROOK WILLIAM A
GREEN MAURICE ETAL
BLAND JAMES ETUX
BLAND JAMES JR ETUX
SMITH MARY L BARNETT ETAL
ROACH DEAN (LE)
COLDWATER RIVER
TOWNSHIP 6 SOUTH
TOWNSHIP 7 SOUTH
EAGLE LAKE FARMS INC
SMITH RAY
PEGRAM WILLIAM E
TAYLOR DONALD
ADAMS ALBERTA W
ROACH DORMAN ETUX
CLARK MARY P
HOOD JAMES GREEN
RYALS LYNDA
GARRETT BRIAN P
GARRETT BRIAN P ETAL
HUDSPETH SYBLE D
FIELDS BOBBY
BURTON DEBRA H
MAYO THOMAS D ETUX
BUTLER SHIRLEY
SKINNER ARCENDA
ROWE CLINTON D ETUX
BAILEY E E ETUX
BUTLER MARGIE I ETAL
BRYANT DAVID FAMILY
RICHARDSON PAUL ADAM
HUBBLER JOHN ESTATE
CALDWELL THURMAN V ETAL
FISH LAKE
EAGLE LAKE
HALF MILE LAKE
WHITE OAK BAYOU
N

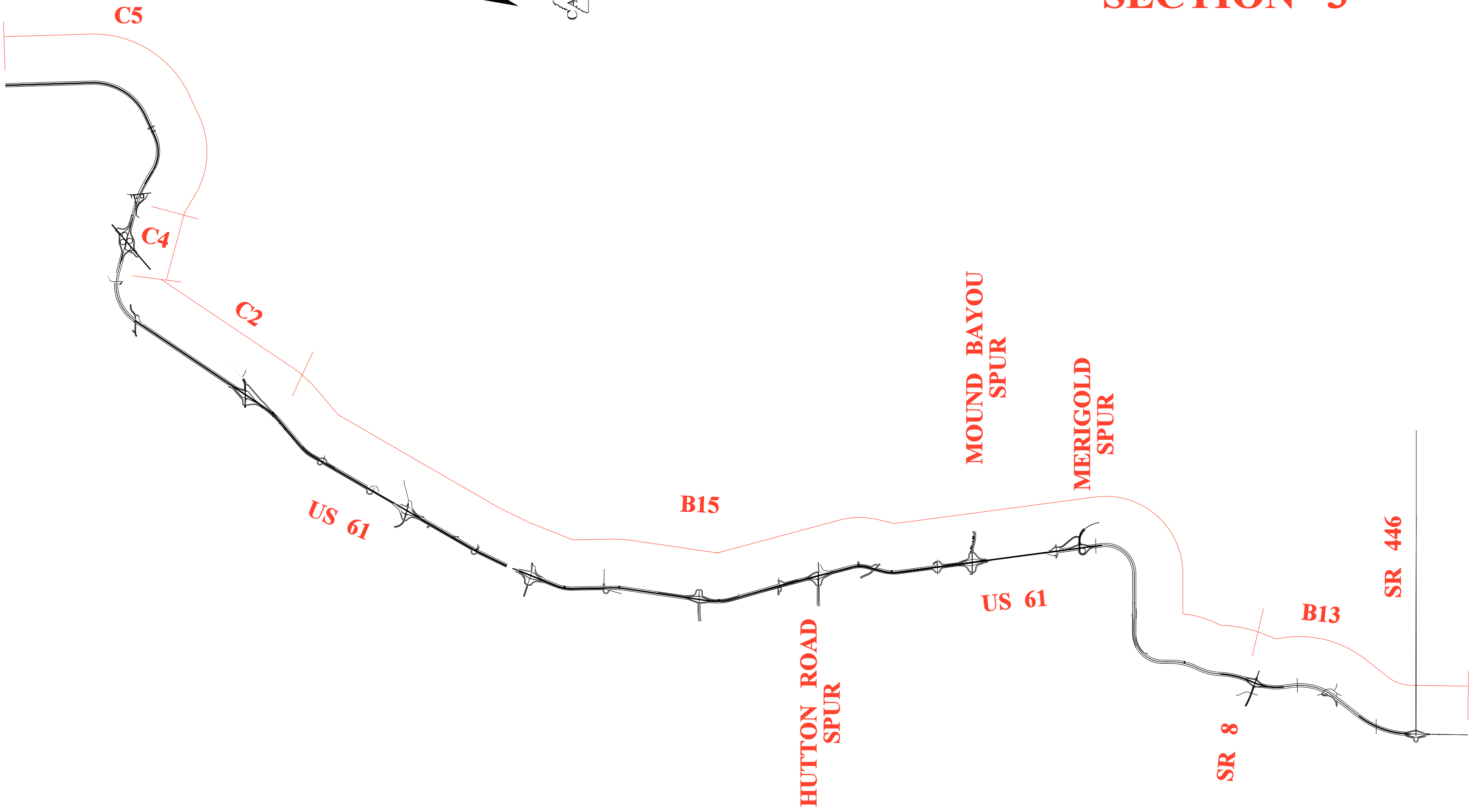

175.000
VPC 112+00.000 EL. 172.000
VPT 118+00.000 EL. 183.646
VPI 132+35.000
EL. 225.000
1,600.000' V.C.
+2.88184%
-2.83286%
VPI 150+00.000
EL. 175.000
600.000' V.C.
175.000
+0.00000%
+0.00000%
VPI 115+00.000
EL. 175.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 124+35.000 EL. 201.945
VPT 140+35.000 EL. 204.337
VPC 147+00.000 EL. 183.499
VPT 153+00.000 EL. 175.000
200
150
100
50
0
100
125
150
175
200
T7UPG-1

I-69 EIS
PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES
PREFERED ALTERNATE SECTION 2

ITEM	SUB-ITEMS	UNIT	UNIT COST	QUANTITY	TOTAL COST
GRADING	CLEARING AND GRUBBING	Acre	2,000	962	1,924,000
	EXCAVATION	CY	5	0	0
	BORROW (Est. at 6' = 174,500 CY/MI)	CY	7	5,181,372	36,269,604
	CHANNEL CHANGE (Perrineal)	CY	3	0	0
	STREAM CHANGE (Intermittent)	CY	0	0	0
				0	
				TOTAL	38,193,604
DRAINAGE	CROSS DRAIN (PIPES)	LF	100	1,316	131,600
	CROSS DRAIN (BOX CULVERTS)	LF	350	2,781	973,350
	CROSS DRAIN (BOX BRIDGES)	LF	600	600	360,000
	MEDIAN DRAIN (Avg 1200' spacings) (24 @ 100')	LF	30	13,300	399,000
				0	
				0	
				TOTAL	1,863,950
SURFACING	4-LANE FREEWAY W/GRASS MEDIAN	MI	1,664,000	29	48,856,704
	2-LANE COLLECTORS/ARTERIALS/HIGHWAYS	MI	329,000	8	2,624,104
	FRONTAGE ROAD (PAVED)	MI	329,000	15	4,897,494
	FRONTAGE ROAD (UNPAVED)	MI	200,000	0	0
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE DIAMOND W/5LN)	EA	2,400,000	5	12,000,000
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE DIAMOND WLOOP)	EA	2,600,000	0	0
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE CLOVERLEAF W/5LN)	EA	3,210,000	1	3,210,000
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE HALF CLOVERLEAF W/5LN)	EA	2,500,000	0	0
				TOTAL	71,588,302
MISCELLANEOUS	GUARD RAIL	LF	15	10,000	150,000
	SIGNALIZATION-INTERCHANGE (DIAMOND ONLY)	EA	150,000	0	0
	RETAINING WALLS	SF	30	0	0
	WIRE FENCE	LF	5	304,075	1,520,375
	EROSION CONTROL		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	2,232,917	2,232,917
	SIGNING AND PAVING MARKINGS		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	2,232,917	2,232,917
	MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	2,232,917	2,232,917
	UTILITY RELOCATION		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	2,232,917	2,232,917
	MAJOR UTILITY RELOCATION			40,384,000	40,384,000
				0	0
				TOTAL	50,986,043
TOTAL ROADWAY CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	162,631,899
BRIDGES	GRADE SEPARATIONS	SF	85	272,180	23,135,300
	MAINLINE - (RAILROAD)	SF	75	22,000	1,650,000
	MAINLINE - (HYDRAULICS)	SF	65	87,440	5,683,600
TOTAL STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	30,468,900
				CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL	193,100,799
				CONTINGENCY @ 15% OF CONSTRUCTION	28,965,120
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	222,065,919
ROW	AGRICULTURAL LAND	ACRE	2,000	962	1,924,000
	RESIDENCE - TAKEN	RES	80,000	4	320,000
	MOBILE HOME - TAKEN	RES	25,000	1	25,000
	BUSINESS - TAKEN	RES	150,000	0	0
				ACQUISITION & RELOCATION (30% OF LAND + STRUCTURES)	680,700
				ROW SUBTOTAL	2,949,700
TOTAL RIGHT-OF-WAY COST				TOTAL	2,949,700
TOTAL UPGRADE/SPUR COST				TOTAL	22,017,874
GRAND TOTAL				TOTAL	247,033,494
Length Total				MILES	31.549

SECTION 3

CADD



0 50 100 150

1225 1250 1275 1300 1325 1350 1375 1400 1425 1450 1475 1500

131.000

VPI 1250+00.000
EL. 131.000

+0.000000%

VPI 1275+90.000
EL. 136.000
400.000' V.C.
VPC 1278+40.000 EL. 141.000

VPC 1273+90.000 EL. 135.614
VPT 1277+90.000 EL. 140.000

+2.000000%

VPI 1285+90.000
EL. 156.000
1,500.000' V.C.

VPT 1293+40.000 EL. 141.000
VPI 1295+90.000
EL. 136.000
400.000' V.C.

VPC 1293+90.000 EL. 140.000
VPT 1297+90.000 EL. 136.000

+0.000000%

VPI 1385+00.000
EL. 136.000
400.000' V.C.

VPC 1383+00.000 EL. 136.000
VPT 1387+00.000 EL. 140.083

+2.041617%

VPC 1401+50.000 EL. 169.688

VPI 1409+00.000
EL. 185.000
1,500.000' V.C.

VPT 1416+50.000 EL. 169.643

-2.041782%

VPI 1430+00.000
EL. 142.000
400.000' V.C.

VPC 1428+00.000 EL. 146.095
VPT 1432+00.000 EL. 142.000

+0.000000%

142.000

B13-1

0 50 100 150

PC Sta. 1216+69.828

PC Sta. 1293+22.179

PT Sta. 1357+45.119

PC Sta. 1408+04.990

PT Sta. 1468+34.676

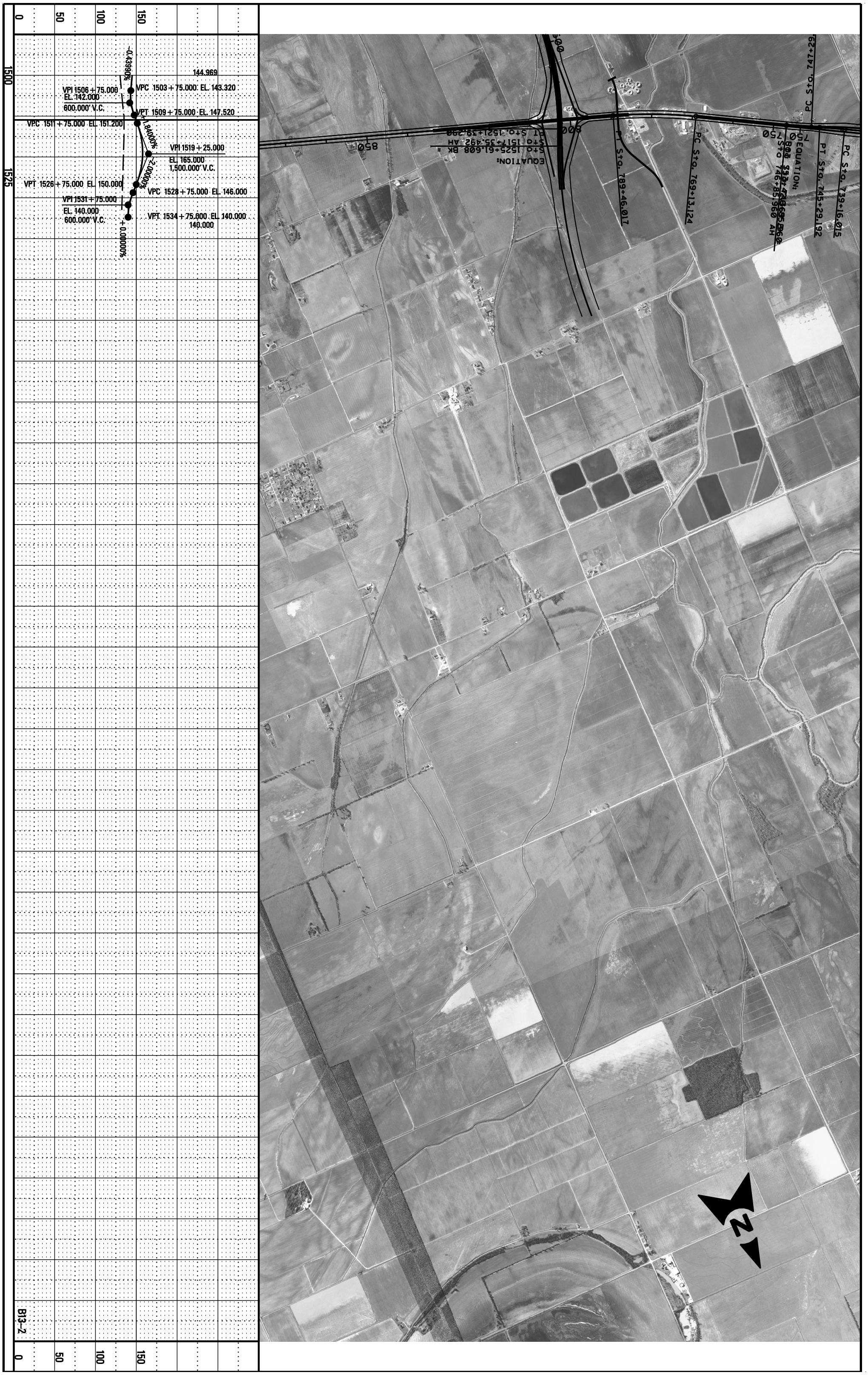
PC Sta. 1479+86.903

PT Sta. 1521+58.438

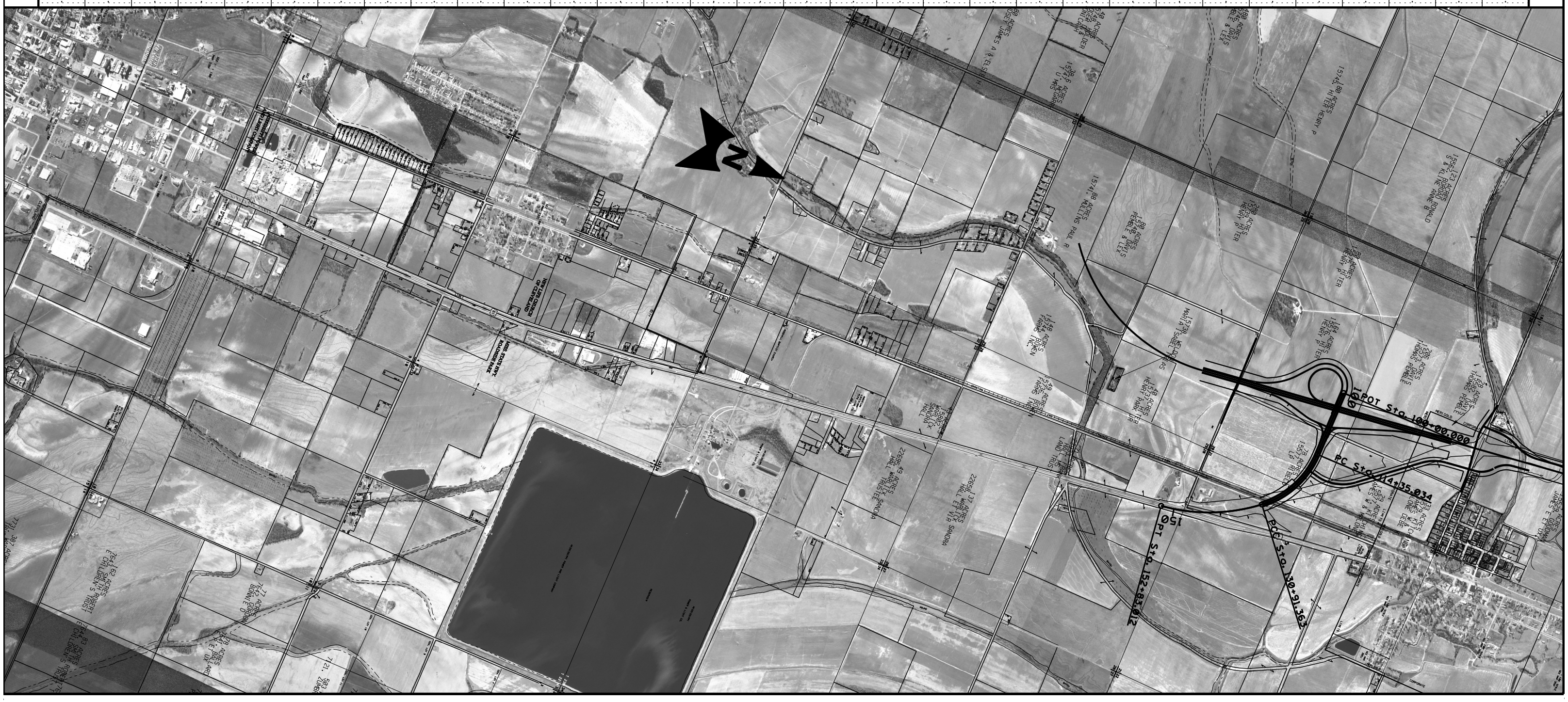
PC Sta. 1525+61.608

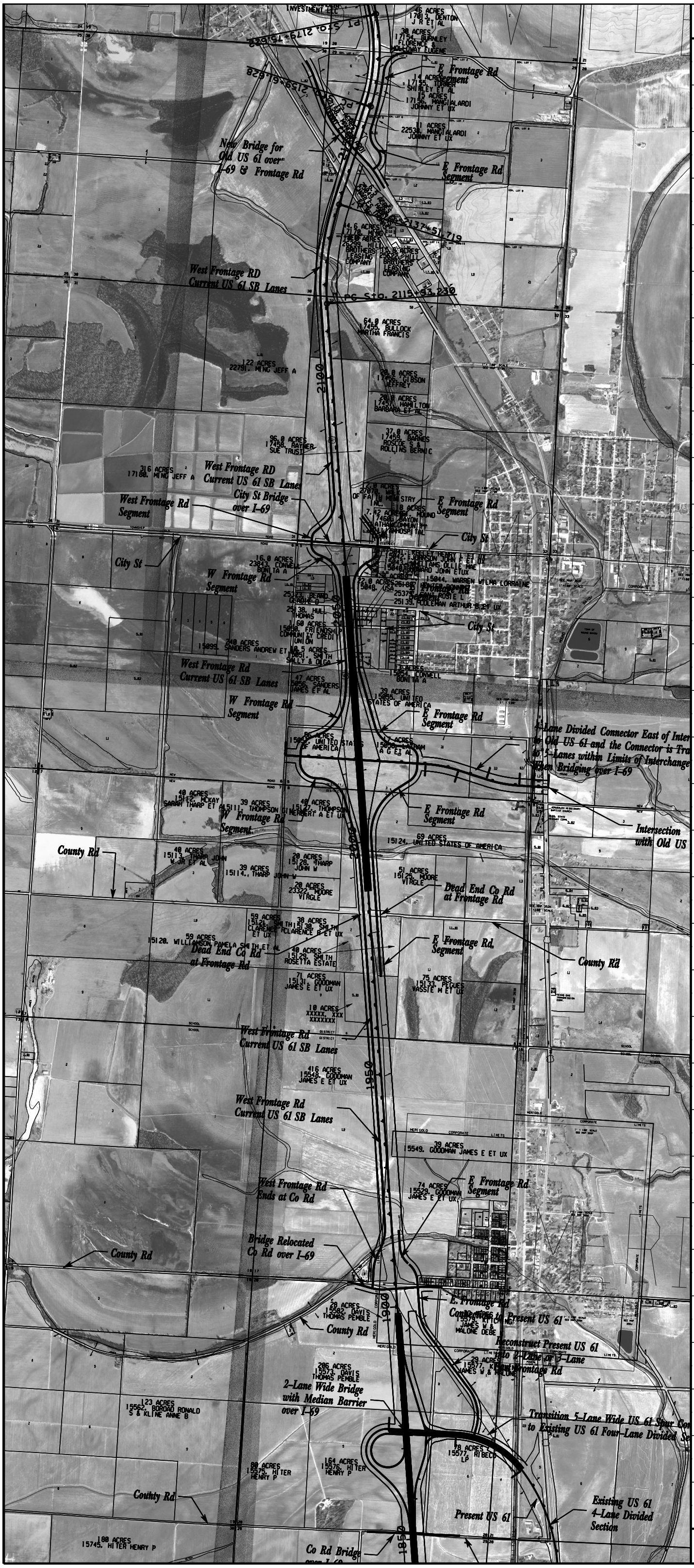
1350 1400 1450 1500

N

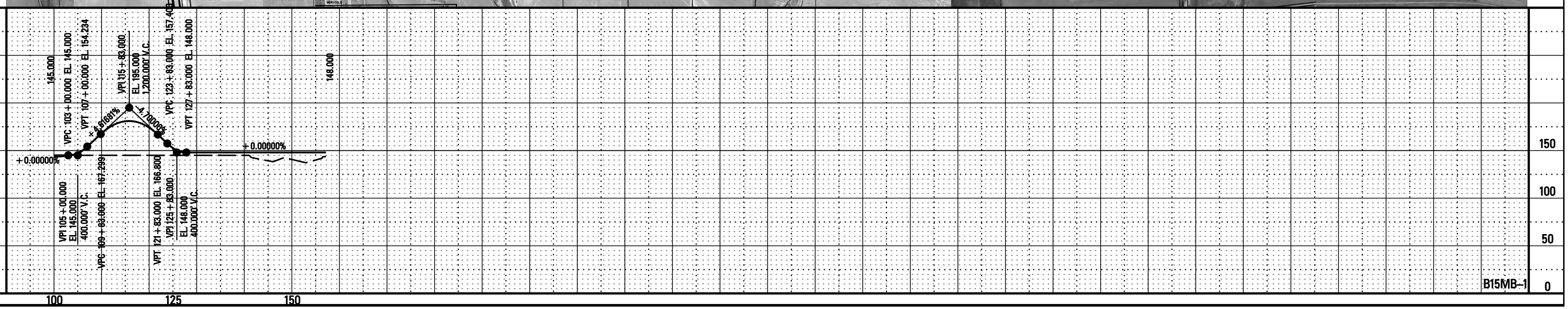

0
50
100
150
1500
1525
-0.43990%
144.969
VPI 1506+75.000
EL. 142.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 1503+75.000 EL. 143.320
VPT 1509+75.000 EL. 147.520
VPC 1511+75.000 EL. 151.200
1.84000%
VPI 1519+25.000
EL. 165.000
1,500.000' V.C.
-2.00000%
VPT 1526+75.000 EL. 150.000
VPC 1528+75.000 EL. 146.000
VPI 1531+75.000
EL. 140.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1534+75.000 EL. 140.000
140.000
+0.00000%
PC Sta. 747+29.
PT Sta. 745+29.192
PC Sta. 739+16.015
EQUATION:
Sta 746+851.960 AH
Sta 750+00.00 BK
PC Sta. 769+13.124
Pt Sta. 789+46.017
EQUATION:
Sta 1525+61.608 BK =
Sta 1517+35.492 AH
PT Sta. 1521+39.298
850
800
B13-2

140.000
VPC 1609+78.000
EL. 140.000
VPI 1612+78.000
EL. 140.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1615+78.000
EL. 146.000
VPC 1619+53.000
EL. 153.500
+2.000000%
VPI 1627+03.000
EL. 168.500
1,500.000' V.C.
+0.600000%
VPT 1634+53.000
EL. 153.500
VPC 1638+28.000
EL. 146.000
VPI 1641+28.000
EL. 140.000
800.000' V.C.
VPT 1644+28.000
EL. 140.000
+0.000000%
+0.000000%
VPC 1707+00.000
EL. 140.000
VPI 1710+00.000
EL. 140.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1713+00.000
EL. 148.451
VPC 1716+20.000
EL. 157.465
+2.609918%
VPI 1724+20.000
EL. 180.000
1,600.000' V.C.
-2.562634%
VPT 1732+20.000
EL. 159.710
VPC 1735+00.000
EL. 152.609
VPI 1738+00.000
EL. 145.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1741+00.000
EL. 145.207
+0.068972%
+0.068972%
VPC 1822+00.000
EL. 150.793
VPI 1825+00.000
EL. 151.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1828+00.000
EL. 151.059
+0.035000%
1550
1575
1600
1625
1650
1675
1700
1725
1750
1775
1800
1825
1850
50
100
150
200
B15-1
PCC Sta. 1525+61.609
PT Sta. 1558+83.717
PC Sta. 1593+06.865
PT Sta. 1626+96.113
PC Sta. 1638+43.965
PT Sta. 1684.25
PC Sta. 1843+06.190
PT Sta. 1876+95.492
County Rd
Relocated County Rd
Bridge Co Rd over I-69
Dead Ends at I-69
Frontage Rd Segment from Cedar Rd to McWhinney Rd
2-Lane Median Barrier with Wide Bridge over I-69
Present US 61


B15MG-1
0
50
100
150
100
125
150
VPI 119+20.000
EL. 143.000
600.000' V.C.
+0.000000%
VPT 122+20.000 EL. 143.000
-4.000000%
VPC 116+20.000 EL. 155.000'
205.000
143.000
157.48 ACRES
PC Sta. 114+35.034
PCC Sta. 130+91.363
PT Sta. 152+83.702
PT Sta. 100+00.000


New Bridge for Old US 61 over I-69 & Frontage Rd
E Frontage Rd Segment
West Frontage RD Current US 61 SB Lanes
PC Sta. 2115+93.230
West Frontage Rd Segment
City St Bridge over I-69
City St
W Frontage Rd Segment
E Frontage Rd Segment
West Frontage Rd Current US 61 SB Lanes
W Frontage Rd Segment
E Frontage Rd Segment
4-Lane Divided Connector East of Inter
to Old US 61 and the Connector is Tra
to 5-Lanes within Limits of Interchange
When Bridging over I-69
Intersection with Old US
W Frontage Rd Segment
County Rd
E Frontage Rd Segment
Dead End Co Rd at Frontage Rd
E Frontage Rd Segment
County Rd
Dead End Co Rd at Frontage Rd
West Frontage Rd Current US 61 SB Lanes
West Frontage Rd Current US 61 SB Lanes
E Frontage Rd Segment
West Frontage Rd Ends at Co Rd
Bridge Relocated Co Rd over I-69
County Rd
E Frontage Rd Connections to Present US 61
Reconstruct Present US 61 into 2-Lane or 3-Lane
West Frontage Rd
2-Lane Wide Bridge with Median Barrier over I-69
Transition 5-Lane Wide US 61 Spur Co
to Existing US 61 Four-Lane Divided Se
County Rd
Present US 61
Existing US 61 4-Lane Divided Section
Co Rd Bridge
2100
1950
1900
1850
VPI 2150+00.000
EL. 150.167
VPC 2148+00.000
-0.083333%
VPT 2092+00.000
EL. 155.000
400.000' V.C.
EL. 154.833
VPI 2090+00.000
EL. 155.000
VPC 2088+00.000
±0.000000%
VPT 2032+00.000
EL. 155.000
400.000' V.C.
EL. 154.961
VPI 2030+00.000
VPC 2028+00.000
+0.119513%
B15-2
200
150
100
50
2175
2150
2125
2100
2075
2050
2025
2000
1975
1950
1925
1900
1875
1850

37.0 ACRES
17459. BARNES ROSCOE S &
ROLLINS BERNIC
96.0 ACRES
17458. RAYNER SUE TRUST
16.0 ACRES
3843. CONWELL BONITA A
22.0 ACRES
15048. USA
25379.
25139.
15044. WARREN MYRA LORRAINE
15055. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
15054. CONWELL BONITA A
15056. SANDERS JAMES ET AL
15059. ADAM A G ET AL
15124. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
15127. THOMPSON HERBERT A ET UX
15128. THARP JOHN W
15125. MOORE VIRGLE
15121. SMITH CLARENCE R ET UX
15130. SMITH CLARENCE R ET UX
15129. SMITH ROSETTA ESTATE
15131. GOODMAN JAMES E ET UX
15133. PEGUES VASSIE M ET UX
15548. GOODMAN JAMES E ET UX
PC Sta 143+24.032
PT Sta 150+93.064
POT Sta 104+00.000
POT Sta 157+83.134
N


VPC 103+00.000 EL. 145.000
VPT 107+00.000 EL. 154.234
+4.81681%
VPI 115+83.000
EL. 195.000
1,200.000' V.C.
-4.10000%
VPC 123+83.000 EL. 157.400
VPT 127+83.000 EL. 148.000
+0.00000%
+0.00000%
145.000
148.000
VPI 105+00.000
EL. 145.000
400.000' V.C.
VPC 109+83.000 EL. 167.299
VPT 121+83.000 EL. 166.800
VPI 125+83.000
EL. 148.000
400.000' V.C.
150
100
50
0
100
125
150
B15MB-1

VPC 2148+00.000
EL. 150.167

VPI 2150+00.000

EL. 150.000
400.000' V.C.

VPT 2152+00.000
EL. 150.100

+0.050000%

VPC 2208+00.000
152.900

VPI 2210+00.000

T 2212+00.000
152.849

EL. 153.000
400.000' V.C.

-0.034347%

VPC 2234+50.000
EL. 151.151

I 2236+50.000

151.000
0.000' V.C.

VPT 2238+50.000
EL. 151.283

+0.141739%

VPC 2298+00.000
EL. 159.717

VPI 2300+00.000

EL. 160.000
400.000' V.C.

VPT 2302+00.000
EL. 159.778

-0.011119%

VPC 2343+00.000
EL. 155.222

VPI 2345+00.000

PT 2347+00.000
L 155.370

EL. 155.000
400.000' V.C.

+0.105195%

VPC 2369+00.000
EL. 159.444

VPI 2372+00.000

EL. 160.000
600.000' V.C.

VPT 2375+00.000
EL. 166.000

+2.000000%

VPC 2382+00.000
EL. 180.000

VPI 2390+00

EL. 196.000
1,600.000' V.C

-2.000000%

VPT 2398+00.000
EL. 180.000

VPI 2408+00.000

EL. 160.000
600.000' V.C.

VPC 2405+00.000
EL. 166.000

VPT 2411+00.000
EL. 160.000

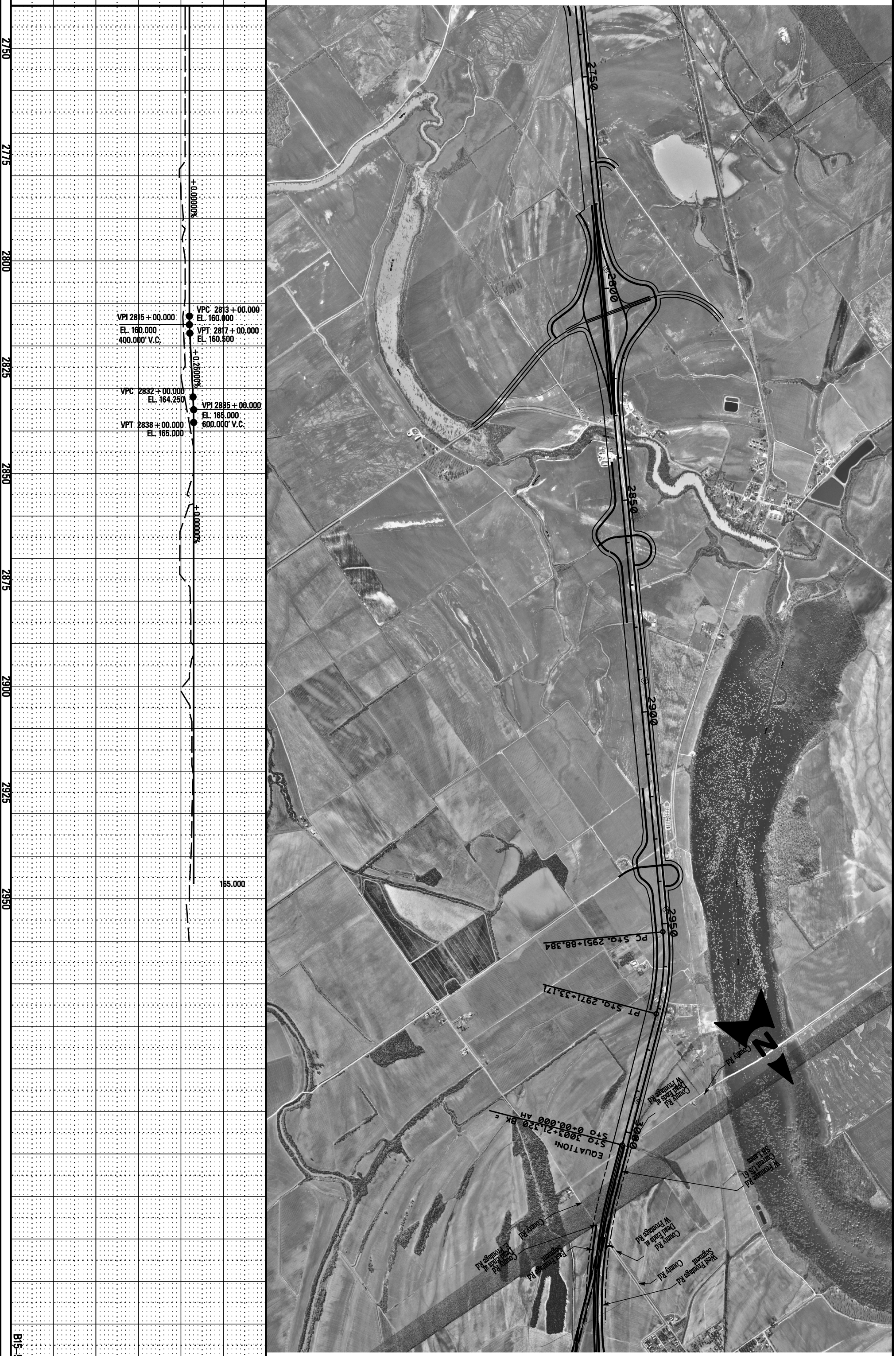
+0.000000%

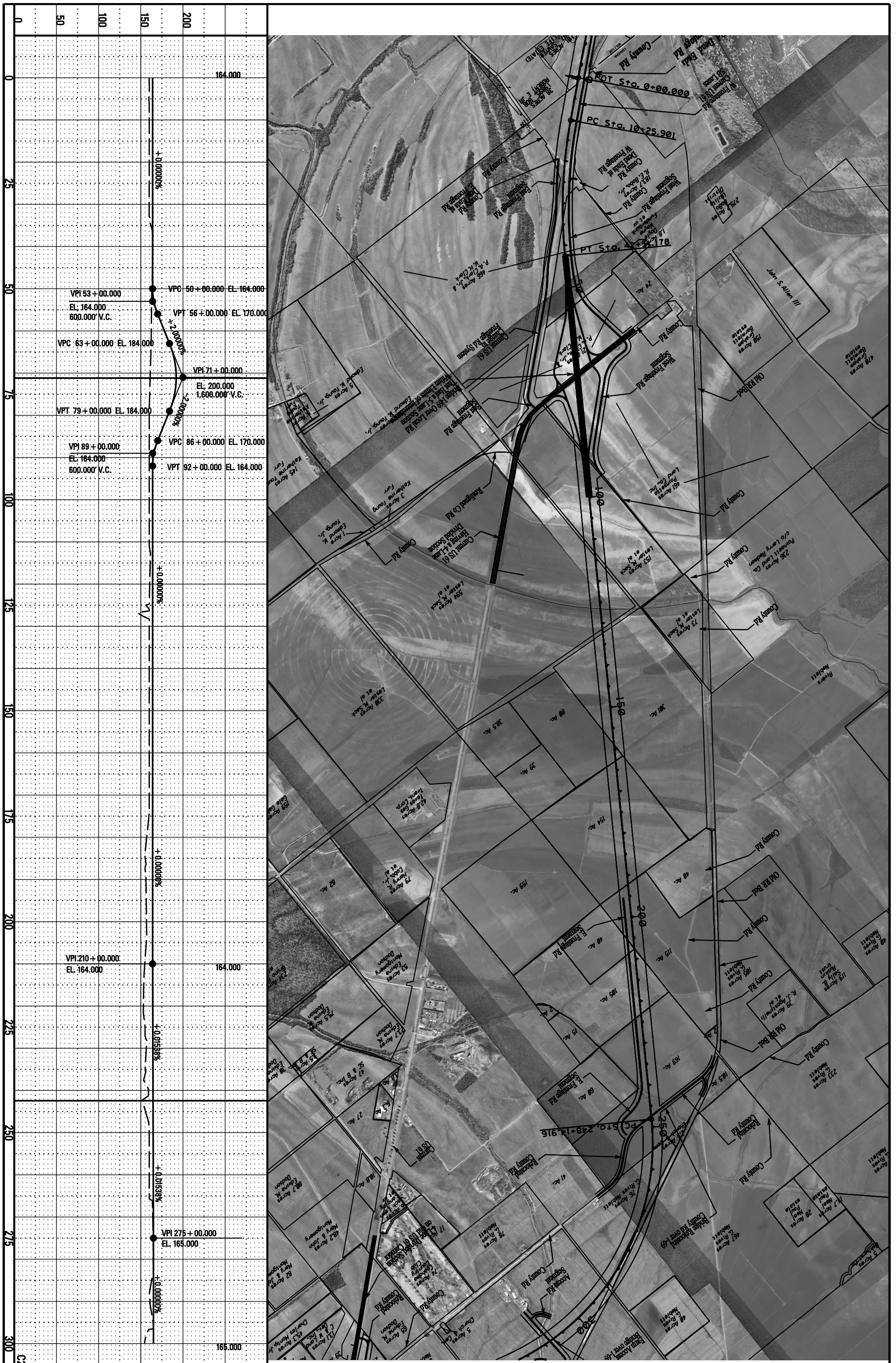
100 150 200

2150 2175 2200 2225 2250 2275 2300 2325 2350 2375 2400 2425 2450

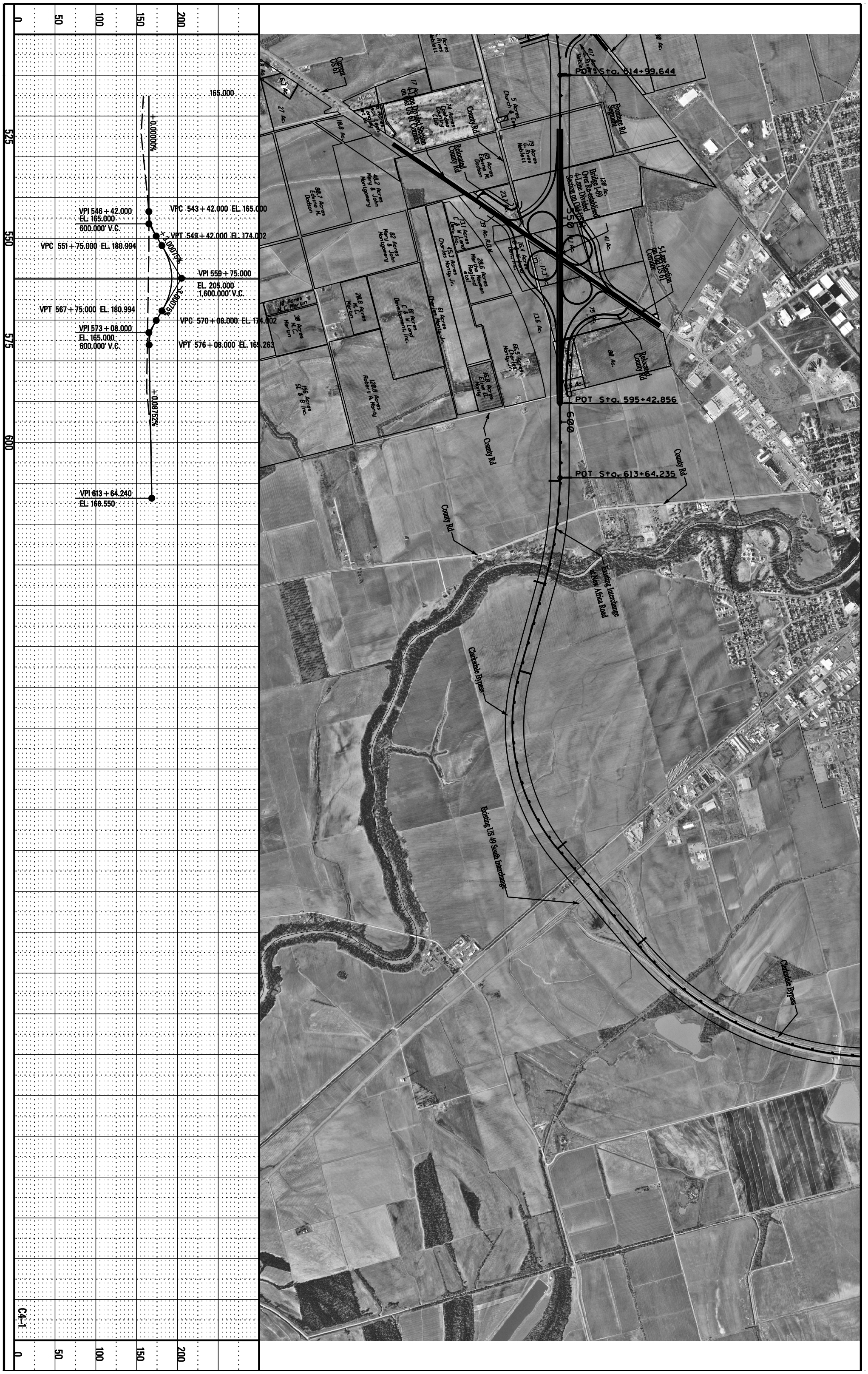
B15-3

B15-4
2450
2475
2500
2525
2550
2575
2600
2625
2650
2675
2700
2725
2750
200
150
100
0.000%
+0.00000%
PC Sta. 2793+48.623
PC Sta. 2695+22.569
Relocated Co Rd 6 Bridge over I-69
Bridge Section of County Rd over I-69 Outside Interchange
4-Lane Section on Co Rd Outside Interchange
PC Sta. 2645+42.498
PC Sta. 2592+14.232
PC Sta. 2560+46.189
PC Sta. 2504+70.227
PC Sta. 2492+38.652
East Frontage Rd Segment
West Frontage Rd Connection to Co Rd Bridge
West Frontage Rd Current US 61 SB Lanes
W. Frontage Rd Segment
2-Lane Co Rd Connector
E. Frontage Rd Segment to Twin Co Rds
Frontage Rd/Co Rd Connector
New County Rd Bridge
County Rd Bridge over I-69
County Rd
County Rd Dead Ends
SR 441
N


100
150
200
2750
2775
2800
2825
2850
2875
2900
2925
2950
+0.00000%
+0.25000%
+0.00000%
VPI 2815+00.000
EL. 160.000
400.000' V.C.
VPC 2813+00.000
EL. 160.000
VPT 2817+00.000
EL. 160.500
VPC 2832+00.000
EL. 164.250
VPI 2835+00.000
EL. 165.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 2838+00.000
EL. 165.000
165.000
2750
2800
2850
2900
2950
3000
PC Sta. 2951+88.384
PT Sta. 2971+33.171
EQUATION:
Sta 3003+21.320 Bk =
Sta 0+00.000 Ah
N
County Rd
Dead Ends at
W Frontage Rd
W Frontage Rd
Eastbound US 61
SB Lanes
West Frontage Rd
Segment
County Rd
Dead Ends at
E Frontage Rd
East Frontage Rd
Segment
County Rd
Dead Ends at
W Frontage Rd
West Frontage Rd
Segment
County Rd
B15-5


0
50
100
150
200
0
25
50
75
100
125
150
175
200
225
250
275
300
164.000
+0.00000%
VPI 53 + 00.000
EL. 164.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 50 + 00.000 EL. 164.000
VPT 56 + 00.000 EL. 170.000
+2.00000%
VPC 63 + 00.000 EL. 184.000
VPI 71 + 00.000
EL. 200.000
1,600.000' V.C.
-2.00000%
VPT 79 + 00.000 EL. 184.000
VPI 89 + 00.000
EL. 164.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 86 + 00.000 EL. 170.000
VPT 92 + 00.000 EL. 164.000
+0.00000%
-2.00000%
+0.00000%
VPI 210 + 00.000
EL. 164.000
164.000
+0.01538%
+0.01538%
VPI 275 + 00.000
EL. 165.000
+0.00000%
165.000
C2-1
POT Sta. 0+00.000
PC Sta. 10+25.901
PT Sta. 42+43.78
PC Sta. 248+14.916
Old RR Bed
Old RR Bed
Old RR Bed

Clarksdale Bypass
County Rd
Relocated County Rd
5-Lane Section on Old US 61 Corridor
Old RR Bed
Frontage Rd Segment
Bridge I-69 Over Re-established 4-Lane Divided Section on Old US 61
Existing Interchange at New Africa Road
Access Rd Segment
Clarksdale Bypass
Existing US 49 South Interchange
County Rd
Relocated County Rd
4-Lane Divided Section on Old US 61 Corridor
Current US 61
County Rd
Clarksdale Bypass
80 Ac.
120 Ac.
41 Ac.
75 Ac.
17.1 Ac.
17.3 Ac.
13.6 Ac.
79 Acres G. Rives Neblett
5 Acres Church & Cem
65 Acres Edwina M. Dodson
23.7 Ac.
39 Ac. R.O.W.
16.4 Acres C & W Land Dev. Inc.
66.5 Acres Charles Monty Jr.
28.6 Acres Martha Newman Ragland etal
13.1 Acres C & W Land Dev. Inc.
16.8 Acres Elise D. Monty
45.3 Acres Charles Monty, Jr.
61 Acres Charles Monty, Jr.
78 Acres G. Rives Neblett
74 Acres Clarksdale Country Club
17 Ac.
16 Acres Jack Ivan Langley et al
81 Acres C & W Land Development, Inc.
82 Acres Mary & John Montgomery
48.2 Acres Mary & John Montgomery
28.8 Acres M.C. Martin
120.8 Acres Robert A. Monty
10.8 Ac.
88.7 Acres Edwina M. Dodson
30 Acres M.C. Martin
156 Acres SC & B Inc.
6.3 Ac.
27 Ac.
7.8 Ac.
29 Acres
300
165.000
165.000
+0.00000%
200
150
100
50
0
300
C2-2


0
50
100
150
200
525
550
575
600
165.000
+0.00000%
VPI 546+42.000
EL. 165.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 543+42.000 EL. 165.000
VPT 549+42.000 EL. 174.002
VPC 551+75.000 EL. 180.994
+3.00075%
VPI 559+75.000
EL. 205.000
1,600.000' V.C.
-3.00075%
VPT 567+75.000 EL. 180.994
VPC 570+08.000 EL. 174.002
VPI 573+08.000
EL. 165.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 576+08.000 EL. 165.263
+0.08752%
VPI 613+64.240
EL. 168.550
POT Sta. 614+99.644
POT Sta. 595+42.856
POT Sta. 613+64.235
Current US 61
Relocated County Rd
Frontage Rd Segment
County Rd
Existing Interchange at New Africa Road
Clarksdale Bypass
Existing US 49 South Interchange
Clarksdale Bypass
C4-1

Relocated County Rd
County Rd
POT Sta. 613+64.235
PC Sta. 614+36.922
Existing Interchange New Africa Road
PT Sta. 639+91.567
650
PC Sta. 662+19.823
Clarksdale Bypass
PT Sta. 708+59.383
700
Existing US 49 South Interchange
PC Sta. 739+21.953
750
Clarksdale Bypass
800
PT Sta. 828+46.934
850
900
Existing SR 6 Interchange
POT Sta. 943+64
I-69/Clarksdale Bypass Separation Point
153 ACRES W. S. HEATON, JR.
116.9 ACRES W. S. HEATON, JR.
64 AC.
172.000
VPI 624 + 71.200
EL. 173.290
+0.11654%
-0.07754%
-0.07754%
VPC 702 + 83.410 EL. 167.233
VPI 705 + 83.410
EL. 167.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 708 + 83.410 EL. 176.00
VPC 710 + 00.000 EL. 179.498
+3.00017%
VPI 719 + 00.000
EL. 206.500
1,800.000' V.C.
-3.00034%
VPT 728 + 00.000 EL. 179.497
VPC 730 + 05.840 EL. 173.321
VPI 733 + 05.840
EL. 164.320
600.000' V.C.
VPT 736 + 05.840 EL. 164.552
+0.07741%
VPI 797 + 91.200
EL. 169.340
-0.08000%
VPI 821 + 91.200
EL. 167.420
+0.12000%
VPI 848 + 91.200
EL. 170.660
-0.20800%
VPC 860 + 91.200 EL. 168.164
VPI 863 + 91.200
EL. 167.540
600.000' V.C.
VPT 866 + 91.200 EL. 175.040
VPC 869 + 91.200 EL. 182.540
+2.50000%
VPI 877 + 91.200
EL. 202.540
1,600.000' V.C.
-2.50000%
VPT 885 + 91.200 EL. 182.540
VPC 888 + 91.200 EL. 175.040
VPI 891 + 91.200
EL. 167.540
600.000' V.C.
VPT 894 + 91.200 EL. 167.947
+0.13579%
172.033
C5–1

925

0 50 100 150 200

+0.135729%
-0.080136%
VPI 929+91.200
EL. 172.700
171.500
172.033

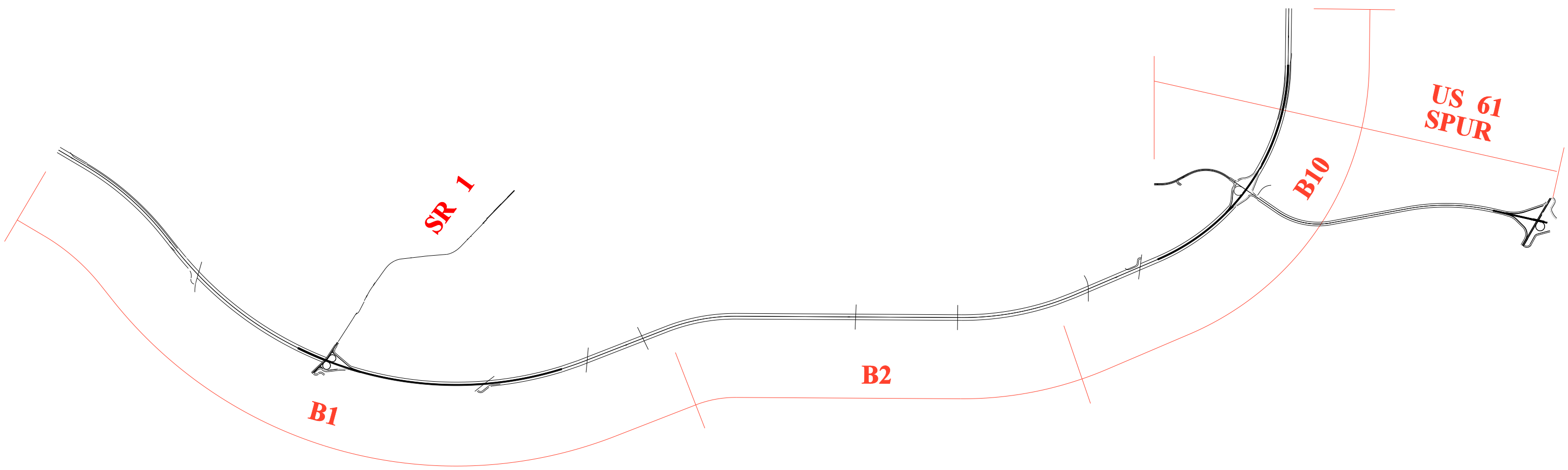
C5-2

I-69 EIS
PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES
PREFERED ALTERNATE SECTION 3

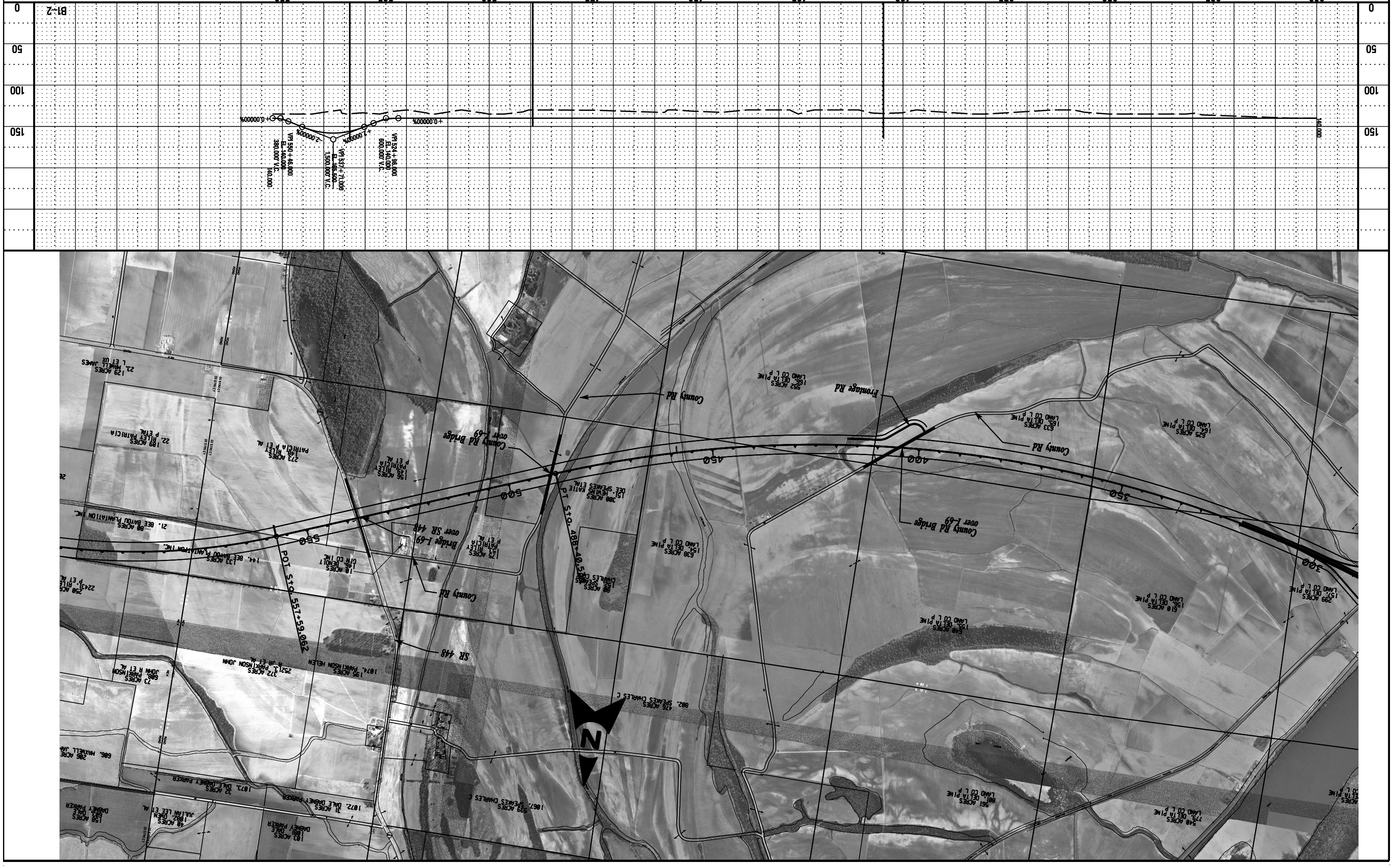
ITEM	SUB-ITEMS	UNIT	UNIT COST	QUANTITY	TOTAL COST
GRADING	CLEARING AND GRUBBING	Acre	2,000	1,065	2,130,000
	EXCAVATION	CY	5	0	0
	BORROW (Est. at 6' = 174,500 CY/MI)	CY	7	5,863,991	41,047,937
	CHANNEL CHANGE (Perrineal)	CY	3	45,000	135,000
	STREAM CHANGE (Intermittent)	CY	0	0	0
				0	
				TOTAL	43,312,937
DRAINAGE	CROSS DRAIN (PIPES)	LF	100	1,521	152,100
	CROSS DRAIN (BOX CULVERTS)	LF	350	2,610	913,500
	CROSS DRAIN (BOX BRIDGES)	LF	600	1,557	934,200
	MEDIAN DRAIN (Avg 1200' spacings) (24 @ 100')	LF	30	17,200	516,000
				0	
				0	
				TOTAL	2,515,800
SURFACING	4-LANE FREEWAY W/GRASS MEDIAN	MI	1,664,000	38	63,906,928
	2-LANE COLLECTORS/ARTERIALS/HIGHWAYS	MI	329,000	8	2,580,018
	FRONTAGE ROAD (PAVED)	MI	329,000	25	8,077,279
	FRONTAGE ROAD (UNPAVED)	MI	200,000	0	0
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE DIAMOND W/5LN)	EA	2,400,000	8	19,200,000
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE DIAMOND WLOOP)	EA	2,600,000	1	2,600,000
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE CLOVERLEAF W/5LN)	EA	3,210,000	1	3,210,000
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE HALF CLOVERLEAF W/5LN)	EA	2,500,000	0	0
				TOTAL	99,574,225
MISCELLANEOUS	GUARD RAIL	LF	15	13,500	202,500
	SIGNALIZATION-INTERCHANGE (DIAMOND ONLY)	EA	150,000	0	0
	RETAINING WALLS	SF	30	0	0
	WIRE FENCE	LF	5	499,700	2,498,500
	EROSION CONTROL		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	2,908,059	2,908,059
	SIGNING AND PAVING MARKINGS		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	2,908,059	2,908,059
	MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	2,908,059	2,908,059
	UTILITY RELOCATION		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	2,908,059	2,908,059
	MAJOR UTILITY RELOCATION			2,873,000	2,873,000
				8,522,425	8,522,425
				TOTAL	25,728,662
TOTAL ROADWAY CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	171,131,624
BRIDGES	GRADE SEPARATIONS	SF	85	481,780	40,951,300
	MAINLINE - (RAILROAD)	SF	75	0	0
	MAINLINE - (HYDRAULICS)	SF	65	200,320	13,020,800
TOTAL STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	53,972,100
				CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL	225,103,724
				CONTINGENCY @ 15% OF CONSTRUCTION	33,765,559
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	258,869,282
ROW	AGRICULTURAL LAND	ACRE	2,000	1,065	2,130,000
	RESIDENCE - TAKEN	RES	80,000	17	1,360,000
	MOBILE HOME - TAKEN	RES	25,000	8	200,000
	BUSINESS - TAKEN	RES	150,000	5	750,000
				ACQUISITION & RELOCATION (30% OF LAND + STRUCTURES)	1,332,000
				ROW SUBTOTAL	5,772,000
TOTAL RIGHT-OF-WAY COST				TOTAL	5,772,000
TOTAL UPGRADE/SPUR COST				TOTAL	19,146,266
GRAND TOTAL				TOTAL	283,787,549
Length Total				MILES	48.160

CADD

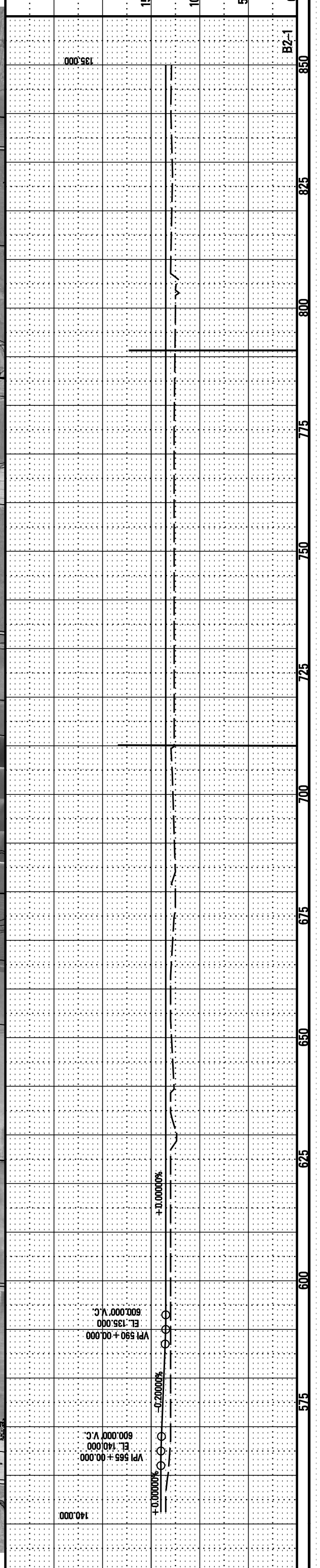
SECTION 4



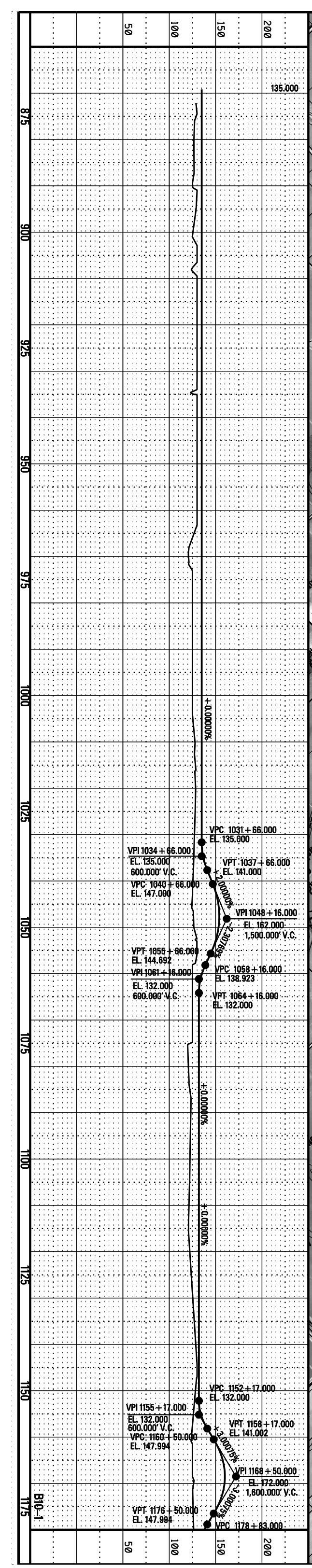
POT Sta. 0+00.000
PC Sta. 25+16.533
PT Sta. 108+99.856
PC Sta. 124+51.753
County Rd
Frontage Rd
County Rd Dead Ends
50
Co Rd Bridge over I-69
Bridge I-69 over SR 1
5-Lane Section on SR 1
Within Limits of Interchange
Relocated County Rd
200
250
300
N
140.000
+3.0%
-3.0%
+0.0000%
-0.0000%
VPI 266 + 46.330
EL. 140.000
600.000' V.C.
VPI 278 + 13.000
EL. 175.000
1,500.000' V.C.
VPI 289 + 79.670
EL. 140.000
600.000' V.C.
SR1
R.R.
0
25
50
75
100
125
150
175
200
225
250
275
300
B1-1

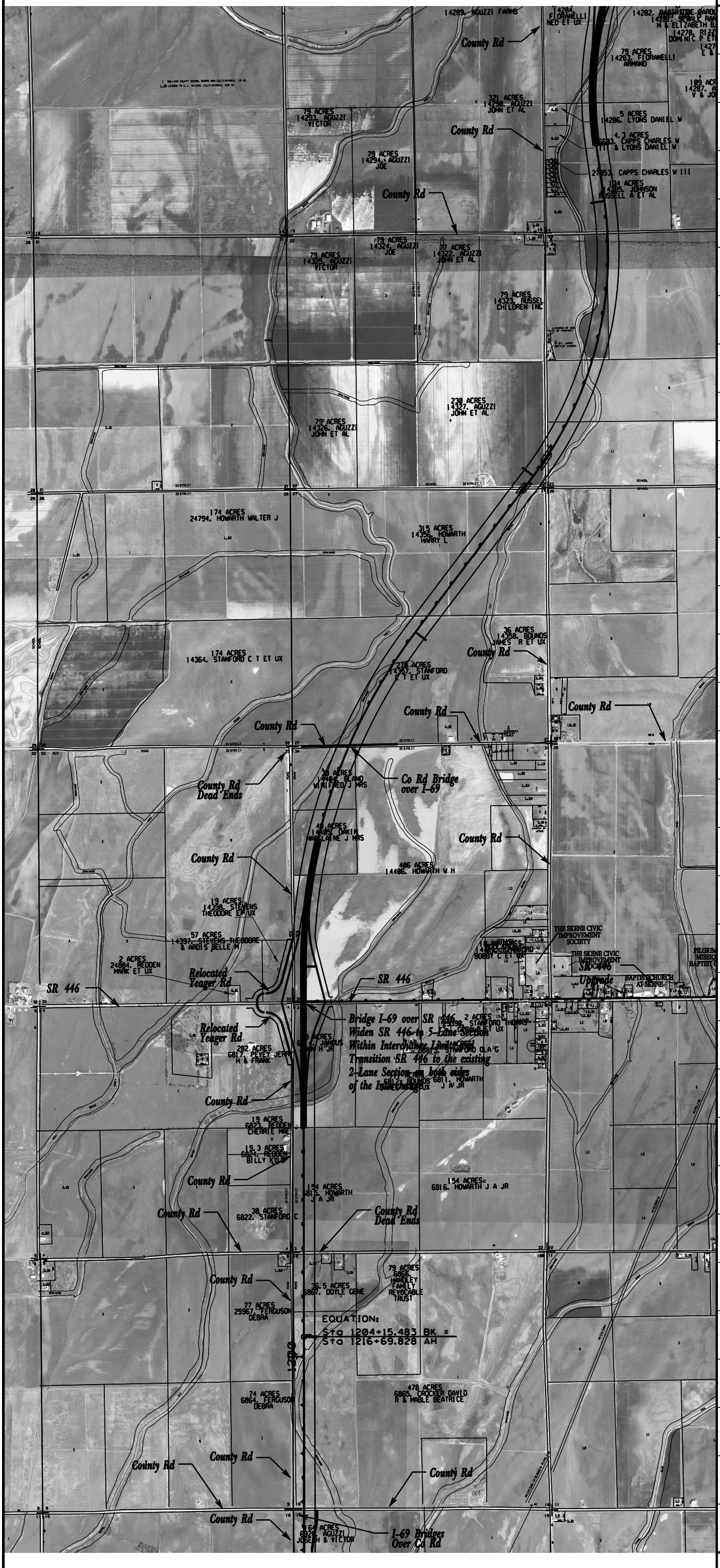

300
325
350
375
400
425
450
475
500
525
550
0
50
100
150
B1-2
+0.000000%
-2.000000%
+2.000000%
+0.000000%
VPI 524+96.000
EL. 140.000
600.000' V.C.
VPI 537+71.000
EL. 135.500
1500.000' V.C.
VPI 550+46.000
EL. 140.000
300.000' V.C.
140.000
County Rd
Frontage Rd
County Rd Bridge over I-69
POT Sta. 488+40.52
POT Sta. 557+59.062
SR 448
Bridge I-69 over SR. 448
N

PC Sta. 794+99.75
PC Sta. 557+59.062
PT Sta. 631+16.965
Co. Rd Bridge over I-69
County Rd
SR 448
Farm Access Rd
N

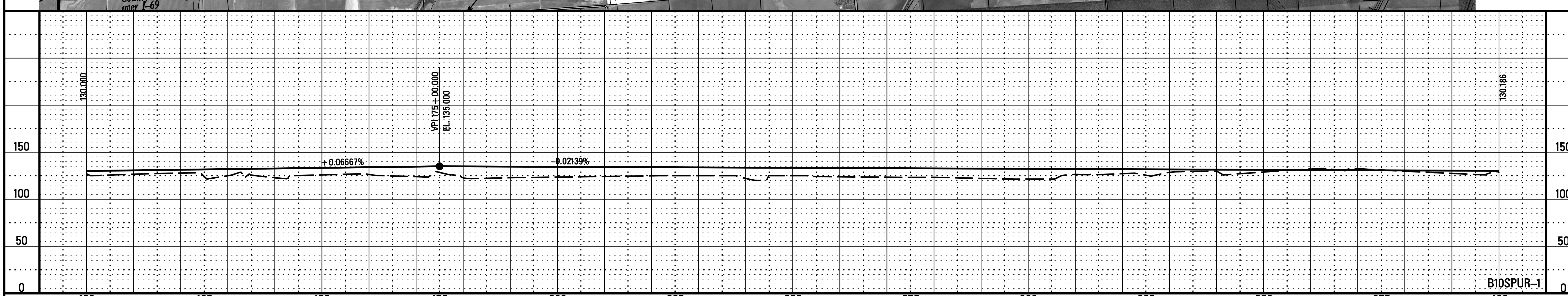

135.000
140.000
VPI 590+00.000
EL. 135.000
600.000' V.C.
VPI 565+00.000
EL. 140.000
600.000' V.C.
+0.00000%
-0.20000%
+0.00000%
B2-1
0
50
100
150
575
600
625
650
675
700
725
750
775
800
825
850

Relocated Litton Rd 2-Lane
Relocated County Rd
Relocated Litton Rd 2-Lane
County Rd
Relocated County Rd
Bridge I-69 over Relocated Litton Rd 5-Lane Section on Relocated Litton Rd Inside Interchange
Relocated Litton Rd 4-Lane Divided Section With Partial Control of Access
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd, Bridge over I-69
County Rd
Bridge over I-69
County Rd
County Rd
County Road
WISCONSIN
MICHIGAN
N
850
875
900
135.000
135.000
150
100
50
0
B2-2

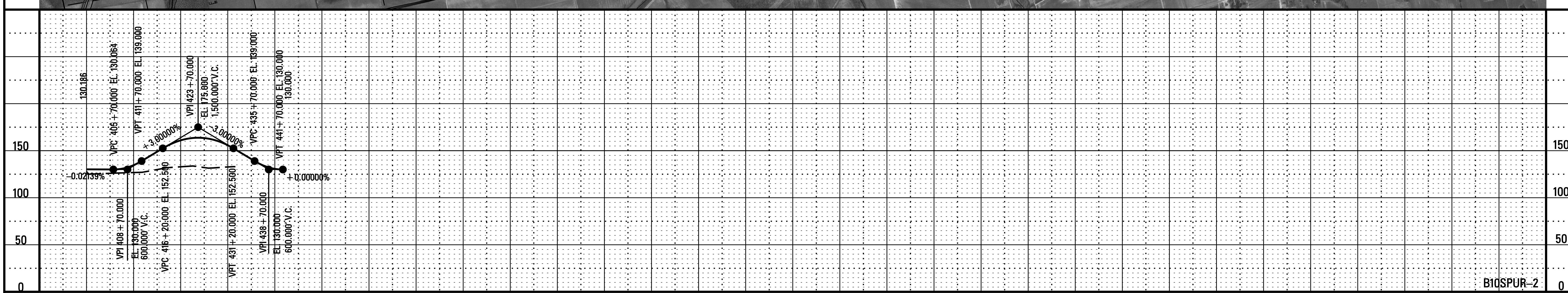

50
100
150
200
135.000
875
900
925
950
975
1000
1025
1050
1075
1100
1125
1150
1175
+0.00000%
VPC 1031+66.000
EL. 135.000
VPI 1034+66.000
EL. 135.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1037+66.000
EL. 141.000
VPC 1040+66.000
EL. 147.000
+2.00000%
VPI 1048+16.000
EL. 162.000
1,500.000' V.C.
-2.30769%
VPT 1055+66.000
EL. 144.692
VPI 1061+16.000
EL. 132.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 1058+16.000
EL. 138.923
VPT 1064+16.000
EL. 132.000
+0.00000%
+0.00000%
VPC 1152+17.000
EL. 132.000
VPI 1155+17.000
EL. 132.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 1158+17.000
EL. 141.002
VPC 1160+50.000
EL. 147.994
+3.00075%
VPI 1168+50.000
EL. 172.000
1,600.000' V.C.
-3.00075%
VPT 1176+50.000
EL. 147.994
VPC 1178+83.000
B10-1
PC Sta. 912+10.000
PT Sta. 888+70.520
PC Sta. 960+55.287
PT Sta. 1159+04.201
County Rd
Lisbon Rd
Redosted Lisbon Rd
2-Lane
Redosted County Rd
Redosted 2-Lane Lisbon Rd
Redosted County Rd
Redosted Dead Ends into Frontage Rd
West Frontage Rd
Bridge I-69 over County Rd
I-69 Bridges over County Rd
MICHIGAN
WISCONSIN
N


14289. AGUZZI FARMS
14284. FIORANELLI NED ET UX
14282. BARRATTE CAROL
14283. FIORANELLI ARMAND
14278. RIZZ
DOMINIC P ET
79 ACRES 14293. AGUZZI VICTOR
321 ACRES 14290. AGUZZI JOHN ET AL
5 ACRES 14286. LYONS DANIEL W
4.3 ACRES 6803. CAPPS CHARLES W III & LYONS DANIEL W
27053. CAPPS CHARLES W III
134 ACRES 14285. JOHNSON RUSSELL A ET AL
79 ACRES 14294. AGUZZI JOE
79 ACRES 14324. AGUZZI JOE
79 ACRES 14325. AGUZZI VICTOR
77 ACRES 14322. AGUZZI JOHN ET AL
79 ACRES 14323. RUSSEL CHILDREN INC
230 ACRES 14327. AGUZZI JOHN ET AL
79 ACRES 14326. AGUZZI JOHN ET AL
174 ACRES 24794. HOWARTH WALTER J
315 ACRES 14356. HOWARTH HARRY L
174 ACRES 14364. STANFORD C T ET UX
36 ACRES 14358. BOUNDS JAMES R ET UX
278 ACRES 14357. STANFORD C T ET UX
39 ACRES 14402. BLAND WINIFRED J MRS
40 ACRES 14405. OAKIN MARLAINE J MRS
406 ACRES 14406. HOWARTH W H
19 ACRES 14398. STEVENS THEODORE E ET UX
57 ACRES 14397. STEVENS THEODORE & ARDIS BELLE M
2 ACRES 24684. REDDEN MARK ET UX
THE SKENE CIVIC IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY
BAPTIST CHURCH AT SKENE
2 ACRES 6830. STANFORD THOMAS C ET UX
6813. STANFORD OLA C
282 ACRES 6817. PEVEY JERRY H & FRANK
6812. BOUNDS 6811. HOWARTH J A JR
19 ACRES 6823. REDDEN CHERRIE MAE
19.3 ACRES 6824. REDDEN BILLY KYLE
154 ACRES 6815. HOWARTH J A JR
154 ACRES 6816. HOWARTH J A JR
38 ACRES 6822. STANFORD C
79 ACRES 6866. HANDLEY FAMILY REVOCABLE TRUST
36.5 ACRES 6867. DOYLE GENE
77 ACRES 25967. FERGUSON DEBRA
74 ACRES 6864. FERGUSON DEBRA
478 ACRES 6865. CROCKER DAVID R & MABLE BEATRICE
164 ACRES 6828. AGUZZI JOSEPH & VICTOR
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd Dead Ends
Co Rd Bridge over I-69
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
SR 446
Relocated Yeager Rd
SR 446
SR 446 Upgrade
Relocated Yeager Rd
Bridge I-69 over SR 446
Widen SR 446 to 5-Lane Section Within Interchange Limits
Transition SR 446 to the existing 2-Lane Section on both sides of the Interchange
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd Dead Ends
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
I-69 Bridges Over Co Rd
EQUATION:
Sta 1204+15.483 BK =
Sta 1216+69.828 AH
1220
132.000
+0.00000%
VPT 1176+50.000
EL. 147.994
5%
VPC 1178+83.000
EL. 141.002
VPT 1181+83.000
EL. 132.000
606.000' V.C.
VPT 1184+83.000
EL. 132.000
1200
1175
150
100
50
0

B10-2

County Rd
County Rd
Dead Ends
Into Frontage Rd
County Rd
Dead Ends
County Rd
County Rd
County Rd
Relocated
Litton Rd
2-Lane
Relocated
Litton Rd
2-Lane
Relocated
County Rd
Relocated
County Rd
Bridge I-69 over
Relocated Litton Rd
5-Lane Section on
Litton Rd Inside Interchange
Relocated Litton Rd
4-Lane Divided Section With
Partial Control of Access
County Rd
County Rd
Relocated Litton Rd
4-Lane Divided Section With
Partial Control of Access
County Road
County Rd Bridge
over I-69
POT Sta. 100+00.000
PC Sta. 105+25.501
PC Sta. 129+64.148
PT Sta. 160+92.858
PC Sta. 210+96.210
PT Sta. 255+87.990
PC Sta. 317+78.514
PT Sta. 387+13.234
100
150
200
250
300
350
400
N
MICHIGAN
WISCONSIN
7027. ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

130.000
VPI 175+00.000
EL. 135.000
+0.06667%
-0.02139%
130.186
150
100
50
0
100
125
150
175
200
225
250
275
300
325
350
375
400
B1DSPUR-1

Frontage Rd
Segment
Frontage Rd
Segment
400
6633. CLAY MARY ANN ET AL
147 ACRES
6632. DAVIS LARRY C
6618. GRIFFITH WILLIAM M JR
182 ACRES
6635. GRIFFITH WILLIAM MILTON JR ET AL
78 ACRES
6619. WARREN JIMMY
6646. COCILOVA VIRA ET UX
6643. REGINELLI HENRY
6586. DUCAN REUBEN D

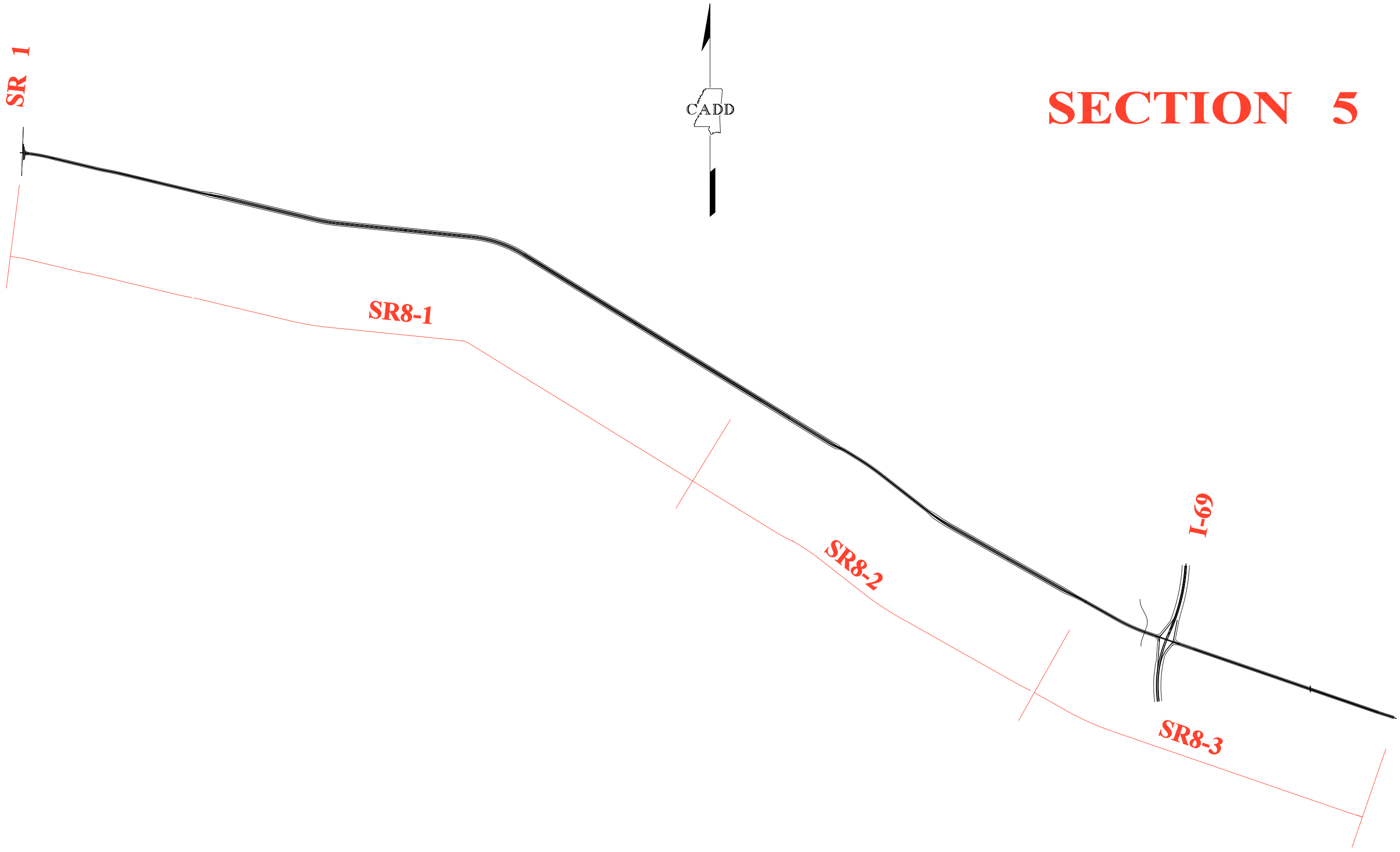


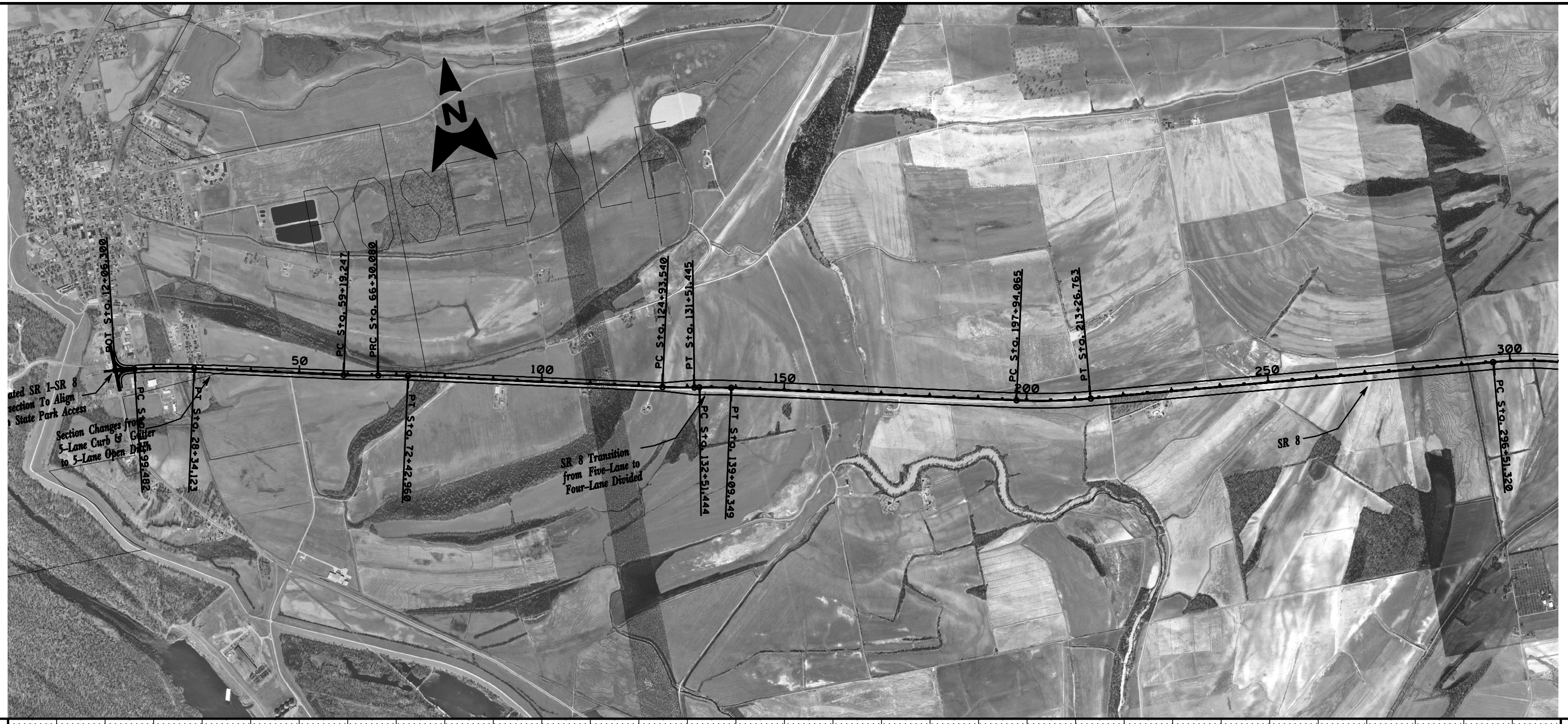
VPC 405+70.000 EL 130.064
VPT 411+70.000 EL 139.000
VPI 408+70.000
EL 130.000
600.000' V.C.
VPC 416+20.000 EL 152.500
VPI 423+70.000
EL 175.800
1,500.000' V.C.
VPT 431+20.000 EL 152.500
VPC 435+70.000 EL 139.000
VPI 438+70.000
EL 130.000
600.000' V.C.
VPT 441+70.000 EL 130.000
130.000
130.186
-0.02139%
+3.00000%
-3.00000%
+0.00000%
150
100
50
0
400
425
B10SPUR-2

I-69 EIS
PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES
PREFERED ALTERNATE SECTION 4

ITEM	SUB-ITEMS	UNIT	UNIT COST	QUANTITY	TOTAL COST
GRADING	CLEARING AND GRUBBING	Acre	2,000	927	1,854,000
	EXCAVATION	CY	5	0	0
	BORROW (Est. at 6' = 174,500 CY/MI)	CY	7	4,348,560	30,439,920
	CHANNEL CHANGE (Perrineal)	CY	3	30,000	90,000
	STREAM CHANGE (Intermittent)	CY	0	0	0
				0	
				TOTAL	32,383,920
DRAINAGE	CROSS DRAIN (PIPES)	LF	100	1,373	137,300
	CROSS DRAIN (BOX CULVERTS)	LF	350	998	349,300
	CROSS DRAIN (BOX BRIDGES)	LF	600	757	454,200
	MEDIAN DRAIN (Avg 1200' spacings) (24 @ 100')	LF	30	9,800	294,000
				0	
				0	
				TOTAL	1,234,800
SURFACING	4-LANE FREEWAY W/GRASS MEDIAN	MI	1,664,000	24	39,207,168
	2-LANE COLLECTORS/ARTERIALS/HIGHWAYS	MI	329,000	3	844,872
	FRONTAGE ROAD (PAVED)	MI	329,000	2	731,038
	FRONTAGE ROAD (UNPAVED)	MI	200,000	4	728,000
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE DIAMOND W/5LN)	EA	2,400,000	0	0
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE DIAMOND WLOOP)	EA	2,600,000	1	2,600,000
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE CLOVERLEAF W/5LN)	EA	3,210,000	0	0
	INTERCHANGE-(TYPE HALF CLOVERLEAF W/5LN)	EA	2,500,000	1	2,500,000
				TOTAL	46,611,078
MISCELLANEOUS	GUARD RAIL	LF	15	8,900	133,500
	SIGNALIZATION-INTERCHANGE (DIAMOND ONLY)	EA	150,000	0	0
	RETAINING WALLS	SF	30	0	0
	WIRE FENCE	LF	5	209,000	1,045,000
	EROSION CONTROL		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	1,604,596	1,604,596
	SIGNING AND PAVING MARKINGS		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	1,604,596	1,604,596
	MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	1,604,596	1,604,596
	UTILITY RELOCATION		2% OF GR. DR. & SURF	1,604,596	1,604,596
	MAJOR UTILITY RELOCATION			2,088,000	2,088,000
				0	0
				TOTAL	9,684,884
TOTAL ROADWAY CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	89,914,682
BRIDGES	GRADE SEPARATIONS	SF	85	95,440	8,112,400
	MAINLINE - (RAILROAD)	SF	75	33,840	2,538,000
	MAINLINE - (HYDRAULICS)	SF	65	587,720	38,201,800
TOTAL STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	48,852,200
				CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL	138,766,882
				CONTINGENCY @ 15% OF CONSTRUCTION	20,815,032
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST				TOTAL	159,581,914
ROW	AGRICULTURAL LAND	ACRE	2,000	856	1,712,000
	RESIDENCE - TAKEN	RES	80,000	2	160,000
	MOBILE HOME - TAKEN	RES	25,000	0	0
	BUSINESS - TAKEN	RES	150,000	0	0
				ACQUISITION & RELOCATION (30% OF LAND + STRUCTURES)	561,600
				ROW SUBTOTAL	2,433,600
TOTAL RIGHT-OF-WAY COST				TOTAL	2,433,600
TOTAL UPGRADE/SPUR COST				TOTAL	32,806,390
GRAND TOTAL				TOTAL	194,821,904
Length Total				MILES	22.807

SECTION 5

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ROSEDALE
POT Sta. 12+06.300
PC Sta. 59+19.247
PRC Sta. 66+30.080
PT Sta. 72+42.960
PC Sta. 124+93.540
PT Sta. 131+51.445
PC Sta. 132+51.444
PT Sta. 139+69.349
PC Sta. 197+94.865
PT Sta. 213+26.762
PC Sta. 296+51.320
PC Sta. 28+34.123
PC Sta. 29+99.482
50
100
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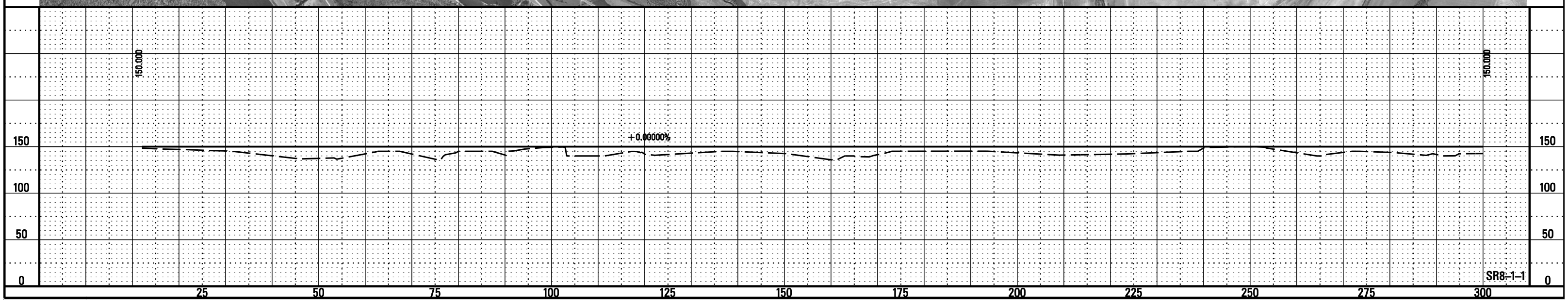
ated SR 1-SR 8
section To Align
State Park Access
Section Changes from
5-Lane Curb & Gutter
to 5-Lane Open Ditch
SR 8 Transition
from Five-Lane to
Four-Lane Divided
SR 8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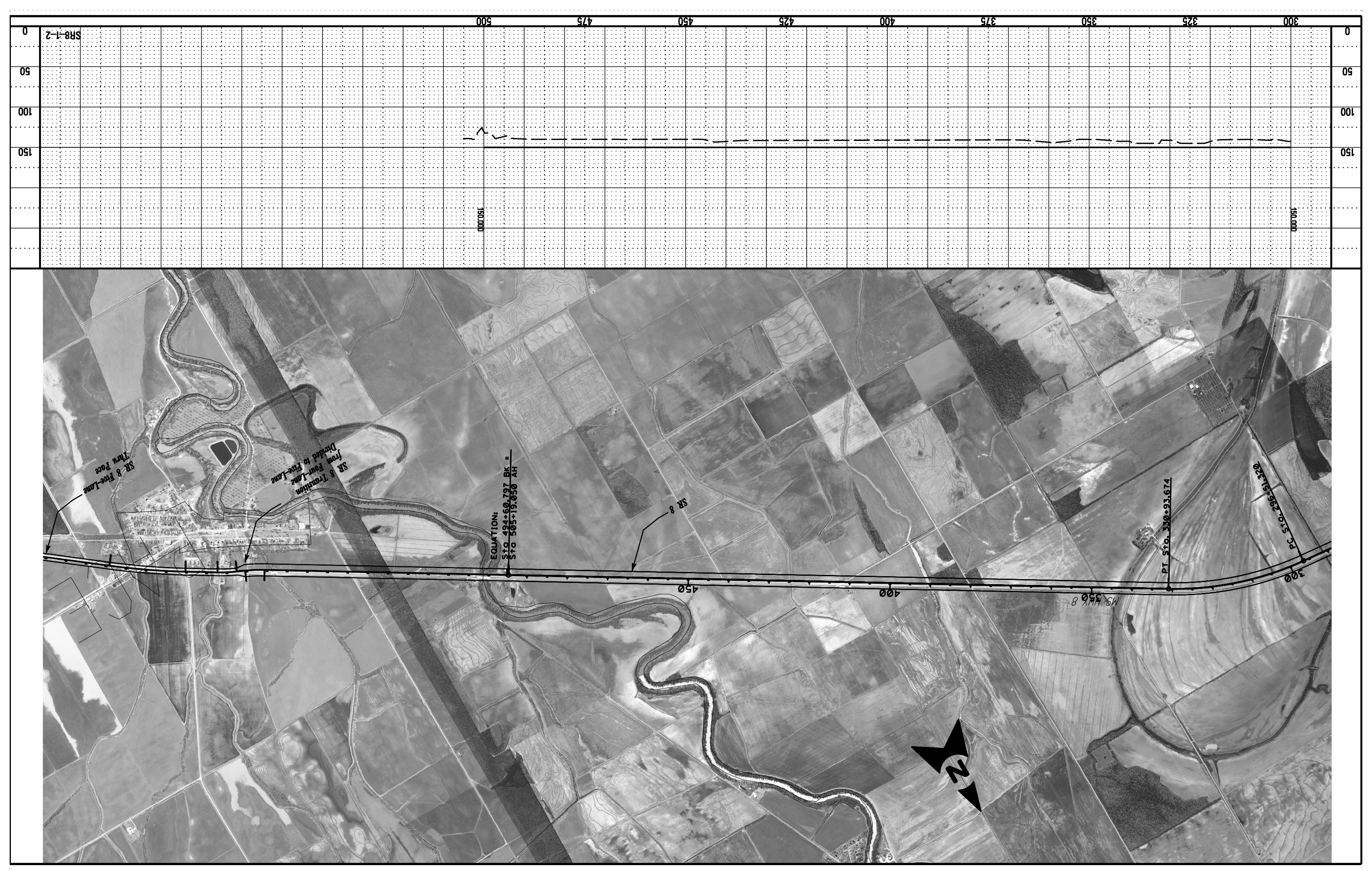
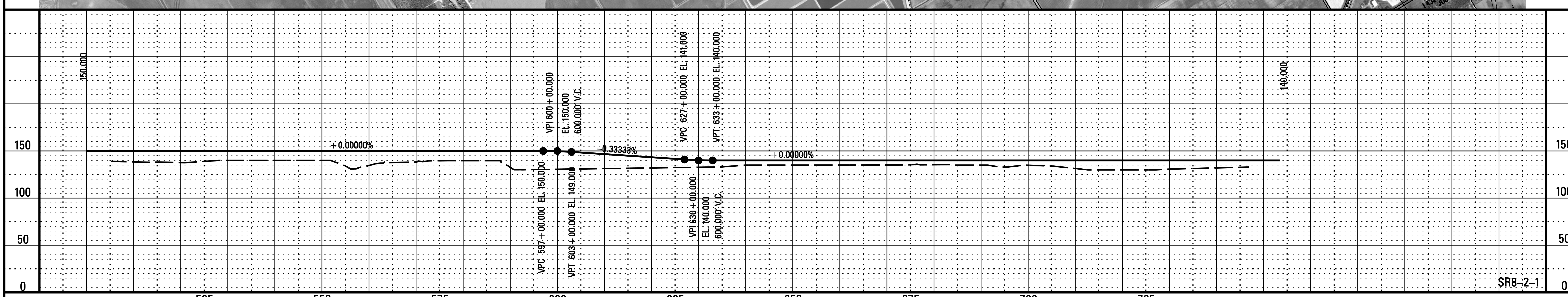
SR8-1-1


SR 8 Five-Lane
Thru Pace
SR 8 Transition
From Four-Lane
Divided to Five-Lane
EQUATION:
Sta 424+60.797 BK =
Sta 505+18.050 AH
SR 8
450
400
350
MS HWY 8
PT Sta. 330+93.674
PC Sta. 298+51.32
300
N

SR8-1-2
0
50
100
150
150.000
150.000
300
325
350
375
400
425
450
475
500

POT Sta. 505+19.050
EQUATION:
Sta 494+60.797 BK =
Sta 505+19.050 AH
550
PC Sta. 565+68.916
PT Sta. 570+50.114
PC Sta. 572+44.791
PT Sta. 577+25.989
PC Sta. 585+19.326
600
PT Sta. 604+04.000
SR 8 Transition from Four-Lane Divided to Five-Lane
SR 8 Five-Lane Thru Pace
SR 8 Transition from Five-Lane to Four-Lane Divided
PC Sta. 640+04.807
650
PT Sta. 657+26.722
700
PC Sta. 739+16.015
PT Sta. 745+29.192
PC Sta. 747+29.192
EQUATION:
Sta 753+42.369 BK =
Sta 746+85.960 AH
750
SR 8 Transition from Four-Lane Divided to Five-Lane
County Rd
Relocated County Rd
County Rd Dead Ends at I-69

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EL. 150.000
600.000 V.C.
VPC 597+00.000 EL. 150.000
VPT 603+00.000 EL. 149.000
VPC 627+00.000 EL. 141.000
VPT 633+00.000 EL. 140.000
VPI 630+00.000
EL. 140.000
600.000 V.C.
150
100
50
0
525
550
575
600
625
650
675
700
725
SR8-2-1

County Rd
Dead Ends at I-69
POT Sta. 746+85.960
PC Sta. 769+13.124
Sta. 789+46.07
Relocated County Rd
SR 8
Section Changes from 5 Lane Open Ditch to 5 Lane Curb & Gutter
PC Sta. 941+99.993
PT Sta. 946+74.104
POT Sta. 954+02.603
PC Sta. 947+74.032
PT Sta. 952+48.195
Connect to Existing SR 8 Five-Lane Curb & Gutter Section
MORGEON CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH
750
800
850
900
950
N

140.000
149.000
+0.00000%
150
100
50
0
750
775
800
825
850
875
900
925
950
975
SR8--3--1

I-69
PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES
PREFERRED ALTERNATE SECTION 5

FACILITY TYPE:

SEGMENT: UPGRADE _X_ SPUR __ SR8 LENGTH: MILES:17.764
ALTERNATIVE:

DESCRIPTION	NO. OF LANES	MILES	R.O.W. COST PER MILE	R.O.W. EST. COST	GRADE & DRAIN PER MILE	GRADE & DRAIN EST. COST	PAVING PER MILE	PAVING EST. COST	TOTAL
NEW LOCATION	4	0	385,000	0	1,102,000	0.00	1,370,000	0	0
MAJOR WIDENING (PARALLEL CONST., ADD 2 LANES)	4	10.443	550,000	5,743,650	694,000	7,247,442.00	1,441,000	15048363	28,039,455
NEW LOCATION	2	0	360,000	0	558,000	0.00	543,000	0	0
MAJOR WIDENING FROM 2-LANE TO 5-LANE (OPEN DITCH)	5	6.715	200,000	1,343,000	558,000	3,746,970.00	1,000,000	6715000	11,804,970
NEW LOCATION - PARTIAL CONTROL ACCESS	4	0	385,000	0	1,102,000	0.00	1,370,000	0	0
MODERATE OVERLAY - 3"x28' (MILL & WIDEN TO 14' LNS)	2	0	0	0	0	0.00	147,000	0	0
WIDENING TO 5-LANE CURB AND GUTTER SECTION	5	0.606	400,000	242,400	1,156,000	700,536.00	1,500,000	909000	1,851,936
								SUBTOTAL	41,696,361
								CONTINGENCY @ 15% OF CONSTRUCTION	6,254,454.15
								R.O.W., GRADE, DRAIN & PAVE TOTAL	47,950,815

ITEM	QUANTITY		S.F		
HYDRAULIC BRIDGES	3		32,670	$42/SF	1,372,140
				SUBTOTAL	1,372,140
				CONTINGENCY @ 15% OF CONSTRUCTION	205,821
				BRIDGE TOTAL	1,577,961

SPECIAL MISCELLANEOUS	UNIT	UNIT COST	QUANTITY	TOTAL
UTILITY RELOCATION				2,127,500
MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC		2% OF GR.DR.&PAVE		833,927
RESIDENCE TAKEN	RES	80,000	13	1,040,000
BUSINESS TAKEN	RES	150,000	3	450,000
MOBILE HOME TAKEN	RES	25,000	5	125,000
OTHER (PARTIAL CLOVERLEAF)	EA	2,500,000	0	0
				0
			SPECIAL MISCELLANEOUS TOTAL	4,576,427
			GRAND TOTAL 2001 COST	54,105,203

Appendix H
Alternatives Development

Appendix H
Development of the Alternatives

The development of alternatives did not begin until after the Initial Scoping Meeting.

Initial Scoping Meeting on July 11, 2001, and Optional Field Visit on July 12, 2001

The Initial Scoping Meeting was held at Clarksdale High School during the afternoon, and the optional field visit was taken the following day. Eighty-nine (89) people registered their attendance at the meeting, and twenty-one (21) people attended all or a portion of the field visit. The goals of the Scoping Meeting and Optional Field Visit were to solicit views from Federal, State, and local agencies – as well as private organization or groups – which by law, interest, or expertise could assist the project planners with the timely identification of economic, social, and environmental opportunities and constraints within the study area. The input received from those attending this meeting and field visit was used to assist the project planners in developing the evaluating the one-mile wide Preliminary Corridor Alternatives for presentation at the Initial Series of Public Meetings. The minutes for this meeting are contained in the **Appendix**.

Displays used to supplement presentations given at the Scoping Meeting included:

- I-69 Typical Section;
- Aerial Photography Map of the Study Area;
- Percent Minority Population Map of the Study Area;
- Median Household Income Map of the Study Area; and,
- An Environmental Consequences Map of the Study Area.

The Environmental Consequences Map of the Study Area utilized Geographical Information Systems (GIS) databases, other desktop resources, and supplements from other agencies to identify known natural and human environmental features such as National Register Sites; Historic Structures; Archaeological Sites; Environmentally Sensitive Areas; Underground Storage Tanks; EPA Regulated Facilities; RCRA Sites; CERCLA Sites; Toxic Release Inventory Sites; Discharge Elimination Sites; Dams; Airports; Electric Transmission Lines; Natural Gas Pipelines; Active Railroads; Abandoned Railroads; County Roads; Primary Roads; Secondary Roads; Intermittent Streams; Perennial Streams; Historic Areas; State Parks; National Wildlife Refuges; Cities; Water Bodies; State Penitentiary; and Areas of 100 Year Floodplain.

The following things learned from discussions at the Scoping Meeting aided the project team in developing the one-mile wide Preliminary Alternative Corridors for presentation at the Initial Series of Public Meetings.

- A minimum of three alternatives will be considered.
- The eastern boundary of the study area will not be extended east of the State Penal Farm in the development of alternatives.
- I-69 should be placed near cities and towns to allow areas a stronger chance for economic development.

The following things learned from the field visit aided the project team in developing the one-mile wide Preliminary Alternative Corridors for presentation at the Initial Series of Public Meetings.

- Using the four-lane section of US 61, from between Renova and Merigold in Bolivar County to Clarksdale in Coahoma County, appeared to be an alternative.
- The built-up area of the City of Cleveland in Bolivar County extends east along SR 8 to near the Sunflower County Line and west along SR 8 to the turnoff to Bayou Academy.
- The industrial park, port, and state park near the SR 8 intersection with SR 1 at Rosedale in Bolivar County are obvious constraints. Due to these constraints and the build-up along SR 8 east of the SR 1 intersection, it appeared the western limits of any alternative for I-69 near Rosedale should be east of Rosedale.
- The Mississippi River is located just west of the Town of Beulah in Bolivar County. Any alternative that is developed along SR 1 impacts the Town of Beulah, and the alternative should pass to the east of the Town.
- SR 446 in Bolivar County connects SR 1 with US 61, and SR 446 passes through the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge between SR 1 and the Community of Skene. The Refuge is an environmentally sensitive constraint.
- Some of the SR 1 crossing points in Bolivar County for the adjacent I-69 study on SIU 12 at and near Benoit were observed. It was recognized that some overlap west onto the SIU 12 study might be needed to complete the SIU 11 study.
- A crop dusting airstrip, located in Bolivar County on Litton Road east of Benoit, was observed as a constraint.
- The built-up limits of the Community of Skene were observed as possible constraints for developing alternatives.
- In the northern portion of the study area near the City of Tunica and Tunica County, a minority community was located east of US 61 and north of SR 4.
- The expansion of Tunica Airport, which was under construction east of US 61, was observed as a constraint.
- The location of the old Tunica County Landfill, which is east of US 61 and north of SR 4, was observed. This landfill is closed, and it is a constraint.
- The location of the new landfill for Tunica County Landfill, which is a constraint located on Counce Road at the SR 3 intersection, was observed.
- In Tunica County at Robinsonville, the build-up was observed along US 61 between the SR 304 intersection and the new SR 304 Interchange to the north with US 61. This build-up is associated with the Casino Gaming Industry whose casinos are located along the Mississippi River west of US 61. There is also build-up associated with the casinos between US 61 and the Mississippi River. The section of SR 304 under construction between I-55 at Hernando and US 61 has been designated as SIU 10 of I-69. As a means of possibly connecting SIU 10 of I-69 with SIU 11, an interstate spur connection was provided east of SR 3 between the section of SR 304 under construction and the existing section of SR 304. Due to the constraints along and west of US 61 between the SR 304 intersection with US 61 and the SR 304 interchange with US 61, the spur connection to SR 304 was selected as the northern termini of the SIU 11 Study from Benoit to Robinsonville. The short distance between the intersections of existing SR 304 with the spur, the railroad, and SR 3 are constraints for connecting the SIU 11 alternatives with the spur.

The following things learned from comments, which were hand-delivered to the project team at the meeting or mailed to the project team in response to the Scoping Meeting and Field Visit, aided the project team in developing the one-mile wide Preliminary Alternative Corridors for presentation at the Initial Series of Public Meetings.

- Keep the south section of this section of I-69 as far south and east as possible to better serve the larger populated areas.
- Carefully examine the merits of an I-69 alignment east of Cleveland and south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge.
- Use the US 61 Clarksdale Bypass for I-69 in Coahoma County and use the four-lane section of US 61 north and south of Clarksdale as much as possible for I-69.

Noteworthy actions in Alternative Development between the Initial Scoping Meeting in July of 2001 and the presentation of one-mile wide Preliminary Alternative Corridors at the Initial Series of Public Meetings on September 24-27, 2001

- The Sunflower County Board of Supervisors passed a Resolution dated July 16, 2001. The Resolution supported the I-69 river crossing at Eutaw Landing in the Benoit area, and further urged the MDOT and FHWA to carefully examine the merits of an I-69 route which would run east of Cleveland, Mississippi, and south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge.
- Geographic Information System (GIS) environmental data was obtained from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and referenced into the project team's base mapping.
- The project team held an internal meeting to discuss the operating procedures of the Environmental Justice Task Force on August 2, 2001.
- A Scoping Meeting with the Native Americans was scheduled at the Headquarters of Delta Council in Stoneville on August 22, 2001. The Jackson Division Office of the FHWA mailed invitations to the appropriate Tribal representatives, but none of the Native Americans attended the meeting.
- The one-mile wide Preliminary Alternative Corridors, shown on Figure 2-1 were developed for presentation at the Initial Series of Public Meetings. The following are some of the factors considered when developing these initial alternative corridors.
    - ❖ Utilizing information received in response to the Initial Scoping Meeting, the base mapping, and known environmental opportunities and constraints, a number of possible one-mile wide alternative segments, which could be connected in various combinations to become alternative corridors, were developed.
    - ❖ The approach was to present as many short segments as appeared remotely possible and practical to the public for input at the initial series of public meetings, and allow the public to assist in reducing the reduce the number of alternatives that would be studied in more detail.
    - ❖ The project team recognized the public still might suggest other alternatives at the initial series of public meetings which would justify further study.
    - ❖ Known human and natural environmental constraints were avoided as much as possible, but when avoidance was not possible the corridors were developed to pass near the outside limits of these constraints rather than bisecting them.
    - ❖ Efforts were made to cross major streams at good angles in anticipation of having bridges at those locations.

- ❖ Efforts were made to cross county roads and highways at good angles in anticipation of having either grade separation bridges or interchanges at these locations.
- ❖ A mile-mile width was selected for most of the corridors to allow flexibility for narrowing the chosen corridors as the study progressed.
- ❖ Corridors more than one mile wide were used in the vicinity of SR 1 at Benoit and south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge to allow flexibility for connecting to the adjacent I-69 Study to the west on SIU 12.

- An Environmental Screening Analysis, which is shown on Table 2-2, was conducted for the segments. Certain combinations of these segments could be joined to develop an alternative corridor.

First Series of Public Meetings held on September 24-27, 2001

Four identical public meetings were held on successive evenings in the Benoit, Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica areas respectively. Thirty-eight (38) people registered their attendance at the Benoit Meeting, 51 at the Cleveland Meeting, 48 at the Clarksdale Meeting, and 74 at the Tunica Meeting. The **Appendix** contains the minutes for the First Series of Public Meetings. The following things learned from discussions and comments received in response to the First Series of Public Meetings aided the project team in deciding on the alternatives corridors that should be eliminated and those that should be refined for further study.

- Landowners, who could have their farmland divided by I-69 alternative segments, were very concerned about how they would access property divided by the interstate. Owners of farmland, or farmers who are renting land from others, want alternative segments relocated to not impact them or they want disruptions to their farming operations minimized as alternative segments are taken forward for further study.
- There were some people who believed the alternative segments utilizing the SR 1 corridor should be eliminated. The people who made this request in the Bolivar County portion of the study had this belief because Segment B3, located in Bolivar County between Benoit and Rosedale, is in the path of a planned westward expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge across SR 1 to the Mississippi River. If Segment B3 were eliminated, then the connecting segments of B6 and B7 would have to be eliminated or modified to connect with the B4 Segment north and east of the Refuge. The people who made this request in the Coahoma County portion of the study had this belief because the C4 and C8 connecting segments in Coahoma County do not use the Clarksdale Bypass and pass through a very narrow environmental corridor between Moon Lake and the Mississippi River Levee in northwest Coahoma County. The people who made this request in the Tunica County portion of the study had this belief because the gaming industry development at Robinsonville is located between the Mississippi River and US 61, while the airport and the industrial zoning for Tunica County projected growth path is east and north of the City of Tunica.
- A new segment was recommended in the Southern Section of the study area that would connect B2, south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, with either C8 at the Clarksdale Bypass of C7. This additional segment would be on new location between Cleveland in Bolivar County and Clarksdale in Coahoma County.

Noteworthy actions in Alternative Development between the Initial Series of Public Meetings of September 2001 and the Agency Scoping Meeting on April 2, 2002

- The project team held a Steering Committee Meeting on October 4, 2001. In response to a request made at the Initial Series of Public Meetings, it was decided to pursue adding the requested eastern alternative segment on new location in the Southern Section from SR 8 east of Cleveland in Bolivar County to Clarksdale in Coahoma County. The consultant team was asked to evaluate a number of the alternative segments presented at the Initial Series of Public Meetings in more detail in regards to constructability and environmental impacts. The consultant team was advised to begin the process of developing alternative alignments for a reduced number of alternative segments based on input received at the Initial Public Meetings and further review of the constructability and environmental constraints. It was agreed the consultant team would use 1,000 feet for the width of the alternative segments taken forward for further study. The first discussions on conducting an economic study comparing benefits of economic corridors were held at this meeting.
- Representative of Neel-Schaffer made a field visit to view the alternative corridors on October 23-24, 2001. During their field visit, they noted the following.
    - ❖ For the B5 Segment at the crossing of Linn Road south of Boyle, there is a tower, church, and cemetery located within the existing one-mile corridor. The portion of the B5 Segment from Linn Road to Merigold was reviewed on a previous trip and appears to be an acceptable corridor.
    - ❖ For the B4 Segment from Dahomey to Merigold, several things were noted. There appears to be an acceptable crossing of SR 446 to the east of the crossroad county road intersection located approximately one mile west of Skene. Proceeding to the northeast, this segment appears to need to cross SR 8 at the first crossroad intersection east of the County Penal Farm. Continuing to the north and east, this segment needs to remain to the east of the pipeline before intersecting the new, four-lane section of US 61 southwest of Merigold.
    - ❖ Should the B4 Segment have some fatal flaws between the power plant and Merigold, we looked into the possibility of modifying the segment to connect to US 61 just south of the power plant in the vicinity of McKnight Road. It was decided to determine if this alignment could be developed to meet the design criteria and be more favorable than the other corridor under consideration.
    - ❖ The C1 Segment and the C3 Segment are viable segments to go west of the Clarksdale Country Club and connect to the Bypass. The railroad has been abandoned in this segment, and the negative impacts could be avoided.
    - ❖ The C2 Segment is a viable segment, but it would have to be constructed to east of existing US 61 between the Bobo community and Clarksdale to avoid the build-up along this section of US 61. By constructing the segment to the east of US 61 on new location, the Natural Gas Pipeline Substation, Clarksdale Country Club, and the American Legion building could be avoided.
    - ❖ The C4 Segment is a viable segment from the intersection of the C2 and C1 segments to SR 1 in the vicinity of Friars Point. Adjacent to SR 1 between the Ferrell and Stovall communities, it appears the west side is a

more favorable location for I-69 than the east. However, between Stovall and Friars Point, it appears the east side of SR 1 is more favorable. These favored sides along SR 1 are due to the locations of the churches, residences, and the towns or communities.

- ❖ The C4 Segment does not appear to be a viable segment along SR 1 at Moon Lake. This is because of the short distance between the levee and the lake, and the wetland and habitat issues appear extensive in this area. There is a possibility that a connection could be made from SR 1 just north of Friars Point using a corridor south of Long Lake, south of Moon Lake, north of Hull Brake, over the railroad to connect to US 61 just south of US 49. If this connection can be developed without any fatal flaws, it was believed this is where the western relocation alternative from Benoit should first connect to US 61.
- ❖ The C10 Segment has a couple of areas of concern. First, the Barbee Cemetery is located adjacent to US 61 on the east side just north of US 49. Another concern is the railroad grade crossing of US 61 approximately 1,500 feet north of the cemetery.
- ❖ The T2 Segment is a viable segment.
- ❖ The T7 Segment and the T 11 Segment are viable segments.
- ❖ The T 15 Segment might have too many impacts just north of its crossing of Jack Lake Bayou. Should this be the case, it may be possible to connect a segment from T15 at Jack Lake Bayou in a north and east direction to T16.
- ❖ The T9 – T14 – T12 – T17 segments appear to be a viable alternative for bypassing Tunica to the west. A combination of the segments farther west does not make any sense since the most western alignment on relocation in the Tunica area was omitted. There does appear to be some problems with the T9 and T17 segments of the T9 – T14 – T12 – T 17 combination of segments. The T9 Segment will negatively impact the industrial park area in the vicinity of the SR 4 East intersection. The T17 Segment can only be located in a narrow corridor to avoid negative impacts caused by commercial and residential development. Segment T6 appears to be a viable alternative should a western bypass of Tunica need to be considered. There is a tower on the east side of US 61 approximately one mile south of the junction of the T9 and T10 segments.
- ❖ Segment T3 – C7 appears to be a viable alternative at this time.

- The project team held a Steering Committee Meeting on November 16, 2001. At that meeting, it was decided the consultant team would identify known wetland areas within the study area that provide good potential for mitigation. The Economic Study was discussed in more detail, and it was decided the consultant team would prepare a supplemental agreement for the additional work.
- A representative from Neel-Schaffer made another field visit on December 26-28, 2001, to review the preliminary 1000 feet wide alternatives in Bolivar County for any needed adjustments. **Refer to map or figure.**
- Kimley-Horn furnished Neel-Schaffer the following comments on the Bolivar County alternative corridors on January 9, 2002.
  - ❖ The piece coming from Route 1 south of Benoit and then extending north doesn't make sense. It seems like if we're going to be on the western side

of the county, we should start at the northern or middle terminus of the Great River Bridge project.

- ❖ A National Register historic site exists south of Benoit. Two of the lines impact it or pass very close to it.
- ❖ We need to be aware of potential expansion of Dahomey to the west.
- ❖ The alignment that crosses the gas pipeline twice south of Skene should be realigned to stay west of the pipeline.
- ❖ There should be an interchange at Route 446 with both western alternatives. (The farthest west would need a short extension of 446.)
- ❖ Still on the west side, two interchanges at Beulah seem like too much.
- ❖ The interchange at Route 32 north of Gunnison appears to be at a stream and floodplain, and also could impact national register archaeological site.
- ❖ There should be an interchange at Route 444.
- ❖ The western alignment north of Route 444 appears to go through a pond.

- Kimley-Horn furnished Neel-Schaffer the following comments on the Coahoma County alternative corridors on January 9, 2002.
  - ❖ Western corridor just north of Bolivar County passes through floodplain and archaeological site near stream crossing.
  - ❖ The alignment just west of US 61 south of Clarksdale appears to be new. Is there a lot of development in that area?
  - ❖ Western corridor impacts archaeological, historic areas near Stovall and Friars Point. Interchange location south of Friars Point doesn't have major road. Are we proposing new spur?
  - ❖ Far eastern corridor east of Clarksdale passes through large floodplain area, has interchange at stream/floodplain area.
  - ❖ Section west of Moon Lake may have environmental problems (wetlands, wildlife corridor). Also crosses large pond near National Register sites west of Moon Lake.
  - ❖ Section east of Jonestown crosses or comes near creek at a bend.
  - ❖ Corridor along US 61 south of Rich should have interchange with US 49. One of the interchanges near Rich appears to be an error. Is Bypass needed in this area? It crosses gas pipeline twice and also crosses RR.
  - ❖ Western corridor north of US 49 just south of Tunica County appears to be on stream.
- Kimley-Horn furnished Neel-Schaffer the following comments on the Tunica County alternative corridors on January 9, 2002.
  - ❖ Western corridor west of Beaverdam Lake has environmental problems, as observed in the field, also appears to impact large catfish ponds. See notes on map regarding alignments east of lake, to provide more connections between alternatives.
  - ❖ Near eastern corridor north of Dundee should stay west of gas pipeline. See notes for connection from far east to near east.
  - ❖ Near west line may impact archaeological sites just west of Tunica.
  - ❖ Near east line southwest of Tunica may impact toxic release site (treatment plant?).
  - ❖ Near west line north of Tunica abuts stream.
  - ❖ Near east line north of Tunica has extra alignment. It looks like eastern one is better. Consider an interchange as indicated on map to provide

additional east-west access. Line just north of that may impact stream and pond.

- To review the comments by Kimley-Horn and take the appropriate action to refine the alternatives, another field visit of the remaining alternative corridors in Bolivar County, and the alternative corridors in Coahoma and Tunica Counties was made by Neel-Schaffer on January 9-11, 2002.
- In response to the actions taken by Neel-Schaffer, Kimley-Horn advised the corridors looked good, and the major changes have been made. Kimley-Horn expressed concern that the corridors to the west looked bad in northern Coahoma and southern Tunica Counties, but they also advised this was already known and the corridors would be shown to quantify the impacts. At the south terminus, Kimley-Horn suggested carrying the corridors back to the common point on the GRB project so that the analyses in that area compare "apples with apples", but Kimley-Horn also stated this can really be done in the next stage after we've eliminated most of these alternatives and have real "feasible and reasonable" corridors to work with.
- For the MDOT meetings on February 12 and 13, 2002, the project team finalized its work of refining the alternatives to widths of 1,000 feet; selecting interchange locations for the alternative corridors undergoing refinement, and verifying alternative corridors would not have any major construction problems that merited eliminating an alternative from consideration.
- The project team held a Steering Committee Meeting on February 12, 2002. Information identifying the current alignment segments undergoing study and the findings on the 1,000 feet wide screening analysis on those segments. It was agreed some minor changes and additions to the screening analysis were needed prior to presenting the information at future meetings. The end of May or the first part of June was given as the estimated time for completing the Economic Study. The four-laning of SR 8 in Bolivar County between Rosedale and Cleveland is in the MDOT's Vision 21 Program; SIU 11 of I-69 has an economic development charge associated with the Delta Initiative; and, the Port of Rosedale presents a possible intermodal connection component to this project on I-69. For these reasons, the consultant team was advised to add the four-laning of SR 8 to its study of this section of I-69.
- An update meeting with MDOT Central Office and District personnel was held on February 13, 2002. After receiving the update, the representatives of the Second and Third districts requested other alternative segments to be added to the study. One of the additional segments was a far-east alternative around Clarksdale that would not use the Bypass. To the north and south, the requested far-east alternative would connect with segments that were recommended for further study. Another requested additional segment would bypass Clarksdale to the west. That requested additional segment would cross SR 322 at the same location as the current far-west segment, but north of SR 322 it would turn northeast crossing US 61 north of the Clarksdale Airport before intersecting the far-east alternative segment between Jonestown and Rich. The final additional alternative segment requested by the districts would result in a connecting segment from SR 1 at Friars Point which would join the far-east alternative segment near the Tunica-Coahoma County Line. The consultant team was advised to develop feasible additional alternative segments to comply with the districts requests.
- In response to the meetings on February 13, 2002, a field visit was made on February 15, 2002. As a result of the field visit and other alternative refinement work, the following changes were made in the alternative segments. **Refer to and show map as Figure.**

- Segment B11 in Bolivar County – Moved radius southeast at catfish ponds to move corridor away from church and cemetery and into ponds to get road over interstate.
- Segment B19 in Bolivar County – South of Beulah and northwest of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, corridor was getting into a church and cemetery. Put in additional tangent with curves at south and north end respectively to avoid the church and cemetery.
- Segment B17 in Bolivar County – Consolidated north and south of SR 8 east of Cleveland.
- Segment B26 in Bolivar County – Moved to west around Harris Bayou and east of Duncan to avoid church and cemetery.
- Bolivar County – Added a 300 foot wide corridor centered on SR 8 from SR 1 at Rosedale to the intersection of SR 8 and South Bishop Road west of Cleveland.
- Bolivar County – Extended all 1000 feet corridors to west of interchanges on/adjacent to SR 1 at Benoit to a common starting point.
- Segment C3, C4, C5, and C6 in Coahoma County – Modified corridors to miss church and created additional line to connect C3 with C5.
- Bolivar and Coahoma counties – Created new segment from B25 near Winstonville to C13 south of Jonestown and added interchange location along this segment at Hwys 49, 322, and 6.
- Segment C5 in Coahoma County – Adjusted to the north to miss church.
- Segment C10 in Coahoma County – Moved interchange at Hwy 322 to the west to miss the radio tower and church.
- Coahoma County – Created new segment from C10 northwest of Clarksdale and added interchange at Hwy 61.
- Segment C12 in Coahoma County – Moved interchange at Hwy 316 to the north to miss church and cemetery.
- Segments C14, C15, C19 in Coahoma County – Adjusted lines and interchanges in this area to attempt avoiding cemeteries, a church, and a tower at the Hwy 49 intersection.
- Segments C12 and C13 in Coahoma County – Moved interchange to the southwest on the south side of these two segments.
- Segment T4 in Tunica County – Moved line slightly to the southeast in the area of the airstrip.
- Segment T28 in Tunica County – Moved segment to miss church and cemetery and realigned area in Segments T10, T11, T25, T26, T27, and T28 to avoid church, school, and cemetery.
- Segment T12 in Tunica County – Moved interchange to the north at T12 and Hwy 4 to avoid a cemetery, church, and airstrip.
- Segment T12 in Tunica County – Moved interchange to the southwest on Hwy 61 to avoid a new school.
- Segment T21 in Tunica County – Moved the interchange to the south to avoid a church and cemetery along a new drainage area.
- Segments C11 and T4 in Coahoma and Tunica counties – Created new segment from C11 at the Hwy 61/49 intersection to T4.
- Segment T18 in Tunica County – Moved interchange at Hwy 61 to avoid a cemetery.

- ❖ Segment T18 in Tunica County – Adjusted to miss cemetery on north side of Segment near T20.

Agency Scoping Meeting on April 2, 2002

An Agency Scoping Meeting was held in the MDOT Auditorium on April 2, 2002. The meeting's purpose was to update the Cooperating Agencies, as well as other key governmental agencies, on the status of the project and to obtain the agencies input of the alternative alignment segments being studied. Although none attended, the Native American tribal representatives were also invited to the meeting. There were 31 people who registered their attendance at the meeting, and the minutes for the meeting are contained in the **Appendix**. Figure 2-2 identifies the Refined Alternative Corridors presented at this meeting for further study, and Table 2-3 provides a Summary of the Impacts on these Refined 1,000 Feet Wide Alternative Corridors. The following were issues the agency attendees expressed concerning the alternative corridors presented for further study.

- Because of the planned westward expansion of the Dahomey National Refuge and the natural environmental corridor that exists between the Mississippi River and the Refuge, several agency representatives expressed concern about any alternative corridor between the River and the Refuge.
- Because of the number of agricultural easements within the study area, such as Wetland Reserve Program Sites, it was recognized that alternatives would impact some of the easements. These easements should be avoided, or if not possible the impacts to easements should be minimized, when developing and refining the alternatives. The consultant team was given the name of a contact person, who could assist them with identifying the location of these easements and the type of easements that exists at each location.
- The overall bisecting of the Delta, in areas where restoration is being used or could be used to connect natural environmental areas, is a concern.
- Pondberry is an endangered species located within the study area. It should be identified and avoided where possible.
- Use US 61 or stay as far east as possible to avoid bisecting of natural environmental areas.
- More information on the quality of wetlands is needed.
- More information on stream impacts is needed.
- What about noise impacts for alternates to the southeast near subdivisions and information on social impacts?
- Floodplain and Prime Farmland impacts need examining.
- Spanning of perennial streams needs to be long enough to not impede flow. Alternatives need to cross streams as close as possible to perpendicular.
- More archaeological issues will probably be encountered with the alternatives closest to the Mississippi River.
- A western option has merit because it would draw on the economic development potential of the Mississippi River.
- Using US 61 for I-69 would probably be the most expensive alternative.
- Maintaining traffic during construction would be very important if US 61 is used for I-69.

- The document should identify an environmentally Preferred Alternative, address the secondary impacts associated with the connectors, and the impacts associated with reasonable anticipated development.
- The adjacent study on SIU 12 between McGehee, AR and Benoit is ahead of this study on SIU 11. Coordination and some overlap will be required for the two studies.
- Tourism attractions and access to recreational facilities should be considered when developing alternatives.
- Work to assess wetlands and perform Phase I Archaeological Studies will begin the following week.

Steering Committee Meeting on May 6, 2002

This meeting was held at the Ridgeland Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the purpose of the meeting was to discuss a written response the Service made to the Agency Scoping Meeting held on April 2, 2002. Those present at this meeting included representatives from the Service and the project team. A copy of the minutes for the meeting is contained in the **Appendix**. The following issues were discussed concerning any Bolivar County alternatives in the Southern Section that pass south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge.

- The Alternative B corridor will be moved south of Litton Road so it would not interfere with a southern expansion of the Refuge to Litton Road.
- Any alternative developed in the future that passes to the south of the Refuge will be kept south of Litton Road.
- The Service loaned the consultant team mapping of the study area counties. The maps had an aerial photography background and the maps identified features including lakes and rivers, private Ducks Unlimited agricultural easements, Farm Service Administration agricultural easements, and Wetland Reserve Program Sites. The information was made available electronically to the consulting team for referencing into the base mapping.

MDOT/FHWA Meeting on May 8, 2002

A MDOT/FHWA Meeting was held in the 4th Floor Conference Room of the MDOT Building in Jackson on May 8, 2002. The meeting's purpose was to update the MDOT and FHWA on the status of the project and to obtain approval from these two agencies on the alternative alignments recommended for further study. Input from these two agencies and their approval was necessary to further refine the number of alternatives for analysis and presentation at the next series of public meetings. There were 26 people who registered their attendance at the meeting, and the minutes for the meeting are contained in the **Appendix**. The following were issues expressed concerning the alternative corridors presented for further study.

- The information presented at the recent Agency Scoping Meeting on the Refined Alternative Corridors was summarized and provided to the attendees in a handout. That information on the Refined 1,000 Feet Wide Alternative Corridors is shown on Figure 2-2 and Table 2-3.
- The attendees were advised of the draft results of the completed Economic Study which considered three alternative corridors. Those corridors were a Western, Central, and Eastern alternatives. The Western and Eastern alternatives were entirely on new location while the Central Alternative followed US 61 as much as possible. The draft results of the Economic Study revealed the urban areas are critical to the location of I-69.

- The attendees were advised of the agreement reached at the Steering Committee Meeting held the previous day. For alternatives passing south of Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, the agreement was to keep the alternatives south of Litton Road so as not to interfere with a possible southern expansion of the Refuge.
- Using Figure 2-2 and Table 2-3 for reference, the alternative corridors recommended for elimination from further study were reviewed. Comments were received and questions were addressed.
- The alternatives recommended for further study, **as shown on Figure _____**, were presented and a handout was provided. It was explained that the shaded portions on the map represented alternative segments that were recommended for elimination from further study, and that the alternatives were recommended for elimination based on the evaluation of known natural and human environmental information, field reviews, and public comments.
- The following recommendations were made on the alternative corridors.
    - ❖ The common portion of Alternatives A, D, H, and I would remain from Benoit to south of SR 322 crossing in Coahoma County where the alternatives would turn east to cross US 61 and join the Clarksdale Bypass. Input received from Coahoma County Officials and citizens strongly indicated they wanted the Clarksdale Bypass utilized for I-69 around Clarksdale. Except for some minor needs, the Clarksdale Bypass is being constructed to interstate standards. Traffic can only access the Bypass at interchange locations, and with some minor work, such as paving the shoulders, the Bypass could be upgraded to fully meet interstate standards. Traffic studies have determined the Bypass can accommodate the projected traffic for I-69.
    - ❖ Input received from Tunica County Officials and citizens strongly indicated they wanted alternatives between the City of Tunica and the casinos at Robinsonville studied that would pass east of the City of Tunica and east of the Tunica Airport. Such a routing of alternatives would avoid the casinos and development associated with the casinos located west of US 61, and avoid most of the residential build-up associated with the City of Tunica.
    - ❖ Alternative D follows the Mississippi River Levee corridor and passes through a very narrow space along SR 1 between the Levee and Moon Lake before crossing US 49. North of US 49 Alternative D passes through very unpopulated areas and pristine natural environmental areas to the west of the City of Tunica before turning east near the casinos and associated development near Robinsonville.
    - ❖ Alternative A passes to the to the west of the City of Tunica through a narrow environmental corridor.
    - ❖ Alternatives A, D, H, and I are recommended for elimination north of SR 322 for the following reasons: the alternatives do not satisfy the desires of the public for using Clarksdale Bypass and passing east of the City of Tunica; and, these alternatives join other alternatives that are recommended for further study between Clarksdale and the Coahoma/Tunica County Line.
    - ❖ All of Alternative F was recommended for elimination. The USF&WS and others want the alternative that connects Benoit to US 61 in the vicinity of Merigold to follow a route that takes the alternative south of the

Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. From where Alternative F joins Alternative B near Merigold, these two alternatives are the same to the northern termini of the project. Therefore, the entire length of Alternative F was recommended for elimination.

- The entire portion of Alternative B is recommended for further study. This corridor passes south of Dahomey National Wildlife, crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland, joins US 61 near Merigold, uses as much of US 61 as possible before joining the Clarksdale Bypass. North of Clarksdale, Alternative B uses as much of US 61 as possible before proceeding northeast on new location in Tunica County near Dundee.
- Alternatives C, E, and G are concurrent from Benoit to north of the State Penal Farm where they separate. The concurrent portion of these alternatives passes south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, crosses SR 8 east of Cleveland, proceeds north on new location between US 61 and the State Penal Farm. When Alternatives C, E, and G, separate, Alternatives C and E remain concurrent until connecting with the Clarksdale Bypass. A slight modification in this concurrent section was recommended for further study. The modification would result in a routing that would stay east of US 61 until connecting with the Clarksdale Bypass.
- Alternative G from the separation point with Alternatives C and E proceeds northeast on new location, crosses US 49 southeast of the Clarksdale Bypass, continues north to cross SR 6 using a narrow corridor and rejoins Alternative C south Jonestown. This portion of Alternative G does not use the Clarksdale Bypass, would open a new environmental corridor, and is recommended for elimination.
- Alternative C leaves the US 61 corridor at the north portion of the Clarksdale Bypass and proceeds northeast on new location to join Alternative G. The two alternatives remain concurrent on new location proceeding northeast to bypass the Town of Jonestown. They turn north to join Alternative H, and the three alternatives then join Alternative I on new location near the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. Alternative C from the separation point with US 61; the concurrent section of Alternatives C and G; and, the concurrent section of Alternatives C, G, and H are recommended for elimination from further study. These section of alternatives recommended for elimination are in a floodplain for most of their length, and the recommendation is based on the obvious negative impacts these alternative segments would have when compared to using a new location alternative to the east from the north end of the Clarksdale Bypass to the Swan Lake/Clarksdale Airport area and the US 61 corridor over the approximate 8.0 mile between the Swan Lake/Clarksdale Airport area and the Coahoma/Jonestown/Rich area.
- Implementing the previous recommendation would result in having only one alternative corridor which would use US 61 as much as possible between the north end of the Clarksdale Bypass and the Coahoma/Jonestown, Rich area. The one recommended alternative, which is Alternative B, would avoid the built-up area along US 61 between the north end of the Clarksdale Bypass and the Clarksdale Airport/Swan Lake area. The recommended alternative would avoid impacting the Clarksdale

Airport and Swan Lake, and it appears the one recommended alternative would have minimal environmental impacts along US 61 between Swan Lake to south of the US 49 intersection where two alternatives would be studied. One of the alternatives recommended for further study would continue to use US 61, which is Alternative Corridor B, and the other alternative would be a new segment proceeding northeast on new location before joining Alternative C near the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. If the study determined more than one alternative was needed in this area, the consultant team advised other alternatives, including those recommended for elimination in this area, will be considered and evaluated.

- ❖ Alternative C was recommended for further study from near the Coahoma/Tunica County Line to the northern termini of the project.
- ❖ Connecting segments were recommended in the south part of Tunica County to join Alternative B with Alternative C and Alternative C with Alternative B. A connecting segment was also recommended in the central portion of Tunica County to join Alternative B with Alternative C. The consultant team advised these connecting segments provided flexibility to develop and refine alternatives in this area which could result in study alternatives that were combinations of the two general corridors.

- One of the attendees at the meeting was Mr. Bob Black, who is an attorney for the FHWA in Washington D.C., and he has been assigned to the I-69 transcontinental corridor studies as the FHWA reviewer for legal sufficiency. Reviewing the development of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and reviewing the EIS for consideration of alternatives are included in Mr. Black's assignment for this project on SIU 11. His questions and the comments to those questions are contained in the meeting minutes in the Appendix. One of the questions Mr. Black was asked concerned only having one alternative that used as much of US 61 as possible between the Clarksdale Bypass and the US 49 intersection near the Coahoma/Tunica County Line. As part of his response to that question, Mr. Black advised as long as there are no critical habitats, or other critical issues, it would be permissible.
- The attendees were advised that anyone interested in commenting on the recommended alternatives should do so within the next few weeks so as not to affect the planning for the next series of public meetings.

Noteworthy actions in Alternative Development between the MDOT/FHWA Alternative Corridor Review Meeting held in May and the Second Series of Public Meetings conducted approximately two months later on July 16-18, 2002

- There were not any objections received from the MDOT or FHWA on the 1,000 feet wide alternative corridors recommended for elimination or those recommended for further study.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provided the project team updated information on the locations of the agricultural easements for Ducks Unlimited sites within the study area, and the alternatives were adjusted to lessen the impacts on the easements.
- Field trips to view the refined alternatives were made on May 21-23 and June 12-14, 2002. Any needed adjustments in the alternatives were made after these field trips.
- The Environmental Screening Analysis for the 1000 feet wide alternatives was updated.

Second Series of Public Meetings held on July 16-18, 2002

Three identical public meetings were held on successive evenings in the Cleveland, Clarksdale, and Tunica areas respectively. One hundred and twenty (129) people registered their attendance at the Cleveland Meeting, 76 at the Clarksdale Meeting, and 83 at the Tunica Meeting. The **Appendix** contains the minutes for the Second Series of Public Meetings. The handout packet presented to the attendees at these meetings included the map of alternatives recommended for further study, shown on Figure _____, and a spreadsheet screening analysis of the alternatives recommended for further study, shown on Figure _____. The following things learned from discussions and comments received in response to the Second Series of Public Meetings aided the project team in making decisions on the alternatives corridors advanced for study.

- At this point in the project, the SIU 11 project team was using the same connecting points to SR 1 that were being used for the adjacent study to the west on SIU 12. The SR 1 connecting point north of Benoit created an out of direction alignment when proceeding east in a path that would take an alternative south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and south of Litton Road. This out of direction alternative generated several negative public comments at the Cleveland meeting.
- The middle SR 1 connecting point on the SIU 12 study is located just south of Downtown Benoit. This point was eliminated from consideration for the SIU 11 study because the crossing of SR 1 could not be continued to the east without bisecting the Town of Benoit and creating a large number of displacements. The comments received in response to the public meetings did not offer any objections to eliminating this crossing point.
- The southern SR 1 connecting point was just south of Ray Brooks School. This crossing point was used for the SIU 11 study, but it received some negative comments from the public at the meeting in Cleveland because of it being located so close to the school.
- At each of the meetings changes to farmland access were comments of concern expressed by landowners or people who farm rented land. These people were concerned that they would not be adequately reimbursed for the improvements they had made to the land. They expressed concern about having a reduction in the amount of land farmed to a level that it would cause an economic hardship. They did not want to be forced to alter their farming operations, and they wanted to know how they would access farmland divided by alternative corridors.
- The Comprehensive Master Land Use and Transportation Plan for Tunica County and the Town of Tunica, performed by Allen & Hoshall independent of this I-69 study had recommended a location for I-69 in Tunica County similar to the West One alternative corridor presented at the Second Series of Public Meetings. The County's recommended alternative for I-69 and Comprehensive Master Land Use and Transportation Plan are shown on Figure _____. The primary differences in the County's recommended corridor and the West One alternative were the connection to US 61 in the south part of the County and the connection to the SR 304 spur at the northern termini of the study.

Special Meeting with MDOT Third District Representatives in Jackson at MDOT Environmental Division on August 6, 2002.

The purpose of the meeting was to hear the Third District's concerns and suggestions about the Western Alternative Corridor between Benoit and the Clarksdale Bypass. The following things learned from discussions and comments received at this meeting aided the project team in making decisions on the alternatives corridors advanced for study.

- The southern portion of current western relocation alternative is located west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and east of the Mississippi River. This location blocks the planned westward expansion of the Dahomey NWR to the Mississippi River. Everyone in attendance at the meeting agreed such a location would probably prevent the alternative from receiving serious consideration entirely through the environmental process. To make sure a west relocation alternative, a central alternative, and east relocation alternative receive serious consideration from Benoit to Clarksdale, it was agreed the consultant team would determine if a new west relocation alternative could be developed by combining the current central alternative with the current west alternative. From Benoit to SR 8 west of Cleveland, the new western alternative would use the current central alternative. The new western relocation alternative then would leave the central alternative and connect to the current western alternative south of the crossing of SR 444. Such an alignment for a new west relocation alternative would not impact any westward expansion of the Dahomey NWR to the Mississippi River.
- Subsequent to this meeting, the consultant team developed the new western relocation alternative, and the project team determined the new alternative merited further study. Steps were taken to bring the degree of the study on the new western relocation alternative to the same level as that which had been conducted on the other alternatives that remain under consideration.

Mayors-County Supervisors Coordination Meeting on September 4, 2002, and Optional Field Trip on September 5, 2002

This meeting was held from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in Clarksdale at the Headquarters of the Delta Regional Authority. This meeting's purpose was to update the mayors and county supervisors on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the limited number of merited alternative corridors the project teams believed should be taken forward for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The handouts provided at the Second Series of Public Meetings were included in the packet provided to this meeting's attendees. The minutes for the meeting are contained in the **Appendix,** and the following things learned from discussions and comments received in response to the meeting and field trip aided the project team in making decisions on the alternatives corridors advanced for study.

- A Tunica County representative requested that an interchange be added where alternatives cross Dubbs Road in the south part of the county. The consultant team subsequently complied with this request.
- Dividing farmland and impacting access are problems of concern throughout the project. The attendees were advised the project team intends to address those problems in a fair and uniform manner.
- A representative from the City of Cleveland asked for and received an explanation of how the Central Alternative Corridor that uses US 61 could be converted into I-69.

- To insure a western alternative is studied, the attendees were advised an alternative segment avoiding the western expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge will be added. The alternative would use the Central Alternative between Benoit and Cleveland, but after crossing SR 8 west of Cleveland the alternative would proceed north on new location and join the current western alternative near the crossing of SR 444.
- During the afternoon portion of the field visit on September 5, the project team toured key economic development associated sites in Tunica County. The County Administrator believes an alternative that passes to the east of the airport and close to the casino gaming development area at Robinsonville is in the best interest of the County's long-range economic development plan.
- Several weeks after this meeting and field trip, a Coahoma County official telephoned the project team requesting an interchange be considered in the south part of Coahoma County for the east alternative at the county road east of the Bobo community. The requested interchange was subsequently added.

Agency-Native American Scoping Meeting on September 4, 2002, and Optional Field Trip on September 5, 2002

This meeting was held from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Clarksdale at the Headquarters of the Delta Regional Authority. This meeting's purpose was to update the cooperating agencies, other key governmental agencies, and the Native Americans on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the limited number of merited alternative corridors the project teams believed should be taken forward for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The handouts provided at the Second Series of Public Meetings were included in the packet provided to this meeting's attendees. There were not any Native American tribal representatives in attendance at the meeting. The minutes for the meeting are contained in the Appendix, and the following things learned from discussions and comments received in response to the meeting and field trip aided the project team in making decisions on the alternatives corridors advanced for study.

- A representative from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency asked for and received an explanation of how the Alternative Corridor that uses US 61 could be converted into I-69.
- The attendees were advised that agricultural easements, such as Wetland Reserve Program sites and Ducks Unlimited sites, were avoided as much as possible when developing alternatives. However, due to the number of agricultural easements contained in the study area it was impossible to avoid all of them. When alternatives passed through agricultural easements, the attendees were advised efforts were made to locate the alternatives near the outer edges of the easements to minimize the impacts.
- To insure a western alternative is studied, the attendees were advised an alternative segment avoiding the western expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge will be added. The alternative would use the Central Alternative between Benoit and Cleveland, but after crossing SR 8 west of Cleveland the alternative would proceed north on new location and join the current western alternative near the crossing of SR 444.
- Questions from the agency representatives during the meeting and during the field trip the following day appeared to be answered to be satisfactorily answered, and the agency representatives did not make any objections to the alternatives presented for further study in the Draft EIS.

Special Meeting in Jackson at MDOT Roadway Design Division on September 11, 2002

Neel-Schaffer asked for this meeting to discuss the alignment corridors in Tunica County and other roadway design project issues. The information received from this meeting was needed to assist the project team in preparing for a Tunica County meeting scheduled for the following week. One of the issues expected to be discussed at the upcoming meeting was the alternative alignment that Allen and Hoshall proposed for I-69 when they prepared the Comprehensive Master Land Use and Transportation Plan for Tunica County and the City of Tunica. The following things learned from discussions and comments received at this meeting aided the project team in making decisions on the alternatives corridors advanced for study.

- The initial discussions concerned the skew angle proposed by Allen and Hoshall for their I-69 interchange location at SR 304. The Roadway Design representatives advised the skew angle is too severe and unacceptable. They stated that, measured from a perpendicular, a zero to fifteen degree angle is recommended, with a maximum allowable angle of 30 degrees allowed in rare instances.
- The following SR 304 interchange concepts for the western and eastern alternatives were discussed.
    - ❖ For the western alternative, an interchange at or near Kirby Road with a short connection to SR 304 was suggested. Unless justified by traffic, an interchange at SR 3 was not suggested. The at-grade railroad crossing would remain for the western alternative.
    - ❖ For the eastern alternative, an interchange was suggested at existing SR 304 east of the railroad. Since SR 304 would become a major access to the casinos and Robinsonville area, it was agreed SR 304 would need improving west of I-69 at this interchange. The improvements should include relocating SR 304, providing a bridge over the railroad, providing a bridge over SR 3, and connecting the relocated SR 304 to existing SR 304 west of SR 3.
- The Roadway Design representatives were shown the new central to west relocation alternative in Bolivar County between SR 8 west of Cleveland and SR 444. The Roadway Design representatives did not have any problems with considering this new alternative in the study. This addressed the MDOT's Third District's concern of having a west relocation alternative taken through the study that would not impact the westward expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge to the Mississippi River.

Special Meeting in Jackson at Neel-Schaffer on September 16, 2002

Bolivar County and the City of Cleveland officials requested this meeting to discuss any planning the city or county might need to initiate regarding the connecting routes for the alternatives recommended for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

After the local officials were briefed on the status of the study, they agreed it would be wise to delay the connecting road issue until after the Preferred Alternative is selected.

Special Meeting in Tunica on September 18, 2002

This meeting was held at the request of Tunica County Administrator Ken Murphree in his office at Tunica. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the locations of the alternatives recommended for further study in the north part of Tunica County from Arkabutla Dam Road to the north end of the project.

Those in attendance at the meeting included: Mr. Ken Murphree, Tunica County Administrator; Mr. Charles Goforth, with Allen and Hoshall, Inc.; and Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley with Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

Mr. Murphree opened the meeting by asking the representatives from Neel-Schaffer to describe how the west alternative they had developed in the north part of the county compares with the corridor that Allen and Hoshall had developed for I-69 in the *Comprehensive Master Land Use and Transportation Plan for Tunica County and the Town of Tunica.* Mr. Jimmy Shirley addressed the request in the following manner.

- Displaying the alternatives that Neel-Schaffer recommends for further study and the alternative recommended for I-69 by Allen and Hoshall on mapping.
- Verifying, by using the mapping as a visual aid, that from Arkabutla Dam Road northeast to Kirby Road the West Alternative developed by Neel-Schaffer compares favorably with the alternative developed by Allen and Hoshall.
- Verifying, by using the mapping as a visual aid, that the major difference in the West Alternative developed by Neel-Schaffer and the alternative developed by Allen and Hoshall is from Kirby Road northeast across SR 304 to the connection to the SR 304 Spur that is presently under construction.
- Advising that – based on the meeting with the MDOT Roadway Design Division representatives on September 11, 2002 – the severe crossing angle of SR 304 used for the Allen and Hoshall alternative is unacceptable.
- Advising, and showing by using the mapping as a visual aid, that taking the necessary steps to obtain an acceptable SR 304 crossing angle for the Allen and Hoshall alternative is not recommended because it has far more negative impacts than the West Alternative of Neel-Schaffer's.

Based on the meeting with the MDOT Roadway Design Division on September 11, 2002, Mr. Shirley then advised the group of the recommended interchange locations – and connecting roads at those interchange locations – that Neel-Schaffer intended to use for studying the two recommended alternative corridors between Arkabutla Dam Road and the north end of the project. The section between Arkabutla Dam Road and SR 304 is an area of particular interest to Mr. Murphree and Mr. Goforth because SR 304 is a major access to the casinos at Robinsonville. Included in the items, Mr. Shirley discussed on this subject were the following comments.

- For the Western Alternative, an interchange is proposed between US 61 and SR 3 at Kirby Road. North of the interchange, Kirby Road would be realigned and reconstructed to SR 304 where a reconstructed signalized intersection would be provided. For this alternative, the Kirby Road Interchange would be the main interchange servicing the casinos at Robinsonville.

- For the Western Alternative, traffic volumes at SR 3 and the relatively short distance between adjacent interchanges at Kirby Road and SR 3 will probably not justify an interchange at SR 3.
- For the Western Alternative, an interchange is proposed east of the SR 3 to connect I-69 with the SR 304 Spur at existing SR 304. West of that interchange, it is proposed that SR 304 would be reconstructed to a minimum of a five-lane section and join the existing five-lane section on SR 304 at the SR 3 intersection. The at-grade railroad crossing east of the SR 3 intersection would remain.
- For the Eastern Alternative, an interchange is proposed east of SR 3 to connect I-69 with the SR 304 Spur at existing SR 304. West of that interchange, it is proposed that SR 304 would be reconstructed on new location north of existing SR 304. The relocated section would include a bridge over the railroad and SR 3. The relocated section of SR 304 would join the existing five-lane section of SR 304 west of SR 3. For this alternative, this would be the main interchange servicing the casinos at Robinsonville.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Murphree and Mr. Goforth appeared satisfied with the explanations provided by Neel-Schaffer for the differences between the West Alternative of Neel-Schaffer and the I-69 corridor suggested by Allen and Hoshall. These two men also appeared satisfied with the approach Neel-Schaffer is using in advancing the Tunica County alternatives for more detailed studies.

HNTB Public Hearing on SIU 12 at Ray Brooks School on September 25, 2002

The Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) is coordinating this study that involves the State of Arkansas, the State of Mississippi, and the I-69 Mississippi River Crossing. Because of the concern about the message that will be delivered to the public about the eastern end of the SIU 12 project at SR 1, the AHTD requested that a representative from the SIU 11 study team attend the Public Hearing. The SIU 11 study representative that attended the Public Hearing was Mr. Jimmy Shirley.

HNTB mailed a project newsletter in September 2002, and that newsletter included an invitation to the Public Hearings in McGehee, AR on September 24, 2002, and Ray Brooks School near Benoit, MS on September 25, 2002. HNTB also mailed a newsletter in March 2002, and that newsletter included an invitation to the Public Meetings in McGehee on March 13, 2001, and Ray Brooks School on March 14, 2001. These two mail-outs provide noteworthy information on HNTB's three alternatives for connecting to SR 1 in the Benoit area.

HNTB presented the north connection to SR 1 as their Preferred Alternative in the Benoit area, and the newsletter invitation to the Public Hearing stated the following concerning that alternative.

- In Mississippi, three alternatives alignments to the east of the bridge were considered. Of the three, the "North" alternative has the fewest impacts to area structures and historic sites and has received significant local support. It also avoids the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge as I-69 is continued to the east. The final location of I-69 near Benoit will be coordinated with the section of I-69 to the east.

Mr. Jerry Mugg delivered the following noteworthy comments for HNTB during his short presentation.

- The three alternatives that HNTB considered for connecting to SR 1 share a common alignment from the Mississippi River Crossing to slightly west of Lake Bolivar.
- The North Alternative that HNTB selected as the Preferred Alternative appeared to provide the SIU 11 study team good flexibility in making a connection to the HNTB study with alternatives that could either proceeds north between the Mississippi River Bridge and the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) or east in a manner that travels south of the Dahomey NWR.
- The final location of I-69 near Benoit will be coordinated with the SIU 11 section of I-69 to the east.
- Representatives of the HNTB Study Team for SIU 12, the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, the Mississippi Department of Transportation, and the SIU 11 Study Team were in attendance at the meeting to address questions, problems, and concerns from the public.
- The public was encouraged to complete the comment sheets and submit the comment sheets to the HNTB study team.

To assist him in addressing SIU 11 questions and comments, Mr. Shirley had mapping at his display area of the alternatives undergoing further study from SR 1 to the south end of the Clarksdale Bypass. The main questions and comments that Mr. Shirley received were about the following:

- Concern about disrupting farmland, dividing farmland, and access to the divided farmland.
- The need to consider an alternative that crossed SR 1 and Lake Bolivar farther south in the vicinity of an area known as Lake Vista. This was discussed with several people, and two of these people were Mr. Delbert Farmer and his son, Wayne. The Farmers submitted written comments, and the following written comments from them were typical of those Mr. Shirley received at the hearing.
    - ❖ It is the shortest route from the Mississippi River Bridge to SR 1.
    - ❖ It does not cut the farmland into small unprofitable units or destroy valuable drainage.
    - ❖ It moves away from the Mississippi River Levee system very quickly which removes many seepwater and echo problems.
    - ❖ It stays away from Ray Brooks School, the City of Benoit, the Benoit Outing Club, the Levee View Estate apartments, and the community of Bolivar – which solves some of their noise and accessibility concerns.
    - ❖ Contrary to HNTB's I-69 Mississippi River Crossing, September 25, 2002, Benoit Meeting Announcement, the North Alternative has very little local support. To connect to the North Alternative and take I-69 to the east would mean that Benoit would be located in sort of a horseshoe with I-69 in close proximity on three sides. This would destroy the Town of Benoit. The support this out of the way route has received is certainly not local.

Special Tunica County Meeting at Greater New Saint Paul Church on October 21, 2002

This meeting concerned the Oak Grove M.B. Church, the Prichard Road area west of the church, the Verner Road area near the Verner Road Park, and the Bonds Road area east and north of the Verner Road Park. The meeting had three goals. Informing the people living in this area or attending Oak Grove M.B. Church that the location of the I-69 alternative corridor receiving the most favorable comments in this portion of Tunica County could impact their home or pass near this church was the first goal. The second goal was to address these people's questions, problems, and concerns. The final goal of the meeting was to provide these people an opportunity to furnish their written comments.

The arrangements for scheduling and conducting the meeting were coordinated by Mr. Ken Weeden under the project's Community Involvement and Environmental Justice outreach efforts. The meeting was well advertised by letters to key community contacts, flyers in nearby community gathering places, and by making an announcement at a worship service conducted in the Oak Grove M.B. Church. There were 74 people who registered their attendance at the meeting conducted east of Tunica in the Fellowship Hall of the Greater New Saint Paul Church.

A member of the project team provided a status report. The general session portion of the meeting then adjourned into approximately eight areas. Aerial photography mapping of the alternative corridors under consideration was provided at these eight areas for the public to view, ask questions and make comments. The alternative corridor that had received the most favorable comments crossed Prichard Road slightly west of the Oak Grove M.B. Church, extended north across Verner Road, turned northeast after crossing Arkabutla Dam Road, continued northeast paralleling SR 304 to the south, and turned north after crossing SR 3 to connect with the SR 304 Spur presently under construction. This alternative had received the most favorable comments because it was closer to the Town of Tunica, the Tunica Airport, planned industrial expansion associated with the airport, US 61, Robinsonville and its casinos. For the alternative that had received the most favorable public comments, the people interested in the Oak Grove M.B. Church were advised an interchange could be provided at Prichard Road without directly impacting the church or the adjacent cemetery. Upon learning this, the people with concerns about the church property appeared satisfied. For the alternative that had received the most favorable comments, most of the comments concerned the residences that would be relocated by the crossing of Verner Road and the noise impacts to those residences that would remain along Verner and Bonds Road. The land at Verner Road is low and frequently floods. Many Verner Road residents stated they would like the crossing of Verner Road to require their relocation so they could leave this low area.

After the break-out sessions, the meeting closed with a general session. Some of the items discussed in the break-out sessions were discussed again either in the form of questions with answers from the project team or in the form of comments from the local citizenry. The project team advised the attendees that a follow-up meeting would be conducted after the study alternatives were further refined and the residential relocations were identified at the crossing of Verner Road. The meeting concluded with the project team encouraging the people attending the meeting to submit their written comments. Six written comments were received in response to this meeting. The comments were all from people who wanted to be relocated from this area prone to flooding, and a couple of the comments were from people who asked relocation assistance questions.

Property Ownership Search Completed and Placed on Alternative Corridor Mapping prior to Steering Committee Meeting on December 9, 2002.

This information was available electronically from Tunica County, but the records had to be searched by hand for the remaining counties of Bolivar, Sunflower, and Coahoma. The information was needed to determine the locations of alternatives relative to property lines. Obtaining the property ownership for farmland was very important to determine where farmland was being divided and if the alternatives could be adjusted to lessen or avoid the impact of dividing the farmland.

Within the opportunities and constraints allowed by the natural and human environments, the following approach was used in refining the alternatives to minimize the impact on neighborhoods, community cohesions, and disruption of farming operations.

- Alternative corridors were generally placed at the fringe areas of municipalities and communities, and a grade separation or interchange was placed at a nearby US highway, state highway, or county road to provide access for local traffic to cross the interstate.
- The alternative corridors were placed adjacent to or nearby the existing road network. This approach maintained existing traffic patterns, lessened the need for providing frontage roads, and was an effort to lessen the impact to farming operations divided by the interstate.
- The typical spacing between interchanges or grade separations was kept to no more than two miles when a property owner's access to the other side of the interstate was divided.
- The locations of changes in property ownership and primary drainage ditches were important factors used in developing the alternatives for further study. Primary drainage ditches are important to consider because they tend to naturally divide farming operations.

Tunica County alternative were refined using the property ownership information from the initial development of the one-mile wide alternatives, to the narrowing of the alternative corridors widths to 1000 feet, and then to the narrowing of the alternative corridors to a width of 450 feet. The alternatives in the remaining counties of Bolivar, Sunflower, and Coahoma were refined continuously as the property ownership records became available. All of the property ownership records needed for all four counties was acquired by December of 2002.

Interchanges and Connecting Road Needs, Preparation Work for Steering Committee Meeting on December 9, 2002.

The Interchange and Connecting Road Plan for the various alternatives was completed in the time frame between the HNTB SIU 12 Public Hearing in September and the Steering Committee Meeting on December 9, 2002.

To compare the alternatives in each section, the locations of interchanges were selected. Interchanges are mandatory at some locations, and interchanges were placed at other locations for stimulating economic development and for construction phasing. The condition on the crossroad at each interchange location was reviewed to determine the improvements that were needed on the crossroad to accommodate truck traffic generated by the interchanges.

It is important to consider the improvements needed on the crossroad at interchange locations for several reasons. One reason is to satisfy the expectations of the drivers for the various types of vehicles, including legally loaded trucks, which will exit and enter the interstate by using the crossroad within and outside the limits of the interchange. Another important reason is associated with maintenance of traffic during and after the construction of SIU 11.

Because the cost for building the entire section of SIU 11 is so large, the construction will almost certainly have to be accomplished in a number of segments. The segmental construction will require SIU 11 traffic to use the interchange locations and the connecting network of county roads and state and Federal highways to enter and exit the interstate segments that are opened to traffic. Therefore, it is important for truck traffic to have at least one connecting approach to each interchange location capable of accommodating truck traffic and a posting of the maximum allowable weight limit in Mississippi of 80,000 pounds.

At some interchange locations, a crossroad is recommended on new location from the interchange to a nearby state or Federal highway that has an 80,000 pound weight limit posted for truck traffic. In addition to addressing the need of accommodating truck traffic, the new crossroad approach might be needed to address transportation network connectivity or Design Year 2030 traffic. In these instances the new crossroad approach is called a "Spur".

Several of the proposed interchanges are with state or Federal highways that currently have an 80,000 pound weight limit. Improvements are either planned or not needed outside the limits of many of these interchanges for the crossing highway to accommodate the Design Year 2030 projected traffic. At the remaining crossroads some improvements will be needed, and those improvements are called an "Upgrade".

The following will elaborate on the "Upgrade". The existing crossroad at a proposed interchange location may have a legal weight limit of less than 80,000 pounds posted from the interchange to a nearby state or Federal highway with the maximum allowable weight limit. However, if the crossroad was improved along its existing alignment, it could accommodate 80,000 pound truck traffic and the Design Year 2030 projected traffic. In such instances the needed crossroad approach improvement is called an "Upgrade".

Steering Committee Meeting at MDOT Environmental Division the morning of December 9, 2002

The 13th Steering Committee Meeting was conducted on December 9, 2002. The goals for the meeting were updating the MDOT Second and Third Districts on the project status, discussing and resolving some work plan concerns about the archaeological studies, and discussing Mr. Walter Lyon's e-mail of November 12, 2002. Mr. Lyons is the Third District Engineer for the MDOT. The minutes for this meeting are contained in the **Appendix**.

MDOT Environmental Engineer Claiborne Barnwell opened the meeting by providing a brief project status update with particular attention given to the archeological work status.

MDOT Third District Engineer Walter Lyons advised the group there were several questions he had about having an alternative that uses US 61 for I-69. Mr. Lyons stated those questions and the questions were then addressed by Mr. Barnwell and Messrs. Robert Walker and Jimmy Shirley of the consultant team.

- Has MDOT ever converted a four-lane facility with Type II-B and at-grade intersections into an interstate?
    - ❖ Mr. Barnwell advised he was not aware of anywhere in Mississippi where this has been done. However, he stated the idea was seriously considered for a future section of US 49 between Florence and the Gulf Coast. The right of way costs associated with relocations along that corridor was the reason the idea was dropped.
    - ❖ Mr. Shirley added the concept of utilizing US 61 for I-69 in Mississippi is documented in previous I-69 studies.
- How do you make this transition while having to maintain traffic? What is the sequence of operations?
    - ❖ Using mapping sheets and a typical section as displays, Mr. Shirley responded to Mr. Lyons' questions. The mapping sheets depicted the Central Alternative in Bolivar County from the SR 8 interchange west of Cleveland to the Coahoma County Line. The typical section for the Central Alternative was developed based on recommendations from the MDOT Roadway Design Division.
    - ❖ Mr. Shirley advised that, except for a short segment on relocation between Shelby and Hushpuckena, a concept of widening US 61 to the east would be used to construct the Central Alternative north of Merigold in Bolivar County. The widening concept calls for all the widening to be accomplished to one side of US 61 between logical termini. Such a widening concept could allow four-lane traffic to be maintained for the most part on US 61 throughout the construction. For the widening section in Bolivar County, the east side of US 61 was chosen to be widened because that side has fewer currently known negative impacts, such as potential relocates, throughout the county than the west.
    - ❖ Mr. Shirley discussed a construction sequencing for accomplishing the widening to the east when using US 61 for I-69. Refer to the minutes contained in the **Appendix** for a plan to accomplish the construction sequencing.
    - ❖ As Mr. Shirley discussed the widening construction sequencing for using US 61, he reviewed the Bolivar County mapping depicting the relocation and widening sections for the Central Alternative in the following south to north format.
        - o From SR 8 west of Cleveland to southwest of Merigold, the Central Alternative is on relocation.
        - o Southwest of Merigold, the Central Alternative has an interchange to service Merigold and North Cleveland, and to provide a connector to separate the concurrent routes of I-69 and US 61 north of the interchange.
        - o From the interchange southwest of Merigold to west of Merigold, the Central Alternative continues on relocation before crossing US 61 and becoming concurrent with US 61.
        - o From west of Merigold to the north part of Shelby, the Central Alternative is concurrent with US 61. Widening would be added to the east of US 61 to provide the I-69 northbound lane and any needed East Frontage Road. An interchange is proposed for Mound Bayou.

- From the north part of Shelby to the south part of Hushpuckena, the Central Alternative is on relocation to the east of US 61. Relocation to the east, instead of widening to the east, is recommended to avoid directly impacting an electric substation north of Shelby and adjacent to the northbound lanes. The east relocation provides a means of avoiding the loading areas for two abandoned crop duster landing strips, and the east relocation also provides a good location for a Shelby interchange. For I-69 northbound traffic, the proposed Shelby interchange would also service Hushpuckena and Duncan.
- From the south part of Hushpuckena to the Coahoma County Line, the Central Alternative is concurrent with US 61. Widening would be added to the east of US 61 to provide the I-69 northbound lanes and any needed East Frontage Road. An interchange is proposed just south of Alligator. The Alligator interchange would also service Duncan for southbound I-69 traffic.

❖ No one present objected to the proposed Central Alternative in Bolivar County being an acceptable alternative for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

❖ Without mapping displays and using the following south to north format, Mr. Shirley continued the discussion of the proposed Central Alternative.

- From the Bolivar – Coahoma County Line to just south of the Bobo, the Central Alternative is concurrent with US 61. Widening would be added to the east of US 61 to provide the I-69 northbound lanes and any needed East Frontage Road. This is a short segment of less than one mile.
- From just south of Bobo to south of Clarksdale, the Central Alternative proceeds on relocation to the west of US 61 before turning east and crossing US 61 to become concurrent with the US 61 Bypass. This avoids the build-up along US 61 between Bobo and the Bypass. An interchange is proposed at Bobo to provide a connector that would separate the concurrent routes of I-69 and US 61 south of the interchange. Another interchange would be provided at the south part of Clarksdale where the Central Alternative crosses US 61 to join the Clarksdale Bypass.

❖ From south of Clarksdale to just south of US 49 near the Coahoma – Tunica County Line, Mr. Shirley advised there is only one proposed alternative in Coahoma County. Without using mapping displays, Jimmy discussed the alternative's use of US 61in the following south to north format.

- From south of Clarksdale to north of the SR 6 Interchange, the alternative uses the Bypass.
- From north of the SR 6 Interchange to south of Swan Lake, the alternative is on relocation to the east of US 61 before becoming concurrent with US 61 north of the Clarksdale Airport. An interchange is proposed near the airport at Eagles

Nest Road to provide a connector to service the airport, the north part of Lyon, and the south part of Jonestown.

- From south of Swan Lake to south of US 49 near the Coahoma – Tunica County Line, the alternative uses US 61. Widening would be added to the west of US 61 to provide the southbound lanes of I-69 and any needed West Frontage Road. An interchange is proposed at Coahoma. The interchange would also service Friars Point and the north part of Jonestown.

❖ From south of US 49 near the Coahoma – Tunica County Line to south of Dundee in Tunica County, Mr. Shirley advised there are two proposed alternatives. One alternative leaves US 61 and proceeds to the east on relocation and the other continues to use US 61 before proceeding east of relocation. In the following south to north format, Mr. Shirley continued his discussion of the West Alternative that continues to use US 61.

- The West Alternative has a proposed interchange slightly north of the current intersection of US 49 and US 61. The proposed interchange would also service US 49, Rich, Lula, and the proposed Welcome Center. Widening for the West Alternative would continue to be added to the west of US 61 to provide the southbound lanes of I-69 and any needed West Frontage Road.
- South of Dundee near Crenshaw Road, Mr. Shirley noted the West Alternative leaves the US 61 corridor and proceeds northeast on relocation. He advised an interchange is proposed at a relocation of Crenshaw Road to provide a connector to separate the concurrent routes of I-69 and US 61 south of the interchange.

❖ The group agreed the plan presented for an alternative using US 61 in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica counties was acceptable for study in the DEIS.

Mr. Shirley distributed a one page mapping handout of the proposed alternatives that are being refined for further study in the DEIS. After asking everyone present to review the handout and provide their comments, he then made the following comments concerning connectivity and constructability.

- Recognizing that this project would almost certainly be constructed in segments of approximately ten miles or less and that there would be pressure to open completed sections of I-69 to traffic as soon as possible, the handout addresses connectivity requirements for maintaining traffic as the small segments of this 100 plus mile Section of Independent Utility are constructed and opened to traffic.
- The handout addresses a minimum number of estimated high quality connectors that would be required for each alternative based upon possible interchange locations and the economic development goal for the project.
- To accurately compare the alternatives, the estimated connectivity costs for each alternative should be contained in the DEIS.

The discussions then moved to the work plan for the archaeological work. Refer to the meeting minutes contained in the **Appendix** for the discussions concerning that work plan.

Steering Committee Meeting at MDOT Environmental Division the afternoon of December 9, 2002

The goals for the meeting were to discuss the work plan for preparing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and any changes in the work plan that were needed as a result of the Steering Committee Meeting conducted that morning with representatives of the MDOT Second and Third Districts. The minutes for this meeting are contained in the **Appendix.**

Mr. David Kelley of Coastal Environments advised approximately 75% of the high probability area survey work is complete in Tunica County, and that wet soil conditions in the county are delaying the work on most of the remaining 25%. The study of the preliminary Preferred Alternative has discovered two historical sites and two cemeteries south of Dubbs Road. One of the historical sites encompasses the entire estimated right of way width while the other is located partially within the estimated right of way. Coastal furnished Neel-Schaffer the necessary electronic information to locate the historical sites and cemeteries discovered on the preliminary Preferred Alternative in Tunica County. Neel-Schaffer modified the alternative to avoid or lessen the impact on the findings and then furnished Coastal the modified alignment for review. Based on Coastal's review, the modified alignment will either become the new alignment or adjusted until the best alignment with the least impacts is located. This is the procedure that will be followed whenever Coastal's survey work discovers areas that need to be avoided.

MDOT Environmental Engineer Claiborne Barnwell advised he wanted Mr. Ken Weeden of the consultant team to meet with any contacts he has that can represent the municipalities or communities along US 61 from Merigold to Bobo. The purpose of contacting these individuals is to obtain their input on the western relocation alternative relative to the central alternative between Merigold and Bobo.

To enable Coastal Environments to conduct the archaeological studies in Tunica County, Neel-Schaffer furnished Coastal mapping for the refined alternative alignments and initial conceptual design at the recommended interchange locations. The project team contacts were also provided a copy of the Tunica County mapping information. Mr. Jimmy Shirley of Neel-Schaffer then gave the following status report on providing similar information for the remaining counties of Coahoma, Sunflower and Bolivar.

- The information for Coahoma and Sunflower counties would be provided to the project team contacts within the next two to three weeks.
- Although the shape files for the property parcels impacted by the alternatives in Bolivar County were available electronically, there was a delay in obtaining the names of the property owners and the acreage they owned. The information needed is now available and no longer delaying the refinement of alternatives and conceptual interchange design for this county.
- West of SR 1 near Benoit in Bolivar County, there are some alignment connection issues to the adjacent study on SIU 12 that need addressing. Resolving those issues will not impact the alternatives undergoing detail study in the DEIS that are located north of Litton Road and east of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge.

Mr. Larry Meisner advised that Kimley-Horn also needed the Bolivar County refined alignments and conceptual interchange designs as soon as possible. Mr. Shirley later determined the Bolivar County information will be furnished to the project team contacts in the following two submittals.

- An initial submittal for the central and north portions of the county from approximately halfway between Litton Road and SR 446 extending north to the Bolivar – Coahoma County Line. The estimated date for that submittal is January 15, 2003.
- A second submittal for the south portion of the county from west of SR 1 near Benoit extending east and then north to approximately halfway between Litton Road and SR 446. That submittal would be made after resolving the connection issues to the adjacent study on SIU 12.

To address the connection of alternatives to SIU 12 west of SR 1 near Benoit, it was decided that one or more separate meetings may be needed to finalize the alternatives for detail study in the DEIS from Benoit proceeding east to the crossings of Litton Road.

At the Steering Committee held earlier in the day with the MDOT Second and Third Districts, Mr. Shirley presented a map of each alternative identifying recommended interchange locations and connectivity issues. The districts were asked to review the maps and provide their comments.

The mapping of the alternatives identifying recommended interchange locations and connectivity issues is a tool the consultant team can use to assist the team in estimating cumulative and secondary development. Mr. Meisner was furnished a copy of the concepts. Using the mapping and other available information, Mr. Barnwell advised Neel-Schaffer and Kimley-Horn to coordinate their efforts to estimate the cumulative and secondary development impacts for each alternative taken forward for study in the DEIS. Mr. Barnwell also wants the consultant team to consider connectivity costs when comparing the alternatives in the DEIS.

The need to conduct another public meeting, or another series of public meetings, in the spring of 2003 was discussed for the following reasons.

- The last series of public meetings were conducted on July 16-18, 2002. The estimated time frame for having the DEIS prepared and approved for presentation at a Public Hearing is late summer or early fall of 2003 at the earliest.
- Over a year will pass between the last series of public meetings and the public hearing. This is too long to not provide the public an opportunity to receive an update.
- By March of 2003 the project team will be able to provide the public more detailed information on the alternatives taken forward for study in the DEIS.

Special Benoit Meeting at Ray Brooks School during the morning of January 29, 2003

The meeting's purpose was to update the Ray Brooks School, community, and farming contacts in the Benoit area on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternatives presented for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting by Mr. Ken Weeden, the Environmental Justice Coordinator for the project. There were 17 people who registered their attendance on the sign-in sheets. Of these 17 people, six represented the MDOT, one represented the FHWA, four represented the consultant team, four represented farm interests, one represented the school, and one represented the Benoit I-69 Committee. The minutes for this meeting are contained in the **Appendix**.

The invitees were able to view maps of the alternatives in the Benoit area and discuss the alternatives with representatives of the MDOT, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and

consultant team. Most of the discussions concerned the alignments from SR 1 west to the connecting point on the adjacent study that HNTB Corporation is conducting for Section of Independent Utility (SIU) 12. The following concerns from SR 1 west to the connecting point for the SIU 12 study were expressed:

- separation of farmland and potential farmland access issues;
- seep water problems;
- drainage problems;
- proximity of alignments to the school (potential safety and noise issues

After the project update was provided by Mr. Claiborne Barnwell of the MDOT and Mr. Robert Walker of the consultant team, the following are some of the questions asked, responses given, and comments made.

QUESTION: Mr. Wayne Farmer asked why the HNTB Study didn't consider a south of Benoit interchange crossing of SR 1 in the Lake Vista area.
RESPONSE: Mr. Barnwell responded that the HNTB study for SIU 12 considered three possible interchange locations in its study independent of the SIU 11 Study. These interchange locations included one interchange close to town, one interchange north of town, and one interchange south of town.

COMMENT: Mr. Wayne Farmer remarked that the West Alternate does not appear feasible because it blocks the proposed westward expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. He continued by stating the interchange location north of town does not appear feasible because it is out of direction for an alternative proceeding east to the south of Litton Road. Since these two alternatives north of Benoit do not appear feasible, he asked consideration be given to adding a southern alternative that would cross SR 1 between the Ray Brooks School and Scott in the vicinity of the Lake Vista area.
RESPONSE: Mr. Barnwell responded that he would request the SIU 11 consultant team to conduct a study sufficient enough to determine if this request merits further study as an additional alternative in the DEIS.

QUESTION: Mr. Early Ewing, Chairman of the Benoit I-69 Committee, asked about providing an interchange between the I-69 Great River Bridge that could serve as a connector to SR 1 and Greenville.
RESPONSE: Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with the consultant team, advised Mr. Ewing this was beyond the Scope of Work for the SIU 11 study from Benoit to Robinsonville.

QUESTION: Mr. Early Ewing expressed his concern that a SR 1 Bypass of Benoit would be needed if the alternative crossing north of Benoit is not selected as the Preferred Alternative.
RESPONSE: Mr. Jimmy Shirley advised projected traffic for the 2030 Design Year would be developed for I-69 interchange alternatives at Benoit in the DEIS. He advised Mr. Ewing it was doubtful the projected traffic for SR 1 would warrant a SR 1 bypass of Benoit for any of the alternatives.

COMMENT: Mr. Early Ewing commented that he thought the view of Lake Bolivar along SR 1 at Lake Vista was one of the most scenic sites in the State of Mississippi.
RESPONSE: None

Mr. Barnwell advised the attendees to use the comment sheet they received at the meeting as the means to record any comments they want documented about this meeting. He advised they could either turn in their comment sheet to a member of the project team at the conclusion of the meeting or they could return it by mail to the project team.

Hwy 61 North Bolivar County Mayors Luncheon Meeting in Merigold on January 29, 2003

The purpose at this meeting held at Crawdads Restaurant was to update the mayors along US 61 between Merigold and Alligator on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternatives presented for detailed study in the DEIS. Invitation letters to the mayors of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, Duncan, and Alligator were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting by Mr. Ken Weeden, the Environmental Justice Coordinator for the project. There were 19 people who registered their attendance on the sign-in sheets. Of these 19 people, four represented the MDOT, one represented the FHWA, five represented the consultant team, five were mayors, one is a town clerk, one is a Bolivar County Supervisor, and two were concerned citizens. Of the municipalities of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, Duncan, and Alligator, the only mayor not in attendance at the meeting was the Mayor of Duncan. The meeting minutes are contained in the **Appendix**.

After introductions, Mr. Barnwell stated the need for written comments to the project. Mr. Barnwell stated that verbal comments would not become a permanent part of the record unless written and submitted to the project team. He made the attendees aware of the comment sheet they could use to furnish their written comments. Mr. Barnwell stated that the intent of the project is to choose the best alternative through consensus and that a major role of this project is to provide economic opportunities to the Delta.

During the introductions, the mayors, county supervisor, local official, and concerned citizens made statements concerning their desires for the outcome of this project. All the mayors and local officials wanted an alignment closest to their municipality because they believed such an alignment would provide the greatest economic impact. All agreed that the best alternative would be the alignment that converts existing US 61 to I-69. They also requested good access to the interstate from their municipality and some, including the Mayor of Alligator, requested an interchange next to their community. Mr. Jimmy Stokes, a citizen from Mound Bayou, emphasized that Bolivar County is a poor rural area which greatly needs economic stimulus. Mr. Stokes reminded the group of the creation of the Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone and the need to provide an economic boost to the communities in Bolivar County through the I-69 project.

Mr. Barnwell replied that one of the primary objectives in addition to providing for the movement of freight from Canada to Mexico for this project is economic stimulus. Mr. Cecil Vick, FHWA Environmental Coordinator for the Jackson Division Office, added that one of Congress' specific purposes for the I-69 project was addressing poverty in the Mississippi Delta and the Lower Rio Grande Valley in the State of Texas.

- Next, the attendees reviewed the maps depicting the alternative alignments recommended for detailed study in the DEIS between Cleveland and the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line. Most of the discussion concerned the central alternative that would convert as much of existing US 61 as possible to I-69. Mr. Jimmy Shirley, with the consultant team, explained the concept of how the conversion for that alternative could be accomplished.

During Mr. Shirley's discussion of the construction concept for converting US 61 to I-69 between Merigold and the county line, questions were addressed concerning interchange locations and how these six municipalities would be accessed from the four proposed interchanges located southwest of Merigold, near Mound Bayou, in north Shelby, and just south of Alligator.

Mayor Westerfield of Merigold asked the project team to review the concept for the interchange southwest of Merigold and determine if any improvements could be made in the concept to provide better access for Merigold. Mr. Shirley advised Mayor Westerfield that his request would be investigated and any needed adjustments in the concept for the DEIS would be implemented.

Mr. Barnwell closed the meeting by reminding the attendees to record any comments they want documented about the meeting on the comment sheet and to return the sheet to the project team as soon as possible.

Bolivar/Sunflower Counties Community Issues Committee Dinner Meeting in at Crawdads Restaurant in Merigold on January 29, 2003.

The MDOT conducted this dinner meeting at Crawdad's Restaurant in Merigold at 6:00 PM on January 29, 2003. The meeting's purpose was to update the county task force on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternatives presented for detailed study in the DEIS. Invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting by Mr. Ken Weeden of the consultant team. A sign-in sheet was circulated to register the attendance at the meeting. The minutes for the meeting are contained in the **Appendix**.

After Mr. Weeden provided welcoming comments and status report on the Three Community Issues Committees, he introduced Mr. Claiborne Barnwell of the MDOT. After making a welcoming statement and commenting on the status of the project, Mr. Barnwell asked everyone attending the meeting to state their name and association with the project. Of the 26 people attending the meeting, four represented the MDOT, one represented the FHWA, five represented the consultant team, and the remaining 16 were Bolivar and Sunflower County officials and/or residents. After introductions, Mr. Barnwell stated the need for written comments to the project. Mr. Barnwell stated that verbal comments would not become a permanent part of the record unless written and submitted to the project team. Mr. Barnwell stated that the intent of the project is to choose the best alternative through consensus and that a major role of this project is to provide economic opportunities to the Delta. Mr. Barnwell advised an informal format would be used for the dinner meeting. He suggested that everyone place their order from the menu, and then view the alternative mapping for Bolivar and Sunflower counties with the project team while the meals were being prepared.

The overwhelming comments from the attendees were the need to build the new interstate as soon as possible and to provide for the greatest economic stimulus to the area. Most of the people with Bolivar County interests stated their support for an alternative south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge that crosses SR 8 as far west of Cleveland as possible. By contrast, most of the people with Sunflower County interests continue to support an alternative that passes south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, crosses US 61 north of Shaw, SR 8 east of Cleveland, and continues to the east on relocation until connecting to the south end of the

Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County. There was not much discussion concerning the central alternative north of Merigold. This was probably due to the central alternative being discussed in such detail earlier in the day at the North Bolivar County Meeting. There was also not much discussion concerning the west alternative between Benoit and Rosedale that passes between the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and the Mississippi River. Those in attendance apparently accept that western alternative is not viable because it blocks the proposed westward expansion of the Refuge. There were no major expressions of interest for or against the modified western alignment that crosses SR 8 west of Cleveland at the same location as the central alternative and then proceeds northwest on relocation to connect to the western alternative near SR 444.

The questions, requests, responses, and comments that occurred while viewing the mapping displays included the following:

> REQUEST: Reverend J.Y. Trice asked Mr. Robert Walker to determine if the central alternative crossing of SR 8 could be moved any further west.
> RESPONSE: After the meeting, Mr. Walker discussed the request with Mr. Jimmy Shirley of the consultant team. Mr. Shirley advised moving the crossing any further west would be out of direction and add mileage to the central alternative. Although it might not add mileage to the modified west alternative, a westward relocation would move the modified west alternative farther away from the established municipalities of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, and Shelby. More bridges and unnecessary pipeline crossings would also be required if the crossing of SR 8 is moved farther west.
>
> QUESTION: During small group discussions while viewing the alternative mapping, Mr. Shirley was asked several times which alternative he thought would eventually become the Preferred Alternative recommendation.
> RESPONSE: Mr. Shirley's response was always that he did not know. He advised the people asking this question that the study of relocation alternatives in the environmental document must take into account the impact of providing adequate connecting roads at interchange locations. Mr. Shirley told these people that considering those impacts will be substantial for new location alternatives in areas where US 61 could be used for I-69 However, Mr. Shirley also advised these same people that converting US 61 when possible to I-69 would have high maintenance of traffic cost during the construction. He advised these people it is unknown at this time whether using US 61 as much as possible or being on relocation as much as possible would have the least negative impacts on the human and natural environments.

Mr. Barnwell closed the meeting by reminding the attendees to record any comments they want documented about the meeting on the comment sheet and to return the sheet to the project team as soon as possible.

Coahoma County Community Issues Committee Meeting held at the Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce during the morning of January 30, 2003.

The MDOT conducted this meeting at the Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce in Clarksdale at 10:00 AM on January 30, 2003. Like the meeting the previous evening, this meeting's purpose was to update the Committee on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternative corridors presented for detailed study in the DEIS. Invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting by Mr. Ken Weeden of the consultant

team. A sign-in sheet was circulated to register the attendance at the meeting. The minutes for the meeting are contained in the Appendix.

After making a welcoming statement and commenting on the status of the project, Mr. Barnwell asked everyone attending the meeting to state their name and association with the project. Of the 19 people attending the meeting, three represented the MDOT, one represented the FHWA, five represented the consultant team, and the remaining 10 were Coahoma County officials and/or residents.

The format used for this meeting was similar to the one used for the meeting held the previous evening in Merigold. During his comments, Mr. Walker presented the following sequence of alternatives in a south to north format for Coahoma County.

- Three alternatives from the Bolivar-Coahoma County Line to the south part of the Clarksdale Bypass.
- One alternative from the south part of the Clarksdale Bypass through central Coahoma County to near the US 49 intersection at the future welcome center site.
- Two alternatives from near the US 49 intersection at the future welcome center site to the Tunica County Line.

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell commented that the team is already looking at connectors and interchanges to provide a transportation network for the whole Mississippi Delta, and he stated that the MDOT will provide commitments and consideration in the final environmental document as part of the decision-making process that will be carried forward for future implementation of the right of way and construction contracts.

The attendees reviewed the alignments in Coahoma County. Some of the issues discussed included how the interstate would be accessed from the existing road network and a concern about coordination of the location of I-69 with the planned City of Clarksdale Airport Expansion. Neel-Schaffer is responsible for performing the engineering services for the planned airport expansion. Therefore, the Neel-Schaffer members of the project team for the I-69 project addressed this concern by stating the work on these two projects was being coordinated through their Jackson Office.

Verner Road Area Tunica County Citizens Meeting held at the Tunica County Economic Development Building during the evening of January 30, 2003

This meeting's purpose was to update the Oak Grove Church members and residents of the Bonds/Verner/Prichard Road areas on the status of the project and to obtain their input on the alternative corridors presented for detailed study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Invitation letters were mailed approximately two weeks prior to the meeting by Mr. Ken Weeden to the attendees of the previous meeting conducted in October of 2002. The meeting minutes are contained in the **Appendix**.

Upon entering the meeting location, a sign-in sheet was provided to register the 52 people who attended. Of these 52 people in attendance, six represented the MDOT, one represented the FHWA, five represented the consultant team, and the remaining 40 people were interested citizens or officials of the Tunica County area. This meeting was scheduled in response to a request by residents of the Bonds/Verner/Prichard Road areas. The residents had also requested an MDOT specialist in right of way issues to be present at the meeting. In response to that

request, there were two specialists in attendance from the Jackson Office of the MDOT and one from the MDOT Second District Office located at Batesville.

Mr. Ken Weeden provided welcoming and opening comments. He explained that the alternates had been revised and that this meeting was being held to give the citizens a change to ask question concerning the new alignments and to address any possible relocation or acquisition questions. He advised there were MDOT relocation specialists attending the meeting that could respond to specific questions or concerns of the project.

Mr. Barnwell discussed the history of the I-69 project and that one of the major goals of the project was providing economic development opportunities for the Lower Mississippi Delta, which includes Tunica County. Mr. Barnwell stated that verbal comments would not become a permanent part of this meeting's record. He advised the attendees they need to furnish their written comments for the record using the form they received when registering their attendance. Mr. Barnwell stated that the MDOT will provide commitments and consideration in the final environmental document as part of the decision-making process to minimize certain impacts to the local communities affected by the construction of the project.

Mr. Robert Walker of Neel-Schaffer provided a status report on the project, and he advised that Mr. Jimmy Shirley of the project team would provide an update on the two alternatives for crossing Prichard Road. As part of that update, Mr. Walker stated an estimate would be provided for the number of residents that would be relocated at the Verner Road crossing for the alternative closest to Tunica. He advised that after the update is given an opportunity will be provided to ask questions prior to viewing the mapping displays for the alternatives.

Mr. Cecil Vick with the FHWA made some comments on the national, regional, and local significance of the study. He also commented on the status of this study relative to other studies on the I-69 Corridor.

Mr. Shirley commented there were two alternatives for crossing Prichard Road. He explained that one alternative passes just east of the airport; proceeds north roughly paralleling US 61 while crossing Goad Road, Verner Road, and Arkabutla Dam Road to near Robinsonville; and then turns east to parallel SR 304. Of the two alternatives under consideration in this area, he advised this alternative is closer to Tunica and provides the better access to the casinos at Robinsonville. Mr. Shirley advised the other alternative crosses Prichard Road farther east at a point near SR 3.

For the alternative closer to Tunica that crosses Verner Road, Mr. Shirley commented there is not much room to adjust the location of the alternative in this area because of the following limitations.

- The crossing of Prichard Road needs to remain west of Oak Grove Church.
- The crossing of Verner Road needs to be east of the Verner Road Park and west of a large ditch to keep the alternative as far west of Bonds Road as possible.

Mr. Shirley then discussed the potential residential displacements if the crossing of Verner Road remains in its current location. He advised if Verner Road was taken over I-69, the residents between the park and the large ditch were potential displacements. This amounted to two permanent residents and four mobile home residents. Mr. Shirley advised it would probably be better to take Verner Road over the interstate for the following reasons.

- For this alternative, it is proposed that a continuous landscaped earthen mound will be added at the right of way line to lessen the I-69 visual and noise impacts to residents in the Bonds and Verner Road area.
- For the landscaped area to be as effective as possible in reducing the noise level, Verner Road should go over the interstate.
- Over time, the expansion joints in bridges can become loose. An impact noise then occurs when trucks cross over the joints. Since there would be less traffic on Verner Road than the interstate, there is less potential for this type impact noise becoming a problem by taking Verner Road over the interstate.

Mr. Leslie Rankin, MDOT Second District Right of Way contact, stated that MDOT had relocation specialists at the meeting to address any questions on relocation and acquisition.

Mr. Cecil Vick further discussed the relocation and acquisition of properties. Mr. Vick stated that the intent of relocation is to put the person in a similar or better condition than they were in before. Mr. Vick stressed that this project may not be built for several years and that the local people should not alter their lives or plans based on the location of any proposed alignments.

The meeting moved to an informal format where the attendees could view the mapping displays for the alternatives and discuss their relocation type questions with the right of way specialists.

Some of the concerns discussed included access to the interstate, access to property, relocation assistance and potential noise and aesthetic impacts along the interstate. The mapping display of the Verner Road area provided the approximate locations of manufactured and brick homes that were within the proposed 450 foot wide right of way for the alternative that crosses Verner Road. Several people were in attendance at the meeting who either owned or rented homes that would be impacted by the alternative that crosses Verner Road.

Tunica, Coahoma, and Bolivar counties Archaeological Finds, Adjustment in Alternative made in March of 2003

Coastal Environments discovered 11 archaeological sites impacted by alternatives in portions of these three counties. If possible, Coastal Environments recommended the alternatives be adjusted to avoid or lessen the impact on these sites. The adjustments that Neel-Schaffer was able to make did not impact other unknown archaeological sites based on a follow-up survey conducted by Coastal Environments.

Newsletter Mailout on April 3, 2003

In preparation for the next series of identical public meetings and to make people who had expressed an interest in this project aware of its status, over 650 copies of a newsletter were mailed on April 3, 2003. Those mailed copies of this newsletter, shown on Figure _____ included people who had attended one or more of the public meetings, as well as Federal, State, and local governmental contacts.

Special Follow-up Meeting at Ray Brooks School near Benoit on April 30, 2003

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the consultant team conducted this special follow-up meeting at Ray Brooks

School in Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Hawley's office. The primary discussions at the previous meeting concerned the crossings of SR 1 southwest of Benoit, and a request to study a crossing of SR 1 farther southwest of Benoit at Lake Vista. Some of the attendees at the previous meeting believed the Lake Vista crossing has the best soil conditions, the least environmental impacts, and the least negative impacts on farming operations. They also believed from the common point on the SIU 12 study near Eutaw Landing, a Lake Vista crossing of SR 1 could be accomplished by extending the Eutaw Landing tangent to the southeast. Then, after crossing SR 1 at Lake Vista, the requested alternative could turn east and then northeast to cross SR 448 at the same location as a crossing being used by one of the alternatives undergoing study. After the requests made at the previous meeting were analyzed, it was decided the crossing of SR 1 at Lake Vista merited study.

Purpose of Special Follow-up Benoit Meeting on April 30, 2003

There were two meeting locations chosen for the Third Series of Public Meetings scheduled for April 30-May 1, 2003, in Cleveland and Clarksdale respectively. Since the Lake Vista crossing was one of the three alternative crossings that would be presented to the public for comments at the meeting in Cleveland that evening, it was appropriate to schedule the follow-up meeting at Benoit. Everyone that attended the previous meeting on January 29th was invited to this follow-up meeting. Because making changes west of the crossing of SR 1 will impact the adjacent study on SIU 12, the SIU 12 contacts with HNTB and the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department were invited to this follow-up meeting.

The second purpose of the meeting concerned the Cleveland – Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce and other community leaders near Benoit. The Chamber has been actively involved in the Great River Bridge project since its conception. Because it is likely that I-69 will use the Great River Bridge crossing of the Mississippi River on SIU 12, this group also needed to be advised of the history behind the alternative crossings of SR 1 that would be presented at the meeting in Cleveland that evening. By inviting this group to the follow-up meeting, they would have an opportunity to ask questions, express any concerns, and make comments prior to the meeting in Cleveland that evening. The appropriate members and officials of the Chamber, as well as other community leaders they deemed appropriate, were invited to the meeting by the Chamber.

Attendees at Special Benoit Meeting on April 30, 2003

There were 26 people who were registered as attendees at this meeting. Of the 26 people, nine were representatives of either the SIU 11 or SIU 12 project teams. The remaining 17 people were farmers, Chamber officials, City of Cleveland officials, Bolivar County officials or Ray Brooks School officials. The minutes for this meeting are contained in the **Appendix**.

Welcome at Special Benoit Meeting on April 30, 2003

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, the MDOT Environmental and Location Division Engineer, provided a welcoming statement and briefly discussed the purpose of the meeting. He then turned the program over to Mr. Jimmy Shirley of the consultant team.

Presentation at Special Benoit Meeting on April 30, 2003

Mr. Shirley discussed the three alternative crossings of SR 1 that HNTB selected for the eastern limit of their adjacent environmental and location study on SIU 12. Mr. Shirley advised the environmental document for the SIU 12 study would state that the eventual crossing of SR 1 would be determined by the study to the east on SIU 11. Mr. Shirley then discussed how the SIU 11 study began by using the SIU 12 crossing alternatives of SR 1, but as the engineering and environmental studies for SIU 11 progressed adjustments were needed in the SR 1 crossing alternatives. The following describes his discussions.

- The HNTB crossing location of SR 1 north of Benoit was eliminated from further detailed study because it was too far out of direction to proceed southeast and cross Litton Road prior to the current western limits of the Dahomey NWR.
- The HNTB crossing location of SR 1 just south of Downtown Benoit was eliminated because it had too many negative natural and human environmental impacts to connect with the remaining alternative alignment corridors to the east that are undergoing study.
- The HNTB crossing location of SR 1, southwest of Benoit and just south of Ray Brooks School, was adjusted south to the first curve in SR 1 south of the school. The adjustment in this crossing point was needed to avoid impacting the expansion of the school's athletic fields, and to connect with the SIU 11 study alternatives proceeding east from Benoit.
- The SIU 11 recommended SR 1 crossing location alternatives are just north of Ray Brooks School, at the first curve south of Ray Brooks School, and further south of the school at a point known as Lake Vista.

Mr. Shirley advised the attendees that based on initial environmental and engineering studies, as well as a field inspection, it was determined the SR 1 crossing at Lake Vista appears to be a viable alternative to connect the HNTB study on SIU 12 with the SIU 11 study. He explained the SIU 11 alternative crossings of SR 1 just north of the school and just south of the school connect to SIU 12 on a shared tangent between Lake Bolivar and Eutaw Landing. Mr. Shirley explained the Lake Vista alternative would use a new tangent proceeding southeast from Eutaw Landing across Lake Bolivar. He advised the attendees that an aerial photography mapping display was available for them to view these alternatives recommending for further study in the Eutaw Landing, Lake Bolivar, Ray Brooks School, and Benoit areas. He concluded his remarks by informing the attendees that these were the SR 1 crossing alternatives that would be presented to the public at the meeting in Cleveland later that day.

Questions, Comments, Concerns & Responses at Special Benoit Meeting

While seated and in a formal type setting, some of the attendees asked questions, made comments, and expressed concerns. The following were the primary questions, comments, or concerns expressed and any response that needed documenting to those questions, comments or concerns.

- Some of the major farmers in the area expressed their appreciation that the Lake Vista alternative was recommended to be added to the SIU 11 study.
- The Cleveland – Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce representatives expressed concern that adding the Lake Vista alternative would delay obtaining a Record of Decision (ROD) for the HNTB study on SIU 12. The Chamber representatives advised they hope to obtain I-69 funding to supplement or in lieu of Great River Bridge funding

for the Mississippi River crossing. They wanted assurance that adding the Lake Vista alternative would not delay obtaining the ROD on the SIU 12 study so the Great River Bridge construction could begin as soon as possible.

RESPONSE: The state highway officials from Arkansas and Mississippi advised they believed this could be worked out; however, they emphasized they could not say that for certain to the group today.

FOLLOW-UP: Some of the Chamber representatives were not satisfied with the highway officials' response.

Special Meeting in Rosedale held during the afternoon at the Court House on April 30, 2003

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the consultant team conducted this special meeting in the West Bolivar County Courthouse at Rosedale to discuss the alternatives under consideration for widening SR 8 to four lanes between Rosedale and Cleveland as part of this I-69 Study on SIU 11.

SR 8 is a two-lane, two-lane highway over the approximately 18 miles from SR 1 at Rosedale to the western limits of Cleveland. The portion of SR 8 through Cleveland is a five-lane section, and the MDOT has location and environmental approval to widen SR 8 to four lanes from the eastern limits of Cleveland east to Ruleville in Sunflower County.

Regardless of the side of Cleveland on which I-69 has its interchange with SR 8, the MDOT decided SR 8 needed widening to four lanes between SR 1 at Rosedale and Cleveland. The reason the MDOT made this decision was to satisfy the expected intermodal connectivity needs that SR 8 would have associated with freight traffic between the Mississippi River Port and Industrial Park at Rosedale and Cleveland. At the request of the MDOT, the I-69 SIU 11 study team agreed to conduct the necessary environmental and engineering studies to obtain the environmental clearance for widening this section of SR 8 to four lanes as part of the SIU 11 Study.

The alternatives recommended for further study to accomplish the widening of SR 8 were to be presented to the public at the meeting in Cleveland during the evening of April 30, 2003. The purpose of this meeting at Rosedale was to provide the community leaders, Cleveland Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce officials, local elected officials, and concerned citizens advance notice of the alternatives that would be presented for further study at the meeting that evening in Cleveland. Invitations to the Rosedale meeting were provided by the Chamber.

There were 22 people who were registered as attendees at this meeting. Of the 22 people, 10 were representatives of the SIU 11 project team, MDOT, or FHWA. The remaining 12 people were City of Rosedale officials, Chamber officials, City of Cleveland officials, Bolivar County officials, and concerned citizens. The meeting minutes are contained in the **Appendix**.

Welcome at Special Rosedale Meeting

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell, the MDOT Environmental and Location Division Engineer, provided a welcoming statement and briefly discussed the purpose of the meeting. He then turned the program over to Mr. Jimmy Shirley of the consultant team.

Presentation at Special Rosedale Meeting

Mr. Shirley advised the group that aerial photography mapping displays of alternatives for widening SR 8 to four lanes were available for the group to view, ask questions, and make comments. He also advised the attendees the same mapping displays would be presented to the public at the meetings scheduled for later that day in Cleveland and the following day in Clarksdale. Before asking the attendees at the Rosedale meeting to view the alternatives, which were placed flat on tables, Mr. Shirley provided the attendees the following overview of the alternatives beginning at SR 1 and proceeding east to the western limits of Cleveland.

- There are two alternatives for the intersection at SR 1. Both of the alternatives would widen SR 8 to five lanes with the center lane functioning as a shared lane for left turning traffic. The only difference in the two alternatives is one alternative keeps the SR 1 intersection in its current location and the other alternative relocates the SR 1 intersection to the south so that SR 8 and the State Park access are directly opposite each other. Since the driveway to the convenience store/restaurant is located directly opposite SR 8, the alternative that maintains the current location of the SR 1 intersection would not require relocating the business. However, the offset in the state park access, which is south of the convenience store/restaurant and on the same side of SR 1, would have to be shifted south outside of the limits of the new SR 8 intersection with SR 1. The alternative for relocating the SR 1 intersection to the south would probably require relocating the convenience store/restaurant.
- From the eastern limits of the SR 1 intersection to slightly east of the access to the industrial park, the only alternative is widening SR 8 to five lanes with the center lane functioning as a shared lane for left turning traffic. The widening would be centered on the existing centerline of SR 8.
- From slightly east of the access to the industrial park to the slightly west of Riverside Fertilizer Association, the only alternative is widening SR 8 to five lanes. East of the industrial park intersection, the widening would transition from being placed equal distance on each side of the current centerline to where all the widening would be placed on the north side west of Riverside Fertilizer Association.
- At Riverside Fertilizer Association, the five-lane section would transition to a four-lane divided section with the new lanes being added on the north side of the existing lanes. The new lanes would continue on the north side of the existing lanes to curve near the electric substation. Using the curve near the electric substation to make the transition, the new lanes would be added on the south side of the existing lanes after exiting the curve. The new lanes would continue to be added on the south side of the existing lanes to the crossing of the Bogue Phalia located west of Pace. This will avoid the abandoned landfill, and it is the only alternative recommended for study in this segment.
- From the crossing of the Bogue Phalia to natural gas pipeline substation just west of the Bolivar County Correctional Facility the following three alternatives were presented.

- ❖ Immediately after crossing the Bogue Phalia, one alternative is for the four lane divided type section to transition to a five lane section along the existing alignment of SR 8. After completing the transition to the five lane section, all the widening necessary to provide the five lane would be added to the south of the existing lanes between the fire tower west of Pace and the apartment complexes that border SR 8 to the south in the middle portion of Pace. This will avoid impacting the Herbie's Transportation Complex that is presently under construction to the north of SR 8 and east of the fire tower. West of the apartment complexes a transition of the widening, from all the widening being placed to the south of SR 8 to all the widening being placed to the north of SR 8, would occur. This transition of the widening is necessary to minimize the impacts to the apartment complex and most of the built-up area of Pace that is located to the south of SR 8. Near the eastern limits of Pace, another transition of the widening would occur that when completed would result in all the widening being placed to the south of SR 8. This will avoid impacting the two natural gas pipeline substations that are located to the north of SR 8 between Pace and the correctional facility.
- ❖ The second alternative for accomplishing the widening of SR 8 from west of Pace to the Bolivar County Correctional Facility is a four-lane divided facility. The concept for the transitioning necessary to provide a four-lane divided section is the same as the concept described above the five-lane.
- ❖ The third alternative for accomplishing the widening at Pace is a four-lane divided alternative on new location to the north of SR 8. This alternative would rejoin SR 8 east of Pace where the new lanes would be added to the south of SR 8. A four-lane divided section would continue to the natural gas pipeline substation located just west of the correctional facility.

- Between the natural gas pipeline substation just west of the correctional facility and the correctional facility, the following two alternatives were presented.
  - ❖ The first alternative is to transition the four-lane divided section to a five-lane section. When the transition is completed, the resulting five-lane section would have all the widening added to the south of the existing lanes.
  - ❖ The second alternative is to maintain the five-lane section will all the widening being added to the south of the existing lanes.
- From just west of the correctional facility to the western limits of Cleveland, the only recommended alternative is a five-lane concept with all the widening being added to the south of the existing lanes. Near the western limits of Cleveland a transition would occur to connect to the existing five-lane section.

Informal Question and Answer Period

After Mr. Shirley completed his description of the proposed alternatives, Mr. Barnwell and Mr. Shirley addressed some general questions. The attendees were invited to view the mapping of the alternatives that were placed on the tables, and to discuss any questions, comments, or concerns they had about the project with members of the project team. The attendees were also

encouraged to submit any comments they have about the project in writing using the comment form that was provided at the meeting.

Comment Forms or Letters Received on Special Rosedale Meeting

None of the three comments received provided support or objections to the alternative plans recommended for further study to accomplish the widening of SR 8 to four lanes between Rosedale and Cleveland. One comment advised the widening of SR 8 to four lanes is a great idea and much needed. However, the cost of this project should not be a part of the I-69 feasibility study since it is not essential to the route determination of I-69.

Third Series of Public Meetings held at Cleveland and Clarksdale respectively on April 30-May 1, 2003

The purpose of the third set of citizen's information workshops was to present to the public for input the I-69 SIU 11 Alternatives and Connecting Roads recommended for study in the Draft EIS and the public the alternatives for widening SR 8 in Bolivar County to four lanes between Rosedale and Cleveland.

Using the project contact list, approximately 650 post card invitations were mailed to the public and agency contacts that had expressed interest in the project. A Press Release was also placed in the area newspapers as another means of inviting the local and area citizenry to the meetings.

Planning Approach Used for the Meetings

Information on the refined 450 feet wide alternative corridors recommended for study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement was presented at these meetings using the same format as the previous two citizen's information workshops. In addition, information on the alternatives recommended for further study to widen SR 8 in Bolivar County to four lanes between SR 1 at Rosedale and Cleveland was presented at these meetings. Large aerial photography mapping displays on the alternative corridors recommended for detail study were placed on tables and other displays were placed on easels for the public to view, ask questions, and make comments. At each meeting brief presentations were made by the MDOT Environmental Division and the consultant team.

Steps were taken an these meetings to assist the public in understanding that the selection of a Preferred Alternative must also address connecting road needs, in at least one direction, from every I-69 interchange location to the existing highway system. This was necessary to address the probable eventual construction of I-69 in short segments between interchange locations, and the necessity of providing a route capable of accommodating truck traffic access needs. In some instances the connecting road is already built to accommodate the posted maximum allowable truck weight limit of 80,000 pounds. In other instances, the connecting road would need improving or upgrading. In others, a connecting road does not exist, and a new road, which the project team identifies as a spur, needs to be provided.

Project Approach of Studying Alternatives in Three Separate Sections

To present the alternatives recommended for further study in the Draft EIS at these meetings, the project was divided into a Southern, Central, and Northern Section.

In the Southern Section, three alternatives were presented for further study. Those three alternatives in the Southern Section were a Western Alternative, a Central Alternative, and the Eastern Alternative. The shared southern terminus for the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternative Corridors in the Southern Section is a point in Bolivar County on the adjacent SIU 12 study east of the proposed Great River Bridge near Eutaw Landing. This shared southern terminus is southwest of Benoit, and west of Lake Bolivar and SR 1. The shared northern terminus for the three alternative corridors is the New Africa Road Interchange on the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County. The Western Alternative and the Eastern Alternative are entirely on new location, and the Central Alternative uses as much of US 61 as possible between the Town of Merigold and the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line.

In the Central Section, only one alternative was presented for further study and that alternative was referred to as the Central Alternative. The Central Alternative is located from the New Africa Road Interchange on the Clarksdale Bypass in Coahoma County to a point on US 61 in Coahoma County approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line.

In the Northern Section, three alternatives were presented for further study. Those three alternatives were a Western Alternative, a Central Alternative, and the Eastern Alternative. The Northern Section is bounded to the south by the northern termini of the Central Section in Coahoma County and bounded to the north by the southern portion of a spur, currently under construction, which will connect existing SR 304 with new SR 304 in Tunica County.

Because there were several points in the Southern Section and the Northern Section where alternatives either overlap or where alternatives can be connected, there are more than three possible alternatives in the Southern and Northern Sections. However, for presentation purposes at the meeting, displays were developed for only the three general corridors previously mentioned for those two sections. The alternative(s) contained in the Northern, Central and Southern Sections presented at the meetings are described below.

Western Alternative in the Southern Section

From Eutaw Landing to west of Lake Bolivar and SR 1, the Western Alternative uses a shared tangent with the Central Alternative. The Western and Central Alternatives separate near Lake Bolivar and the Western Alternative's turn to the southeast results in a crossing of SR 1 just north of Ray Brooks School. The Western Alternative then continues southeast before turning to the northeast to cross SR 448 near the southeastern limits of Benoit. The Alternative then proceeds east on a path south of Litton Road until near the crossing of the Bogue Phalia where the Alternative turns north to cross Litton Road. The Alternative continues north and then joins the Central Alternative east of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge and south of SR 446. The two alternatives continue north on the same alignment until after they cross SR 8 west of Cleveland where they separate. The Western Alternative turns to the north and remains on new location following a path between US 61 and SR 1 to near the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line where the Alternative begins a turn to the northeast and then to the east. The Western Alternative joins the Central Alternative southwest of Clarksdale and after these two alternatives join they continue east to cross US 61 and join the Clarksdale Bypass near the New Africa Road Interchange.

Central Alternative in Southern Section

The Central Alternative and the Western Alternative are joined and follow the same easterly path from Eutaw Landing to west of Lake Bolivar and SR 1 where the two alternatives separate. The Central Alternative turns to the southeast and crosses SR 1 in the curve just south of Ray Brooks School. Continuing its southeasterly path the Alternative turns to the northeast near SR 448 to join the Eastern Alternative. After crossing SR 448 southeast of Benoit near a cotton gin, the two alternatives turn east on a path north of SR 448 until crossing the Bogue Phalia where the two alternatives separate. The Central Alternative turns north to cross Litton Road and join the Western Alternative east of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge. The two alternatives continue north crossing SR 446 and SR 8 west of Cleveland. Just north of SR 8, the Central Alternative leaves the Western Alternative and follows a northeast path that connects the Central Alternative to US 61 near Merigold. Between Merigold and the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line, the Central Alternative continues north using the US 61 corridor as much as possible. Just north of the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line, the Alternative proceeds northeast and then east to join the Western Alternative southwest of Clarksdale. The two alternatives then continue east to cross US 61 and connect with the Clarksdale Bypass near the New Africa Road Interchange.

Eastern Alternative in Southern Section

From Eutaw Landing and northwest of Lake Bolivar, the Eastern Alternative leaves the Western and Central alternatives and proceeds on a southeast path resulting in a crossing of Lake Bolivar and SR 1 near an area known as Lake Vista. After crossing SR 1, the Alternative turns to the east and then the northeast to join the Central Alternative southwest of SR 448. Following a northeast path the two alternatives cross SR 448 southeast of Benoit near a cotton gin. The two alternatives then turn east on a path to paralleling SR 448 to the north until the crossing of the Bogue Phalia where the two alternatives separate. The Eastern Alternative proceeds east to cross US 61 just north of Shaw and turns north to cross SR 8 east of Cleveland. The Eastern Alternative remains on new location following a northerly path that takes the Alternative just west of the State Penal Farm until the Alternative joins the Clarksdale Bypass near the New Africa Road Interchange.

Central Alternative in Central Section

The Central Alternative uses the Clarksdale Bypass to north of SR 6 near Lyon where the Alternative proceeds northeast on new location to avoid the build-up along the concurrent section of US 49 and US 61 between Lyon and Eagles Nest Road. The Alternative rejoins the concurrent section of US 49 and US 61 north of Eagles Nest Road near the Clarksdale Airport and Swan Lake, and the Alternative continues to use concurrent section of US 49-US 61 to approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line.

Western Alternative in Northern Section

Approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line is the separation point for the Central and Northern sections. The Western Alternative in the Northern Section proceeds north along the concurrent US 49-US 61 section and then along US 61 beyond the US 49 intersection into Tunica County to a point just south of the Crenshaw Road intersection. The alternative then proceeds to the northeast on new location to near Dubbs Road where the alternative turns to the north and then to the northeast to cross Dubbs Road and roughly parallel

US 61. The alternative continues north paralleling US 61 across SR 4, Prichard Road, and Arkabutla Dam Road before turning to the east just south of SR 304. The alternative crosses Kirby Road in a manner that roughly parallels SR 304, and the alternative continues to the east paralleling SR 304 across SR 3 and the railroad before turning north to cross SR 304 and join the Spur.

Central Alternative in Northern Section

Approximately four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line, the Central and Eastern alternatives proceed northeast on new location. Between the crossings of Crenshaw Road and Dubbs Road the Central Alternative leaves the Eastern Alternative to proceed north on a path that joins the Central Alternative with the Western Alternative prior to the crossing of Dubbs Road. The two alternatives remain concurrent to north of Prichard Road where the Central Alternative makes a turn to the east. After crossing SR 3 and the railroad, the Alternative turns to the north to join the Eastern Alternative prior to crossing Arkabutla Dam Road. The two alternatives remain concurrent crossing SR 304 and then joining the Spur at the northern limits of the study.

Eastern Alternative in Northern Section

The Eastern Alternative in the Northern Section is concurrent with the Central Alternative from four miles south of the Coahoma/Tunica County Line to south of Dubbs Road where the Alternative turns to the northeast. After proceeding northeast to cross Dubbs Road and Sarah Road, the Alternative turns to the north to cross SR 4 at Little Texas and then Beatline Road. After crossing Beatline Road, the alternative turns to the northeast crossing Prichard Road, SR 3, and the railroad before turning north to join the Central Alternative south of Arkabutla Dam Road. From south of Arkabutla Dam Road to the Spur, the Eastern Alternative is concurrent with the Central Alternative.

Viewing Displays and Project Handouts Provided at Meetings

Aerial photography mappings displays, which could be placed flat on tables for viewing at these meetings, were prepared for the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives in the Southern Section; the Central Alternative in the Central Section; and, the Western, Central, and Eastern Alternatives in the Northern Section. This resulted in seven viewing locations for the I-69 alternatives. It was expected that at some locations along the corridor there would be considerable public interest. Therefore, two mapping displays of the same alternative were provided at several of the displays areas. The aerial photography mapping identified property ownership, potential frontage road locations, interchange locations, connector roads to the existing highway system at the interchange locations, and other natural and human environmental information. This information was provided on the mapping displays to enable the public to identify the location of an alternative relative to their questions, comments, or concerns. At each of the seven viewing locations, a map was placed on an easel to identify the alternative displayed on the table.

The environmental and location study for the widening of SR 8 to four lanes in Bolivar County from Rosedale to Cleveland is included in this study. Two identical aerial photography mapping displays of the alternatives for accomplishing this widening were also available for public

viewing and comments. The Press Release for the meetings stated information on the widening alternatives of SR 8 to four-lanes would be available for viewing and discussion.

Other displays on easels included a project schedule, typical roadway section with frontage roads, and a list of the evaluation criteria for this Environmental Impact Statement under the headings of engineering issues, impact on the natural environment, impact on the human environment, and public opinion.

Each attendee was provided a packet containing the project brochure, a color coded map of the seven I-69 alternative corridors and connecting road needs that were presented at the meetings, and a comment form. A figure in the text is a copy of the color coded map of the seven I-69 alternative corridors and connecting road needs that was presented to the attendees at the meeting.

The minutes for these two meetings is contained in the **Appendix**.

Cleveland Meeting Registration, Discussion Items, and Comments

A total of 78 people registered their attendance at the meeting in Cleveland, and 13 comment forms were received from 12 of the attendees (one attendee submitted two comment forms). The following were the primary topics discussed at the Cleveland meeting.

- The history that led to the three alternative locations for crossing SR 1 south of Benoit.
- The probable elimination from further serious study of the alternative crossing of SR 1 just north of Benoit. The elimination is probable because the crossing is out of direction for connecting to the study alternatives east of SR 1 that pass south of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge.
- The probable elimination from further serious study of the far-west alternative between Benoit and the crossing of SR 444 in Bolivar County. The elimination is probable because it bisects the planned westward expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge to Mississippi River.
- The information provided at the seven aerial photography mapping display areas for the I-69 alternatives and the one aerial photography mapping display area for the alternatives to accomplish the widening of SR 8 to four lanes.
- Environmental constraints, engineering constraints, drainage ditches, and locations of changes in property ownership contributed to alternatives bisecting some farmland. When bisecting of farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave extremely large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative. The property retained by the owner after the I-69 right of way was acquired could then hopefully be large enough to farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would be an uneconomical remnant.
- To lessen the impacts on farmland access, grade separation bridges or interchanges are proposed on a maximum spacing of approximately two miles. In addition, frontage roads are proposed where economically feasible and practical.

There continued to be widespread support for the I-69 project at the meeting in Cleveland, and the initial response expressed by the attendees on the widening of SR 8 to four lanes was also very favorable. Opinions continue to differ as to whether it is best for I-69 to cross SR 8 west or east of Cleveland. The people supporting the SR 8 crossing east of Cleveland generally have Sunflower County interests or they have interests in farmland that is divided by the Western and

Central Alternatives, which cross SR 8 at the same location west of Cleveland. Most people with Bolivar County interests continue to support the crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland.

The following summarizes any revisions or modifications that were suggested in the 13 written comments received on the alternatives recommended for further study.

- One comment expressed support for the Western Alternative in the Northern Section and the Central Alternative in the Southern Section. That comment also contained suggestions for possible future connectors or connector improvements to I-69. He believed consideration should be given in future studies for the need of a connection to relocated US 82 near Greenville. He believed the potential for an upgraded SR 448 from I-69 southeast to US 49W at Indianola should be considered to provide a more direct route from Jackson, MS to Little Rock, AR. He believed a Spur might be eventually needed to address possible development and increased accessibility for the Commerce Landing resorts.
  RESPONSE: These requests were beyond the scope of this I-69 study. They may need to be reviewed more seriously in the future, but they are not critical at this time in determining a Preferred Alternative for this study.
- One comment was from a landowner whose family owned property adjoining US 61 to the east where the Eastern Alternative crosses and interchanges with US 61. If at all possible, he asked that the East Alternative, east of US 61, be moved to his family's south property line.
  RESPONSE: If the Eastern Alternative becomes the Preferred Alternative a slight adjustment in the Alternative can and will be made to lessen the impact to farmland at this location.

Clarksdale Meeting Registration, Discussion Items, and Comments

In Clarksdale, a total of 64 registered their attendance at the meeting, and seven comment forms were received from attendees or agencies represented at the meeting. The same format was followed at this meetings as the format that was used the previous evening in Cleveland.

There continued to be widespread overall support for the I-69 project at the meeting in Clarksdale. Because of the distance from Clarksdale to Cleveland and Rosedale, most of the attendees were not that interested in the widening of SR 8 to four lanes between Cleveland and Rosedale. However, they appeared to recognize the benefits the Mississippi Delta could achieve from widening that segment of SR 8 and they did not express any opposition to the project. Most of the people attending the meeting had either Coahoma or Tunica County interests, and they generally supported the alternatives in those two counties that are recommended for detail study in the Draft EIS.

The following summarizes any revisions or modifications that were suggested in the 7 written comments received on the alternatives recommended for further study.

- The person believed an interchange should be added to the Central Alternative near Duncan, and that the Merigold – Drew Road should be upgraded to the east to Drew for the Eastern Alternative. This person supported the Western Alternative in the Northern Section because it provides an interchange close to Robinsonville for casino traffic.
  RESPONSE: The requested interchange near Duncan for the Central Alternative was added. The request to add the upgrade of the Merigold – Drew Road for the Eastern

Alternative was not added because it was not required for the constructability of the Eastern Alternative and because of the additional cost it would add to the analysis of the Eastern Alternative. The Eastern Alternative provides access to Drew for northbound I-69 traffic via SR 8 East to US 49W North, and the Eastern Alternative provides access to Drew for southbound I-69 traffic via US 49 to US 49W.

- There were two comments from members of the same family whose farmland is located in the Southern Section between Litton Road and SR 448. They asked that consideration be given to moving the north tangent, used by the Western Alternative, farther south to a property line. This move would prevent bisecting their farmland. They also stated their belief that the south tangent between Litton Road and SR 448, used by the Central and Eastern Alternatives, provides better soil conditions for constructing a highway than the north tangent.
  RESPONSE: Based on future archaeological studies for the best locations to cross the Bogue Phalia and based on a review on the alignment for the section of the Western Alternative between Benoit and the Bogue Phalia, it was decided that moving the tangent to the property line provided an overall improvement for the human and natural environment. Therefore, the requested adjustment was made.

Non-Attendee Comments on Cleveland and Clarksdale Meetings

There were 33 written comments received from people who did not register as attendees at either of the public meetings held April 30-May 1, 2003. The following summarizes any revisions or modifications that were suggested in the 33 written comments received on the alternatives recommended for further study.

- Four comments were from the Aguzzi family, and their comments supported a crossing of SR 8 east of Cleveland. Another member of the Aguzzi family registered his attendance at the meeting in Cleveland, and his comments supporting the crossing of SR 8 east of Cleveland were previously provided in these minutes. The following were the reasons these four members of the Aguzzi family provided for also supporting a crossing of SR 8 east of Cleveland. The most productive farmland is on the west side; this is an agricultural community and it does not make sense to dissect the best yielding land. The crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland would traverse a large part of our property and require us to double our equipment headquarters, etc., and to have both sides of the interstate set up adequately for farm production; this would add a financial burden that would not be covered by land payments alone. There are more businesses on the east side of Cleveland to accommodate the interstate motorist. In terms of soil fertility, the land being utilized by the eastern route is much less rich. The routes, other than the eastern route, pass through key resting and feeding points for ducks. In Bolivar County, the Central/West Corridor passes through areas that are the most active in wildlife habitat management. The economic impact of all routes will be equally beneficial. Travelers will be enticed to the local communities equally no matter which route is selected. My family has been farming in the regions noted for the Central/West Corridor for many years, and I-69 will completely divide a lifetime of work.

  RESPONSE: The consultant team reviewed the Western and Central Corridor to determine if adjustments in the alignments were needed, representatives of the MDOT met with members on the Aguzzi Family during the week of May 19, 2003, and

representatives of the MDOT and the consultant team met with a Bolivar County delegation on June 20, 2003. met with members of the Aguzzi Family to discuss their concerns. The Aguzzi Family owns some property just south of Litton Road and several random large parcels of property between Litton Road and SR 8. The following became controls in the locations of the Western and Central Corridors in the Southern Section between the crossings of the Bogue Phalia and SR 8 west of Cleveland.

- Because of the possible southern expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) to Litton Road, the alternatives for crossing the Bogue Phalia must be south of Litton Road.
- Two locations for crossing the Bogue Phalia south of Litton Road were determined. Both of the crossing locations are between Litton Road and SR 448.
- The distances between Litton Road and the north crossing of the Bogue, the north crossing of the Bogue and the south crossing of the Bogue, and the south crossing of the Bogue and SR 448 are approximately equal.
- The West Alternative uses the north crossing of the Bogue and the Central and Eastern alternatives use the south crossing of the Bogue.
- After both crossings of the Bogue, a gradual curve to the north was required in order for the Western and Central Alternatives to interchange with Litton Road east of the Litton Chapel Methodist Church and cemetery and west of the Poplar Grove Church.
- The crossing of Litton Road between these two churches and the selected corridor for these two alternatives to proceed north was chosen for the following reasons.
    - There is a natural gas pipeline crossing of Litton Road just east of Poplar Grove Church.
    - East of the pipeline crossing the Shaw-Skene Road intersects Litton Road. The Shaw-Skene Road is a major north-south county road with some built-up of homes and farm headquarters located along both sides.
    - Although Litton Road would be relocated slightly at this interchange to provide a new connector to US 61, this is a good interchange location for the US 61 connector.
    - Continuing north of Litton Road on the gradual curve to the north allows the Western and Central alternatives to join their shared tangent prior to crossing Evans Road.
    - Yeager Road intersects Evans Road west of the point where the two alternatives join and continue north paralleling Yeager Road through the interchange location at SR 446.
    - The Yeager Road intersection with SR 446 would be just west of the western limits of this interchange.
    - Between the crossings of Litton Road and Yeager Road, major streams were kept to the outside of the corridors as much as possible, county roads were crossed an good angles as much as possible, grade separation bridges would be provided at some of the county road crossings, and frontage roads were provided at some locations and existing parallel county roads could be utilized at other locations to address bisected farmland.

- There is a crop dusting general aviation airport located in the southwest quadrant of Yeager Road intersection with Laughlin Road, which is one mile road north of SR 446.The SR 446 interchange location needed to be east of Yeager Road, near the western limits of Skene, and west of the Shaw-Skene Road to align with a crossing of Litton Road between Litton Methodist Chapel Church and Poplar Grove Church.

- With the Litton Road crossing and the SR 446 crossings as controls, the interchange crossing of SR 8 became the next control. The following items were taken into account in determining the recommended interchange location for SR 8 slightly east of the SR 8 intersection with the Shaw-Skene Road.
  - It needed to cross at a location near the western limits of Cleveland that would allow the Central and Western Alternatives to separate from their shared alignment north of the SR 8 interchange. The Central Alternative could then proceed northeast to join the new section of US 61 near Merigold, while the Western Alternative would proceed north on new location.
  - The county correctional facility, two natural gas pipeline substations, and some major drainage ditch crossings are located along SR 8 west of the Shaw-Skene Road intersection with SR 8.
  - The new water well and water tank for the Boyle-Skene Water Association, which is located to the west of the Shaw-Skene Road just south of the SR 8 intersection.
- The proposed crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland will accommodate an interchange and provides good opportunity for economic development around the interchange.
- Taking into account the acceptable crossings of the Bogue Phalia; the available corridor space at the Litton Road crossing for an interchange, the requirements for an interchange at SR 446 and SR 8; and the alignment standards required for an interstate highway; the consultant team studied other options for the alternatives.
- One of the other options considered by the consultant team would move the crossing of Litton Road west of the Litton community. This alternative created a sharp curve from the crossing of the Bogue Phalia to the crossing of Litton Road, continuing north the option would create an interchange at SR 8 where the Bolivar County Correctional Facility would be located in the northeast quadrant, a natural gas pipeline substation in the northwest quadrant, and the interchange would the bordered and constrained by major drainage ditches. A SR 8 interchange at this location would be farther west of Cleveland and less desirable from an economic development viewpoint for the City and Bolivar County. Although the alternative corridor would lessen or avoid the impacts to property owned by the Aguzzi Family, it would not be in the best overall interests to the human and natural environments to use this other corridor.
- Another option considered was to use the current corridor, but shift the corridor to the northeast after crossing SR 446. This would lessen the impact to the property the Aguzzi Family owns between SR 446 and SR 8. The shift created a crossing of Shaw-Skene Road farther south of the

current alternative. The shift would create more residential relocatees and create a less desirable interchange location for SR 8. This change in alternative alignment could not be recommended.

- ❖ As stated previously environmental constraints, engineering constraints, drainage ditches, and locations of changes in property ownership contributed to alternatives bisecting some farmland. When bisecting of farmland occurred, efforts were made to leave extremely large or very small tracts of land on each side of the alternative and provide reasonable access to the bisected property. The property retained by the owner after the I-69 right of way was acquired could then hopefully be large enough to farm or it would be so small that the remaining property would be an uneconomical remnant. This is the philosophy that was followed on locating these two alternatives between Litton Road and the crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland.

- One comment was from Mr. G.R. Harden and a map was attached to his letter. He wants the Western and Central Alternative moved west another couple of miles. Mr. Harden owns land north of the shared crossing of SR 8 used by the Western and Central Alternatives. After separating from the Western Alternative, the Central Alternative makes a turn to the northeast towards Merigold. After completing the turn, the Central Alternative goes through a portion of a new subdivision that Mr. Harden is developing. He advises the subdivision contains 19 lots and 9 two-acre lots that remain available. He also advises these lots sell for $30,000.00 (thirty thousand dollars), and that since the meeting in Cleveland on May 1, 2003, he has lost two sales. Mr. Harden does not anticipate being able to sell any of the remainder of the lots unless this can be resolved. The shared alignment, used by the Western and Central Alternatives between their crossing of SR 8 and their separation point north of SR 8, travels through farm acreage that is either owned by Mr. Harden or farmed by him, and takes out two of his houses. There are several other houses that do not belong to Mr. Harden that would be impacted. He expressed his opposition to the location of the Western and Central Alternatives in this area, and he advised that if the route could go west another couple of miles there would be much lesser negative impact on this portion of the county. RESPONSE: The consultant team considered this requested and determined it was in the best interest of the human and natural environment to make a slight adjustment in the Western and Central Alternatives just north of their shared crossing of SR 8 west of Cleveland. The resulting adjustment substantially reduced the number of relocatees and lessened the impact on Mr. Harden's property. Only one new relocate was created by making the requested adjustment. By making this adjustment, the Central Alternative now passes through farmland to the north of Mr. Harden's subdivision.
- One comment supported an alternative in the Southern Section that would proceed north from Benoit and pass west of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge before turning northeast to connect with US 61 just south of Winstonville. (This suggested alternative would pass through land that the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge is considering acquiring for a westward expansion of the refuge to the Mississippi River.) RESPONSE: Because this would create an alternative that would be located in the planned westward expansion of the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, the consultant team was unable to consider the request.
- One comment was from the County Engineer for Washington, Sharkey, and Issaquena Counties. His comment expressed opposition to the Great River Bridge being used for I-69. If the Great River Bridge is not built and if the US 82 Mississippi River Bridge is

used for I-69, he believes the people of the Delta would be better served and the construction costs would be less.
RESPONSE: Because the US 82 Greenville River Bridge is outside the limits of the SIU 11 Study for I-69, the consultant team was unable to consider this request.

Meeting on the I-69 access to the casinos at Robinsonville held at Noon on May 2, 2003

This luncheon meeting was requested by the Tunica County Chamber of Commerce on behalf of several of the casinos located in the Robinsonville area. The purposes of the meeting held at Sam's Town casino were to discuss the proposed interchange locations in the Robinsonville area for the alternatives recommended for further study in the Draft EIS, and the manner in which the connecting roads at the proposed interchange locations would provide access to the casinos at Robinsonville. The minutes for this meeting, attended by approximately 10 people, are contained in the Appendix.

Mr. Penn Owen, Jr., opened the meeting by asking everyone to introduce themselves, and Mr. Owen led the discussions on the following items.

- The casinos represented at the meeting want to make sure their traffic, especially from the Memphis area, is provided good access from I-69.
- The casinos representatives support the proposed Arkabutla Dam Road Interchange on the Western Alternative.
- The casinos representatives favor the Western Alternative over the Central and Eastern Alternative in the north part of Tunica County.
- The casinos representatives are concerned about the manner in which the Western Alternative joins the spur, which connects existing SR 304 with the new section of SR 304 that is under construction.
- The casinos representatives are concerned that the proposed Western Alternative will either require their customers from the north to travel west on existing SR 304 through an at-grade railroad crossing or their customers will be required to continue on I-69 south to the Kirby Road interchange to exit. After exiting to the north at the Kirby Road interchange, this traffic from the north would then have to turn left at existing SR 304 to proceed west.
- The casino representatives believe the existing at-grade railroad crossing on SR 304 would require them to direct their traffic to the Kirby Road Interchange. However, they believe the left turn required for their casino traffic at SR 304 after proceeding north from the Kirby Road Interchange is a substantial change in the existing traffic pattern, and this would make directional signing for their customers more difficult.

Mr. Owen asked why the alternative originally proposed by the county, which crossed existing SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3, was eliminated. He wanted to know if this alternative could be reconsidered or what other options were available to address these concerns.

During the course of Mr. Barnwell's and Mr. Shirley's discussion of the above mentioned items, the following noteworthy items were either discussed or decided.

- The county's original alternative crossed SR 304 between US 61 and SR 3 on a very severe angle. The angle of the crossing was unacceptable for providing an interchange at SR 304. Changing the angle of the crossing was also unacceptable because of the

curves in the I-69 alignment that would be required to connect with the spur to the north and the Western Alternative to the south.

- The proposed Eastern and Central Alternatives would relocate existing SR 304 west of the SR 304 interchange location shared by these two alternatives. The new section of SR 304 west of the interchange would be located to the north of SR 304, bridge over the railroad, possibly interchange with SR 3 and then rejoin the existing five-lane section of SR 304.
- The proposed interchange locations for the Western Alternative would remain at Arkabutla Dam Road, Kirby Road, and existing SR 304. However, SR 304 would be improved west of the interchange for the Western Alternate in a similar manner to that proposed at the interchange for the Eastern and Central Alternatives.

The casino representatives were satisfied that implementing the changes in the Western Alternative will adequately address their concerns.

Bolivar County Archaeological Finds, Adjustment in Alternatives made in June of 2003

Coastal Environments discovered ten archaeological sites impacted by alternatives in the southwest portion of Bolivar County. If possible, Coastal Environments recommended the alternatives be adjusted to avoid the sites. In response, Neel-Schaffer adjusted the alternatives to avoid or lessen the impacts on these sites. The adjustments performed by Neel-Schaffer on the alignments of the corridors did not impact unknown archaeological sites based on a follow-up survey conducted by Coastal Environments, and the adjustments made created improved alternatives from an archaeological viewpoint.

Special Cleveland – Bolivar County Meeting held at the MDOT Third District Office on June 20, 2003

The City of Cleveland and Bolivar County requested this meeting to better understand how to address the complaints they were receiving from landowners about the impacts the Western and Central Alternatives would have on their property between Litton Road and SR 8 west of Cleveland.

The people representing the City of Cleveland and/or Bolivar County, the MDOT, and the consultant team are identified in the meeting minutes contained in the Appendix.

Welcome and Opening Comments

Mr. Walter Lyons welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited the Cleveland Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce representatives for their comments.

Mr. Scot Luth advised their group is routinely being asked why the Western and Central Alternatives divides so much farmland between Litton Road and the SR 8 interchange location west of Cleveland, which these two alternatives share. He stated they do not know how to answer this question and that he hoped they could obtain some information today to assist them in better answering the question.

Explanation for Location of Western and Central Alternative in Question

The MDOT and the consultant team decided that Mr. Jimmy Shirley should address the question. There were tables in front of the chairs where the attendees were sitting. This sitting arrangement allowed the mapping displays of the Western and Central Alternatives between Benoit and Clarksdale to be placed flat on the tables in front of the attendees. By placing two sets of mapping on the tables, all the attendees were able to view the mapping as Mr. Shirley discussed the environmental and engineering factors that led to the recommended locations for the Western and Central Alternatives between Litton Road and the proposed SR 8 interchange location west of Cleveland.

The explanations provided by Mr. Shirley are in the meeting minutes contained in the Appendix. Those explanation as well as other explanations for the location of the Central and Western Alternatives in this relatively narrow corridor are also contained in this document under the RESPONSE to the comment sheets submitted by the Aguzzi Family after the Third Series of Public Meetings held on April 30 and May 1, 2003.

Questions, Comments, and Closing

After providing the explanation for the location of the Western and Central Alternatives between Litton Road and SR 8, Mr. Walker and Mr. Shirley addressed some general questions concerning the impacts on the natural and human environment that could be caused by making changes in the alternatives between the existing controls on Litton Road, SR 446, and SR 8. Several attendees, representing Bolivar County interests, advised they understood these constraints. However, they were not sure how well they could relay this information and address future questions on this issue. The possibility of having a meeting in the future with people impacted by the current alternatives was discussed. The Bolivar County representatives expressed their appreciation for having the meeting, and advised they better understood the constraints that existed for the Western and Central Alternatives between Litton Road and SR 8 west of Cleveland.

Status of Alternative Development Decisions Made by July of 2003

The following provides the status of the study of the alternatives as of July 2003.

- The concept of studying three alternatives in the Southern Section from Benoit to Clarksdale, one alternative in the Middle Section from Clarksdale to the north part of Coahoma County, and three alternatives in the Northern Section from the north part of Coahoma County to east of Robinsonville was finalized.
- The designation of the Central Alternative in the Northern Section was changed to overlap the Eastern Alternative in the south part of Tunica County and overlap the Western Alternative from near Dubbs Road to the northern end of the project. Refer to the map shown on Figure 2-3 for clarification.
- The connecting road and interchange concept that would be studied for these alternatives was nearly finalized.
- Most of the proposed interchanges are at U.S. highways, state routes, or major county roads. Maintenance of traffic and minimal disruption to the traffic on these crossing routes during the construction of the interchanges are important factors to consider. For these reasons, in most instances the decision was made to bridge the interstate over

these intersecting routes at interchange locations. A decision was needed to develop the plan profile grades for comparing the costs of alternatives.

- The grade separation bridge locations were finalized for crossing county roads. Grade separations were provided at most county roads, and in most instances the county roads were taken over the interstate. This approach meant only one bridge would be needed instead of the two bridges that would be required if the interstate was taken over the county roads.
- The alignments for the alternatives were developed to such a degree that only minor adjustments would be expected in the future based on the ongoing archaeological study.
- The noise and relocation studies were completed based on the finalized alignments.
- The frontage road concepts for all the alternatives were finalized.
- For new location alternatives, the alternatives followed and paralleled the county roads when possible. Recognizing the concept of taking most county roads over the interstate, the alternatives had to be kept a sufficient distance away from paralleling county roads to allow the county road to be bridged over the interstate. In most instances this minimum distance from the county road to the alternative was 750 to 1000 feet. Such distances provided enough distance to take a county road over the interstate without impacting that county road's intersection with another nearby county road. By keeping alternatives a minimum of 700 to 1000 feet away from the parallel county roads, the belief was that the remaining farmland divided by alternatives would not become an uneconomical remnant of property for the landowner.
- For new location alternatives, efforts were made to have alternatives cross county roads and major drainage ditches at good angles. When farmland was involved, efforts were also made to roughly parallel major drainage ditches because they tend to naturally divide farming operations.
- When new location alternatives were proceeding east to west or north to south, efforts were made to follow section lines and property lines as much as possible to eliminate the need for providing frontage roads.
- Based on the property ownership record search, the county road bridges and interchanges are located no farther apart than two miles when large individual parcels of property are divided by a new location alternative.
- A combination of parallel county roads and added frontage roads, when economically feasible and practical, was used in conjunction with the grade separation bridges and interchanges as the means of providing access to large parcels of property divided by alternatives.
- For the new location alternatives, there were human and natural environmental opportunities and constraints. There were also engineering opportunities and constraint encountered in developing the new location alternatives. Regrettably, some farmland was divided by alternatives. When this happened, the project team tried to divide the farmland in a way that did not create uneconomical remnants of property and provided reasonable access to the divided farmland.
- The frontage road concept for the new location alternatives was needed to prepare the cost estimate for the alternatives.
- For alternatives using US 61, the existing southbound lanes of US 61 would be converted to a two-lane, two-way frontage road from Merigold to the north part of Shelby in Bolivar County and from Hushpuckena in Bolivar County to the Bolivar/Coahoma County Line. From the Swan Lake/Clarksdale Airport area in

Coahoma County to the Dundee area in Tunica County, the existing northbound lanes of US 61 would be converted to a two-lane, two-way frontage road. This was used as a means to maintain traffic with minimal disruption on US 61 during the construction of I-69 for these alternatives. Should an incident occur requiring the closure of the northbound and/or southbound lanes of the interstate, this frontage road concept provides a means of detouring US 61 traffic over the frontage roads and sections of US 61 not utilized between Merigold and Dundee. The concept of utilizing one of the existing lanes of US 61 for a frontage road addresses access needs on one side of the interstate, and also provides a two-lane road for economic development. The access needs for the other side of alternatives that use US 61 was addressed in a similar manner to that of the new location alternatives.

- The frontage road concept for alternatives using US 61 was needed to prepare the cost estimate for the alternatives.

Eastern Alternative Interchange and Connection to US 61 near Merigold Consultant Team Request Addressed by MDOT on September 24, 2003

The Western and Central alternatives, in the Southern Section slightly north of Shaw, include a new four-lane connector from US 61 to the Litton Road Interchange. North of Cleveland, the Central Alternative has an interchange near Merigold and the four-lane crossroad at that interchange provides a Central Alternative connection to the four-lane section of US 61 between Cleveland and Merigold. The Central Alternative therefore provides a four-lane bypass of Cleveland.

Between Merigold in Bolivar County and Clarksdale in Coahoma County, the Western Alternative is located from approximately two to five miles west of US 61. Over this approximate length of 26 miles between Merigold and Clarksdale, the Western Alternative bypasses to the west the municipalities of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, and Duncan in Bolivar County. Each of these municipalities are located along the US 61 corridor, and interchanges are proposed on the Western Alternative to provide direct access to Merigold, Mound Bayou, Shelby, and Duncan.

Between Merigold and Clarksdale, the Central Alternative uses the US 61 corridor and interchanges are proposed for Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, Duncan, and Alligator.

Between Merigold and Clarksdale, the Eastern Alternative is located from four to seven miles east of US 61. Interchanges are proposed east of Merigold, east of Shelby, west of the Roundaway community in Coahoma County, and east of the Bobo community in Coahoma County.

It is important for the north Bolivar County municipalities of Merigold, Mound Bayou, Winstonville, Shelby, and Alligator to have good access to all I-69 alternatives. The Western and Central alternatives provide these municipalities good access. For the Eastern Alternative to address these municipalities' access needs in a comparable manner to the other two alternatives, it was decided the Eastern Alternative should include the cost of a new four-lane connector from the Merigold-Drew Road Interchange west to US 61 south of Merigold, and the cost of an interchange at US 61. The northbound traffic on the Eastern Alternative desiring to access these US 61 municipalities would then have a four-lane route from the Merigold-Drew Interchange to

Clarksdale. The Eastern Alternative would then also provide southbound traffic US 61 traffic an eastern bypass of Cleveland in a similar manner to the way the Western and Central alternatives provide northbound US 61 traffic a western bypass of Cleveland.

To fairly compare the costs of the three alternatives, for the Eastern Alternative the consultant team will consider the cost of providing the additional interchange on US 61 near Merigold and the cost of providing a four-lane connector from the added US 61 interchange to the interchange at Merigold-Drew Road.

Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement submitted to MDOT for review on November 10, 2003

MDOT and FHWA Comments on Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement finalized on March 29, 2004

Benoit School District Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Hawley's Letter dated February 11, 2004

Based on the meetings held in Dr. Hawley's Office at Ray Brooks School during the 2003 Calendar Year, the project team had requested the Benoit School District to provide a position statement on the SR 1 crossing alternatives undergoing study south of Benoit.

The letter from Dr. Hawley stated, "Please accept this letter as an endorsement for the I-69 Section near Benoit School District/Ray Brooks School to cross in the curve just south of the school. This route is north of the one that would cross Lake Bolivar and would take it across our 16th Section Land. We feel this would be the most beneficial to the Town of Benoit and Benoit School District. It would lie in close proximity to Benoit and any development would impact this small town and our school district. We look forward to this project moving ahead."

Native American Conference held at the Grand Casino – Tunica Resort on February 11-13, 2004

In accordance with the formal consultation process described in 36 CFR 800, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) hosted this Native American Conference. For Sections of Independent Utility (SIU) # 9 and #11 of the proposed Interstate 69 (I-69), alternatives have been selected for detail engineering and environmental studies, and a Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statements has been prepared for both SIUs. The conference was directed towards the Native American tribal representatives who could possibly identify properties of importance to Native Americans, as well as properties to which one or more tribes may attach religious or cultural significance, relative to the alternatives undergoing further study. The Mississippi Division Office of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), and Tennessee Division Office of the FHWA concurred in the MDOT scheduling and hosting this conference. To provide a good cross section of representation at the conference for issues involving the natural and human environments, some Federal and State Cooperating Agencies were invited to send representation to the conference.

The attendees represented the MDOT, TDOT, Mississippi and Tennessee Division Offices of the FHWA, the consultant teams for SIU 9 and SIU 11, three Native American tribes, Mississippi State University, and some of the SIU 11 Cooperating Agencies. The three Native American

tribes represented at the First Session were: the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians; the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma; and the Chickasaw Nation. Bad weather conditions prevented the representative from the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma from attending the First Session. SIU 11 Cooperating Agencies represented at the First Session included: the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. The SIU 9 consultant team representatives at the First Session were from PBS&J, while the SIU 11 consultant team representatives were from Neel-Schaffer, Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., and Coastal Environments, Inc. Excluding the 22 representatives from the MDOT, TDOT, FHWA, and consultant teams, 13 people attended the First Session. The minutes for the meeting are contained in the **Appendix**.

The main concern expressed by the Native Americans at the Conference and on the field visit was the area adjacent to US 61 in the vicinity of the US 49 intersection at Lula. It was agreed at the Conference that the consultant team would review and refine the alternatives, if necessary, near this intersection. It was also agreed the consultant team would provide the Native Americans with a copy of the alternative mapping for the alternatives undergoing study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

During this meeting, representatives from Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provided MDOT with a draft report on EPA's preliminary evaluation of alternatives. The EPA document screened the preliminary alternatives based on environmental impacts, using GIS data, and identified alternatives that appeared to have the fewest environmental impacts overall. The assessment did not consider archaeological impacts since that information was not available at the time. It appeared that MDOT's evaluation of alternatives was consistent with EPA's, considering that the alternatives and data had been refined during MDOT's evaluation. In general, the alternatives ranked lowest by the EPA had been eliminated, and those ranked highest had been retained.

MDOT and FHWA Comments on Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement finalized on March 29, 2004

Tunica, Coahoma, and Bolivar counties Archaeological Finds, Adjustment in Alternative made in April of 2004

Coastal Environments discovered 43 previously unrecorded archaeological sites impacted by alternatives in portions of these three counties, and recommended 15 of these for avoidance, if possible. The adjustments that Neel-Schaffer made avoided most of the 15 sites. As part of the adjustments, Neel-Schaffer refined the alternatives near the US 61 intersection with US 49 at Lula to address the concerns expressed by the Native Americans at the Conference on February 11-13, 2004.

Appendix I
2002 Economic Report

Stimulating Economic Development
I 69 Alternative Alignments
State of Mississippi

Introduction

The objective of this assignment is formulation of a screening analysis of the three alignments options in the Mississippi portion of the proposed I 69 corridor. The focus of this research and conclusions is a highly generalized rather than a detailed impact study.

Public hearings and other discussion have impressed MDOT and its consultants with the considerable local interest in an alignment for I 69. Facilitating economic development – job creation and new investment – in the four counties (Bolivar, Coahoma, Sunflower, and Tunica) of the Mississippi Delta through which the route may pass is a significant concern.

Our activity has centered upon research to be able to render a judgement supporting the elimination of those options, or segments, currently under consideration which have the least opportunity for economic development stimulus. To accomplish this we defined a list of factors needed to support new economic activity. They included:

- Proximity to population centers
- Proximity to existing industrial parks and major employers
- Proximity to river ports
- Proximity to airports
- Proximity to tourist development opportunities
- Avoidance of national register historic sites
- Avoidance of surface impoundment sites
- Avoidance of recreation facilities
- Avoidance of environmental concerns

- Avoidance of schools, health centers, and hospitals
- Supportive of state, regional and local economic development policies

The list of factors was reviewed with Neel-Schaffer and various state and federal data sources. In addition, we conducted field research in each of the counties in the corridor to identify local concerns and gather information that would allow us to evaluate each county's three alignment options provided to us by the engineers.

Background information about the corridor counties was assembled in order to provide the context for the conclusions of the investigation. Population, employment, income, and other factors and their change over the last two decades were reviewed.

The process was started in Jackson with meetings with Neel-Schaffer personnel and representatives of MDOT. In addition, work sessions were held with staff of the Mississippi Development Authority, Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, University Research Center. Those discussions permitted identification of data resources and also suggestions of people at the state and local level whom it would be important to meet in addition to the expected county contacts.

In succeeding sections of this report we describe background, our methodology, list interviewees, interview summaries, other supporting material.
and findings and conclusions of the analysis.

Section One: Economic And Demographic Profile
I-69 Corridor

The planned route of I-69 is through three or four Delta counties in northwest Mississippi. For the most part, this area is rural. Agriculture dominates the land area.

Population and Housing

Urban centers are few. There are only three towns located within the four county area with populations exceeding 10,000 persons. The largest of these is Clarksdale with a 2000 census population count of 20,645. Cleveland (13,841 persons) and Indianola (12,066 persons) are the other incorporated areas with significant concentrations of population. Most housing (approximately three-quarters) in the region is single family, detached.

Population and household gains have been modest over the past decade. Resident population of the four county area increased by a miniscule .2 of one percent. Total population in 2000 was estimated at 114,851 by the US Bureau of Census. This small gain in population was a significant improvement over the 40 year period,1960 – 2000, which witnessed the four county region lose over 29 percent of its resident population. In 2000, approximately 30 percent of the area population was white. At the same time, almost 49 percent of the population was male, and the median age of the resident population was 30 years of age.

Household (occupied housing units) gains were somewhat higher than population gain. This reflects a national trend of an increasing number of individuals, both young and old, living independently. Household growth in the Delta region increased by 3.4 percent in the last decade. This rate of growth was about one-fourth the rate of the state household gain. See Table 1, Exhibits 1 and 2 at the end of this section. Over 59 percent of area housing was owner occupied. The overall vacancy rate among residential units stood at just under nine percent.

Employment

The economy of the area remains closely linked to agriculture. Over 12 percent of agricultural employment in the state is located in the four county region, while only four percent of the total state population resides here.

The employment profile in the region has been altered dramatically by the advent of the gaming industry in Tunica County. Total employment in the area has increased by 41 percent since 1990 (See Table 1, Exhibit 4). Over 96 percent of that increase is attributable to employment gains in Tunica County. It should be

pointed out majority of those employed in the gaming industry live outside Tunica County, and most employees come from outside the four county region.

The retail-service environment is limited, as is the industrial base. Only 13.3 percent of employment in the region is categorized as manufacturing as compared with nearly 19 percent statewide.

Detailed employment data, by major sector, for the four county region is presented in Table 2, at the end of this section. This table graphically illustrates the transformation of the job base in the region in the past decade. If Tunica County is omitted from the analysis, net job gains in the three remaining counties amounted to only new 500 jobs over an 11-year period. Total employment in Tunica County increased from just under 1,900 jobs in 1990 to 16,140 jobs in 2001. The great preponderance of the growth is reflected in the services sector, within which most jobs in the gaming industry are categorized. Services employment in Tunica County grew from 330 jobs in 1990 to over 13,700 jobs in 2001. As previously mentioned, the majority of these job holders actually live outside the four county analysis area.

Unemployment stood at seven percent in October of 2001, as compared with 5.3 percent for the state. The highest rate of unemployment was recorded in Sunflower County – at 11percent. Sunflower County has lost over 1,700 manufacturing jobs during the analysis period. This is a significant loss to a county with an employment base of less than 11,000 jobs.

Income

Per capita income for counties in the Delta counties was lower than the statewide average. The exception being Tunica County, which was within 2.5 percent of the state average ($20,686). The four county average per capita income of $16,892 was over 18 percent lower than the state. The Delta region average per capita income level remained relatively unchanged when compared with the state average over the past decade, in spite of the substantial increase in Tunica County income.

Public Services

Public water is provided throughout most of the area, public sewage treatment is scattered and generally limited to incorporated areas. There is one four-year college in the area - Delta State University; and two community colleges – Coahoma Community College and Mississippi Delta Community College.

Summary

These four Delta counties are part of a larger, multi-state region that has not kept pace with the rest of the nation or the south in economic development.

Consequently, other social indicators of progress lag behind the region and the nation as a whole. Much has been written of the plight of the Delta and numerous studies document various facets of the challenge to bring its residents into the mainstream of current economic opportunity.

This report is a small element in the larger process of attention to the Delta region.

Section Two: Rural Highway Development Literature Search

A search was conducted of the literature dealing with rural highway investment in the United States. It revealed that a great deal of investigation has been undertaken on the subject. One of the most informative sources was a document entitled: *Highway Investment and Rural Economic Development: An Annotated Bibliography*. This work, written in 1999 by Dennis M. Brown of the Food and Rural Economics Division, Economics Research Service, US Department of Agriculture, was drawn upon extensively as we refined the study effort.

The publication cites numerous studies, most of which were conducted in the last 20 years. The general emphasis of the research was on studies that dealt with rural areas, however, some studies focused on urban areas, if there were issues that had relevance to non-metropolitan area.

In his introduction, Mr. Brown cites many benefits relating to development of highways in non-metropolitan areas. Some of these benefits in new highway development include:

- improved access to services and jobs for rural residents,
- better access to customers for businesses,
- reduction in travel time for motorists,
- lower vehicle operating costs,
- cost savings for local consumers as goods and services become more competitively priced, and
- if improved highways lead to growth in the local economic base, it may produce higher wages for workers and greater income for local businesses.

Some potential negatives exist, as well. New highway investment could divert economic activity from an already existing road network within the region. The proliferation of sprawl in a previously undeveloped rural area can be a significant negative influence. Highway maintenance costs can also be a burden on localities that have too many roads and too few people to pay for their upkeep. Mr. Brown concludes that effective highway investment requires both good foresight and planning.

Citations of studies deemed to have most relevance to the I-69 experience are listed below:

1. Carlino, Gerald A., and Edwin S. Mills. 1987, "The Determinants of County Growth," *Journal of Regional Science*, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 39-54.

Concludes that the interstate highway program contributed to a redistribution of population and employment in the US, although that was not the original intent of the program.

2. Hilewick, Carol L., Edward Deak, and Edward Heinze. 1980. "A simulation of Communications and Transportation Investments," *Growth and Change*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp.26-38.

   Employment and income are positively related to the presence of highways, but the strength of the relationship is weaker for rural than urban areas.

3. Blair, John P., and Robert Premus. 1987. "Major Factors in Industrial Location: A Review," *Economic Development Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 72-85.

   While traditional location factors, including transportation, are still important determinants in industrial location decisions, evidence from the 1980's indicate the importance of new factors, such as tax rates, education, and labor skills.

4. Frokenbrock, David J., and Norman S.J. Foster. 1996. "Highways and Business Location Decisions," *Economic Development Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 3, pp. 239-48.

   State-level highway investment policies that emphasize proper maintenance and relatively minor improvements are likely to be more cost-effective strategies for economic development than expensive highway construction projects.

5. Harris, Curtis C. 1980. "New Developments and Extensions of the Multiregional, Multi-Industry Forecasting Model," *Journal of Regional Science*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp.159-71.

   Employment growth and income growth are positively related to highway access, but the relationship is much weaker for non-metro areas. Distance to a metro or larger urban area is a much greater determinant of non-metro growth than the presence of highways.

6. Briggs, Ronald. 1980. *The Impact of Interstate Highway System on Non-Metropolitan Growth*. US Department of Transportation, Office of University Research.

   Use of national data on net migration and employment change, finds that the presence of an interstate highway leads to the channeling of non

metro development along interstate corridors, resulting in only minor economic benefits.

7. Stephanedes, Yorgos J., and David M. Eagle. 1986a. "Highway Expenditures and Non-Metropolitan Employment," *Journal of Advanced Transportation*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 43-61

   Highway induced economic stimulation is strongest in areas with some degree of prior urbanization.

8. Moon, Henry E., Jr. 1987. "Interstate Highway Interchanges Reshape Rural Communities," *Rural Development Perspectives*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 35-38.

   Analyzes five factors, thought to contribute to development along a rural interstate in Kentucky, and two factors believed to detract from development. Factors most important in explaining the level of development around an interchange were: 1.) the existence of previous development, 2.) regional location of the interchange, 3.) distance to nearest interchange, 4.) traffic volume, 5.) distance to nearest city (proximity to a city encourages development). Negative factors: 1.) prohibition of sale of alcohol, and 2.) unfavorable topography (developers prefer flatter terrain).

9. Rephann Terence J., and Andrew M. Isserman. 1994. "New Highways as Economic Development Tools: An Evaluation Using Quasi-Experimental Matching Methods," *Regional Science and Urban Economic*, Vol. 24, No. 6, pp.723-51.

   Economic growth of counties with interstate highways is greatest for those close to large cities or those with some degree of prior urbanization. "Interstate counties" that are isolated or rural have few benefits.

10. Eagle, David, and Yorgos J. Stephanedes. 1987. "Dynamic Highway Impacts on Economic Development," Transportation Research Record, No. 1116, pp. 56-62.

    Increases in highway expenditures do not generally lead to employment increases other than temporary gains in the year of construction in most cases, although expenditures do have a positive long-term effect in important, "regional center" counties.

Several general conclusions were gleaned from the vast amount of research done on the subject of rural highway investment:

- Rural counties in close proximity to metro areas and those with some degree of prior degree of urbanization, benefit economically, at least, in the short term, by new highways, especially interstates.

- Highway investment can also entail costs for rural areas if new investment diverts economic activity from an already existing road within the region.

- Highway construction expenditures benefit rural employment in the manufacturing and retail sectors with effects strongest in the short term (during period of highway construction), but had little or no effect on rural employment over the long term.

- Little consensus exists about how highways affect rural areas over the long term. Some studies argue that highways merely redistribute development potential from other areas.

- Accurately measuring the economic effects of highway investment is difficult because of the problems of isolating highway effects from the larger processes associated with regional economic growth.

Section Three: Delta Area Interviews

A series of interviews were held with key public and private economic development officials in four Mississippi Delta counties (Bolivar, Coahoma, Sunflower, and Tunica). In addition, interviews were conducted with the Delta initiative officer of the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development and the co-chairman and executive director of the Delta Regional Authority.

The purpose of these interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing economic development in the counties most directly impacted by I 69 construction. Very specific detail was requested of appropriate parties in each county. Data collected and verified during this process was subsequently plotted on maps of the study area. These base maps, accompanying overlays and illustrative tables would form a basis for our analysis of the three alternate routes of I-69.

Among the data requested during the interview process were: the name, location and number of employees at major industries; the location of industrial parks, airports, rail lines, river ports, shopping centers, and major residential developments in each county.

Facts relating to planned projects, public and private, were explored with local officials. Availability of vocational training facilities and community colleges, with programs aimed at preparing workers to become a part of the county work force was ascertained.

Information regarding the location of tourist destinations, including gaming establishments and historical sites, was sought. Data concerning the location of environmentally sensitive areas such as, high quality agricultural land and wetlands were also generated.

Representatives of the local communities, as well as, officials from state and federal agencies provided information regarding various social and economic development programs that were available to counties of the Delta region.

The following paragraphs summarize results of the interviews that were conducted, March 18 –20, 2002. Interviews of HUD and the Delta Regional Authority representatives precede individual county findings.

Department of Housing and Urban Development: Ben Davis, Special Programs Officer, Delta Initiatives

Millions of dollars of federal money have been funneled into the Delta to assist local governments in providing more affordable housing and to aid in the construction of badly needed infrastructure improvements.

Challenges to economic development and new highway construction were outlined from HUD's perspective.

In Tunica County, affordable housing was a primary issue. Because a great deal of the land is held in large tracts by a few land holders, difficulty was anticipated in developing a substantial number of affordable housing units in the near term.

Agriculture remains the driving force in the economies of these Delta counties. Another key element is welfare or transfer payments. A significant source of employment the prison industry, both county prisons and the state prison at Parchman. Tunica County has a large work force employed in the gaming industry, but many of these employees come from Desoto County and Memphis.

There are approximately 20 government agencies currently working in the Delta now. A higher level of coordination among these agencies would allow a higher level of service to the communities.

Delta Regional Authority: Pete Johnson, Co-Chairman; Hayes Dent, Executive Director.

In 1988 the governors of Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana met in order to formulate a plan to rejuvenate the economy of the Delta region. The creation of the Delta Regional Authority, patterned after the Appalachian Regional Commission, is the third iteration of that plan. It is the first plan that places a presidential appointee in the region.

Pete Johnson, whose office is in Clarksdale, is one of the two appointees. The Delta Regional Authority encompasses counties in portions of eight states. A representative from each of the eight states is responsible for submitting an economic development plan for its designated counties to the Authority. A coordinated strategic economic plan will be drafted from these submissions.

The focus of the plan will be economic development, health care, housing, education, transportation, and tax incentives. The primary question that has been presented to Authority staff is, how best to reverse the outlook for the region's economic future.

A concept that is being explored by Authority staff is that of "clustering". The concept involves concentrating public and private investment in key areas or clusters. This rationale holds that an economy of scale will be generated by concentrating development in a few strategic nodes, as opposed to dispersing scarce resources throughout the area.

A second benefit - synergy - comes in to play, as well. That is the notion that suggests that development generates additional development, in close proximity. This effect is similar to the clustering or concentration of additional merchants in the vicinity of a shopping mall.

Transportation planning will assume great importance should this concept of clustering form a key part of the Authority's overall economic development strategy. The interchanges along I-69 would be obvious candidate areas for economic clustering.

Tunica County: Ken Murphree, Tunica County Administrator; Lyn Arnold, Executive Director, Tunica County Chamber of Commerce; Webster Franklin, Tourism Director, Tunica County Chamber of Commerce.

County Overview: Tunica County is the beneficiary of funds from taxes imposed on the gaming industry. Improvements to the county infrastructure are gradually transforming this once poor, rural county to a suburb of Memphis. Tax money has been utilized to greatly improve public school facilities. Resulting improvement in academic attainment has yet to occur.

Local tourism professionals estimate that some 10 to 12 million patrons visit the casinos in Tunica County each year. Tourists here spend an average 2.2 nights per visit in area hotels. Transient lodging occupancy in Tunica County is high at approximately 88 percent.

Most new residential activity is occurring in the city of Tunica and to the north. There is a limited amount of commercial activity; it is mostly located along US 61. The county is currently working on a land use plan.

Public water is available throughout the county. Sewer is provided west of US Highway 61 (casino area). There is neither hospital nor community college in the county, as yet. Massive improvement of the existing airport is underway. Eventually, the renovated facility will have a 7,000-foot runway, a new terminal building with three passenger gates. Scheduled flights are anticipated by 2005.

A recreation facility, to be called Tunica River Park, is to be opened in approximately one year. The $22 million park will feature a paddleboat, docking facility, 40,000 square foot interactive center, and nature trails. The Mhoon Landing area (former casino location) is likely to be converted to a commercial port.

Industrial Infrastructure: There is one industrial park located in Tunica County. The 74-acre Tunica Industrial Park is situated in the US 61 corridor, south of the city. All utilities are present on site. Plans call for a 2,000-acre industrial park to be built in close proximity to and east of the airport. A rail spur is to be constructed from this area to the main line of the Illinois Central (IC) on the east side of the county. A second industrial concentration may be developed in the vicinity of the intersection of MS Highway 3 and the new MS Highway 304.

Major Industrial Employers: There are few major private employers in the county outside the gaming industry. Pillowtex (320 employees), Pride of the Pond (121 employees) and Drexel Chemical Company (60 employees) are among the largest. Industry in Tunica County is currently located along the US 61 corridor.

Routing of I-69: Local officials indicated that the preferred route of I-69 in Tunica County would be on a new roadway east of the airport and west of MS Highway 3.

The new interstate highway would serve as the transportation linchpin linking the new airport, industrial area, and rail spur to the IC main line. South of the city, there is only muted opinion that the highway should remain on new roadway to the Coahoma County boundary. The primary reason given for utilizing the new road system and not returning to the US 61 corridor south of Tunica is so as not to disturb the few businesses currently located along this route.

Coahoma County: Ron Hudson, Executive Director, Clarksdale Coahoma County Chamber of Commerce & Industrial Foundation; Hugh Jack Stubbs, Coahoma County Administrator.

County Overview: Clarksdale, the county seat of Coahoma County, is a small regional center for commerce, medicine, and education. The 194-bed Northwest Mississippi Regional Center is located in Clarksdale. Approximately 50 physicians are on staff at this medical facility. The Coahoma Community College is situated just northwest of Clarksdale. Its Skill/Tech Center occupies space in the Sunbelt Industrial Park. The community college provides industry with no cost training programs for prospective employees.

Major retail development is limited. A Wal-Mart/Kroger-anchored shopping center has been developed near the intersection of US 61 and MS Highway 322 on the city's south side. A circuitous short line railroad is being utilized to provide industry in the county with a connection to IC mainline rail service in Swan Lake. The county's general aviation airport is located just northeast of Clarksdale. The airport has a 5,400-foot runway.

A tourist welcome center is planned at the intersection of US 49 and US 61, near the Lula community. Coahoma County's sole casino, the Isle of Capri, is situated nearby on US 49 just east of the Mississippi River. The US 49 river-crossing into Arkansas is currently the only river crossing between Memphis and Greenville.

Most residential development is to the north and west in the vicinity of Friar's Point Road.

Industrial Infrastructure: The county has two major industrial parks: the 160-acre Leonard Pharr Industrial Park, which is located west of the city on MS Highway 322. This park has only two acres of remaining land to be developed. Some existing buildings are available in this park. The larger (285-acre) Sunbelt Industrial Park is located on US 49 near its intersection with US 61 By-Pass. Industry flanks both sides of US 49 adjacent to the Sunbelt Industrial Park. This corridor is the heaviest concentration of manufacturing and distribution businesses observed in the four county analysis area. The area in the vicinity of Sunbelt Industrial Park will be the focal point of future industrial development. Strohm Manufacturing, Metso, Jim Dandy, a major beer distributor, and an electrical generation plant have all located in this corridor.

Major industrial Employers: Cooper Tire & Rubber Company, located at the intersection of old US 61 and MS Highway 6, is the county's largest industrial employer with a work force of 250. Other major employers include: Waterfield, Inc. (140 employees), Delta Wire Corporation (108 employees), KBH Corporation (110 employees), Metso (Svedala Industries, 95 employees), Strohm Manufacturing Company (83 employees).

Routing of I-69: Strong sentiment exists for I-69 to be routed along the existing US 61/US 61 By-Pass corridor in Coahoma County. This route would provide convenient access to the county's airport, primary industrial concentration, and growing retail node. In addition, it is believed that fewer environmental problems would be encountered along this route than on the either of new highway routes to the east or west side of the county.

Bolivar County: Scott Luth, Executive Director, Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce; David Work, Port Director, Port of Rosedale; Wanda Ray, Bolivar County Administrator.

County Overview: Bolivar County is the only county in the four-county analysis area with a public port. The port of Rosedale is currently the only public port along the Mississippi River between Memphis and Greenville. Furthermore, it is the only port in the state of Mississippi located within a federal empowerment zone.

The port features a "T" dock, 150-ton crane, and more than 1,200 acres of developable land in close proximity. Three private companies maintain port facilities on adjacent sites. The proposed I-69 Mississippi River crossing will span the river at a site south of the port in Bolivar County.

The county's primary general aviation airport is located on Cleveland's west side. Delta State University, which offers degrees in commercial aviation, utilizes the facilities at the nearby Cleveland Airport.

New, high quality residential development is also being built in the area west and northwest of Cleveland and near the university and airport. Primary commercial concentrations in the county are located in the downtown Cleveland; along US 61; and State Route 8, west of town.

Bolivar County has the only four-year college in the analysis area, Delta State University. The 4,000-student university is renowned for its school of education. Bolivar County operates Voc-Tech Centers in both Cleveland and Rosedale.

The 165-bed Bolivar County Medical Center in Cleveland provides a high level of care for the citizens of the county. The Delta Health Care Center in Mound Bayou provides primary health care for its constituents. The municipalities in the county provide public water. The county is one of several in the state of Mississippi that has two county seats – Rosedale and Cleveland.

Industrial Infrastructure: There are four industrial parks in Bolivar County. Two of the parks are located in Rosedale. One is actually a part of the port complex. This park contains over 1,200 acres; approximately 1,100 acres are available for development.

Situated in close proximity to the port is the 270-acre Rosedale Industrial Park. Approximately 250 acres of this park is undeveloped. Cleveland Industrial Park is located just off US 61, northeast of the Cleveland city limits. The park contains 200 acres of land, with 183 being currently available for development. Full utility packages are available to all the parks. A short line railroad connects the port and three industrial parks to the C&G railroad in Greenville. Shelby Industrial

Park is a small 40-acre park located in the community of Shelby. There are currently no tenants in this park.

Major industrial Employers: Baxter Healthcare, Inc located on the north side of Cleveland, is the county's largest employer providing approximately 1,100 full time jobs. Duo Fast, Jimmy Sanders, Inc, Needle Specialty Products, Inc, and Quality Steel Corporation are Cleveland area industries with 90 to 225 employees. Tyson Foods and Royal Vendors have closed their Cleveland operations laying off 700 workers. In Rosedale, Cives Steel Company and Jantran are the largest employers with approximately 165 employees each.

Routing of I-69: There are three proposed routes for the new interstate highway to take as it crosses the Mississippi River south of Benoit: a western route and; a central route, west of Cleveland; and an eastern route, east of Cleveland. The consensus opinion from county officials and economic development professionals is that the central route immediately west of Cleveland would best serve Cleveland and Bolivar County. It would be near the airport around which new industry will be encouraged. This route would also be closer to the port of Rosedale than the route east of the city. The eastern route and western route are viewed as being more intrusive to the prime agriculture land and environmental features of the county. In a related issue, improving State Route 8, which links Rosedale and Cleveland, from two to four lanes is considered vital to the continued health of the Port of Rosedale.

Sunflower County: Barry Bryant, Sunflower County Supervisor; Clanton Beamon, Sunflower County Supervisor; Shirley Edwards, Mayor of Ruleville; Jimmy Pettigrew, Mayor of Drew; John McPherson, Business Executive; Bill Gresham, Business Executive; Daniel Vassel, Business/Industry Outreach, Delta Council.

County Overview: Sunflower County is a county within which are a number of small incorporated areas. The county and municipalities operate six school districts, including three high schools. The vast majority of commercial and industrial activity is centered in the city of Indianola. With a population of over 12,000 persons, the city accounts for nearly one-third of total county population.

Ruleville is the second largest municipality with a 2000 population of approximately 3,200 persons. Parchman State Prison is the largest employer in Sunflower County with approximately 2,800 persons on the payroll.

There are two hospitals in the county, a small facility in Ruleville; the larger located in Indianola. Public water is generally available throughout the county, while sewer is limited to incorporated areas. Job skills training is provided in Sunflower County by Mississippi Delta Community College, located in Moorhead, a small community about seven miles east of Indianola. The school has an enrollment of approximately 2,500 students.

The primary airport in Sunflower County is located in Indianola. The facility has a 7,000-foot runway, an instrument approach, and a fixed base operator. The county has obtained a $500,000 FAA grant to recondition the existing runway. There is a second, albeit smaller, general aviation airport in the county. The Ruleville-Drew airport has a lighted 4,000-foot runway. There is a plan to build an industrial park between Ruleville and Drew. A plastics manufacturer in Drew has recently gone into receivership and local officials are attempting to gain control of the facility in hopes of attracting another industry to the area.

The major retail center in the county is found in Indianola and is anchored by a Wal-Mart discount store. Convenience stores, small independent grocers, and sundry stores provide for the basic needs of county residents outside of Indianola.

New residential development is described as being scattered throughout the county. The county has no land use plan at the present time.

Industrial infrastructure: Mississippi Development Authority lists two industrial parks on its web site. The 100-acre Indianola Industrial Park, located four miles from the Indianola Municipal Airport and one mile from US 82. This park is adjacent to the Columbus and Greenville Railroad. Approximately 46 acres of this park remains to be developed.

The Indianola Airport Industrial Park is adjacent to the airport and one mile from US 82. The park has a total of 80 acres, with about 65 acres available for development. Delta Center, operated by Mississippi Delta Community College, is situated west of Indianola just off US 82. The center provides job training instruction. In addition, there is a small 10 acres industrial park in Ruleville. The park has city water, sewer, as well as natural gas.

Major Industrial Employers: In addition to the prison, there are other major providers of employment in Sunflower County. Two distribution operations are located in Indianola: Dollar General Stores (US 82) maintains a 400 employee operation that serves over 100 of its stores in the region; while the Super Value (US 49) grocery distribution facility employs approximately 600 persons. Delta Pride Catfish, Inc. employs about 900 persons in operations located in Indianola (Indianola Industrial Park) and Inverness. The largest employer in Ruleville is the Ruleville Manufacturing Co., Inc., which maintains a work force of about 200. Other major employers in Sunflower County include: Allen Canning Company, Moorhead (200 employees); SouthFresh Catfish Processors, Inc., Indianola, (180 employees).

Routing of I-69: The route of choice of local elected officials in Sunflower County is the eastern most route. This alternative would be located east of Cleveland and then proceed to the north through northwestern Sunflower County. It would pass near the cities of Ruleville, Drew, and the western edge of the Parchman prison land before exiting the county into Coahoma County. The rationale given for supporting this route argues that in order for Sunflower County to participate in any of the potential economic benefits of the planned interstate, the alignment must be routed as far to the east of Cleveland as possible. It is the strongly held opinion of Sunflower County officials that neither of the proposed western routes of I-69 would benefit their county. In their opinion, the road should be constructed so as to provide maximum exposure to as many delta counties as possible. By routing the interstate to the east, Bolivar and Sunflower counties would share as economic beneficiaries.

Section Four – I-69 Alternative Alignments Analysis

For purposes of this study, three alternative alignments represent the major choices for routing I-69 through the Mississippi Delta counties. In fact, there are a number of variations and links that have been explored by Neel-Schaffer during the EIS process. But these three alternatives represent the principal features of an alignment:

- Western Alternative
- Cental Alternative,
- Eastern Alternative.

Each of the three routes has been the subject of analysis by the consultant team. That analysis has been aimed at finding the alignment that most effectively serves as a stimulus for economic development.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this concluding section of the report is to present the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the three options and a conclusion regarding which of the three represents the alignment most advantageous for stimulating economic development.

In the experience of the consultant team, there is no formula or model by which the alignments could be measured. No blueprint for coordinated Delta economic development has been formulated which calls for a particular route to meet its objectives (although the Delta Regional Authority may ultimately take steps in that direction).

The various economic development interests in the Delta have advanced opinions on the position of proposed I-69. Naturally, these opinions are weighted more heavily in the interests of the various constituencies rather than the region as a whole. That bias does not invalidate the opinions in any way. But our charge is to identify the route that might have the best opportunity for stimulating economic development in the region.

APPROACH

Researchers have explored the question of aligning new highways as a tool for development stimulus. As cited earlier in this text, a great deal of study has been devoted to maximizing development opportunities along transportation corridors. There are several perspectives regarding the relationship between new

transportation facilities and development that were of particular importance in analyzing the alternative I-69 alignments in the Delta.

A number of the researchers reached the conclusion that economic growth in jurisdictions along major new highway corridors could indeed be documented. However, growth was almost always more vigorous in jurisdictions in close proximity to metropolitan areas; or at the very least, areas that had some degree of urbanization. Conversely, isolated or rural jurisdictions along interstate highways were seen to enjoy few benefits. Concentrating development, or focusing new access so that it builds upon pre-existing market strength, on centers of economic activity or "growth poles" is considered to be the most effective approach. Doing so maximizes attraction of new investment due to the tendency of new investment to follow already established patterns.

Other transportation researchers concluded that the introduction of a new highway merely redistributes development without adding to overall economic activity. In the case of I-69, this redistribution, or thinning out, of future development opportunity must be considered when acknowledging the likely effect of three parallel routes serving Northwest Mississippi: US 61, I-55 and the new I-69.

Industrial location decisions do not depend on transportation alone, but also on factors such as: local tax rates, education, job readiness skills, utilities, services, and affordable housing. However, strengthening the larger communities of the Delta through enhancement of access may advance the competitive edge in attracting new investment.

Building upon existing centers of activity or settlement takes full advantage of existing public investments in infrastructure, inhibits further sprawl, inefficient delivery of public services, and reinforces patterns of business and the private investment made in a wide variety of enterprises.

METHODOLOGY

Our methodology for analyzing the merits of each of the route options consisted of examining each segment in each of the three routes in of the four Delta counties.

That examination consisted of a review of population data (as a surrogate for urbanization). The analysis also addressed the degree to which the route segments and proposed interchanges reinforced existing patterns of economic development. Further the route segments and interchanges were examined to judge the degree to which each enhanced access to selected public facilities or the degree to which each may be disruptive to selected public facilities.

The most recent data available on major manufacturing plants was secured from the Mississippi Development Authority and each plant was plotted on project base maps using GIS techniques. This employment estimate was used as a surrogate for total employment, since total employment data is not available except for counties as a whole. In addition, the location of a variety of public facilities (e.g. hospitals, schools, industrial parks, airports, parks and recreational facilities, sensitive environmental areas, etc.) were plotted on the base maps along with the alignment of the three routes and the location of proposed interchanges.

For this analysis, it was assumed that the primary area of influence for each interchange was encompassed by a circle with a radius of 2.5 miles around the center of the interchange. The primary area of impact of the route segments between interchanges was considered to be one mile on either side of the centerline of the route.

Interviews were conducted with economic development officials in each of the four Delta counties. The purpose of the interviews was twofold: one, they allowed consultant staff to become better acquainted with the local economies; and, two, they allowed those most familiar with local economic development efforts to express their opinion on the importance of the planned I-69 to their community.

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENTS

An analysis of each of the proposed I-69 alternative alignments was undertaken in order to arrive at a rational judgement regarding an optimum alignment for stimulating new economic development. Criteria employed to make this judgement: a) degree of existing urbanization (presence of cities and towns, population); b) concentration of development (presence of major employers, industrial parks and patterns of commercial development), and c) environmental factors that could produce a negative impact should a particular alignment be chosen.

The three routes examined in this analysis are shown on the map on the following page.

Western Alternative

This alignment begins near Benoit and proceeds east for about 12 miles and then turns northeasterly and crosses SR 8. Just north of SR 8, the alignment proceeds north and stays on new alignment parrallel and west of US 61 until it proceeds east and crosses US 61 and connects at New Africa Road at the Clarksdale Bypass.

The alignment stays on the existing Bypass and follows US 61 until just south of

Crenshaw Road where it turns northeast and runs on new alignment, crossing Dubbs Road, SR4 and Prichard Road. It then turns east and crosses Kirby Road and ties into SR304.

- Urbanization – This alignment exhibits the least amount of existing population of the three routes under study. There are 34,213 persons within the study boundaries.

- Development Concentrations – There are few concentrations of commercial or industrial development along theWestern Alignment corridor in In Bolivar County. The Port of Rosedale and its industrial parks are over 10 miles west of the route. A tourist information center is proposed in Coahoma County at the intersection of US 49 and US 61 on the Western Alignment. . In Tunica County, the casinos near Tunica are located immediately west of the proposed route.

Central Alternative

This alignment proceeds in an easterly direction from Benoit for about 12 miles and then northeasterly about 13 miles until intersecting US 61 at Merigold. From Merigold it remains in close proximity to US 61 in Bolivar, Coahoma and southern Tunica County. In Tunica County the alignment of the route leaves the US 61 corridor about nine miles south of Tunica and proceeds easterly on new right of way where it returns to the US 61 north of the city vicinity and intersects MS Highway 304.

- Urbanization - This alignment exhibits the greatest amount of existing population of the three routes under study. Communities on or near its path include Cleveland in Bolivar County, and the string of towns extending the length of US 61: Mound Bayou, Shelby, Clarksdale (Coahoma County), Tunica/North Tunica (Tunica County). Approximately 39,729 persons reside within the Central Alternative corridor.
- Development Concentrations –Cleveland and Clarksdale are the largest concentration of development along this corridor. In Bolivar County, development in the small towns along US 61 would be limited to the convenience and services. In Coahoma County proposed interchanges serve the heaviest concentration of industrial employment in the Clarksdale area. In Tunica County, routing of the highway will accommodate planned expansion of the county airport and its adjacent 2,000-acre industrial park on the east side of Tunica. A second industrial park in the planning stages near Tunica would be served at the intersection of proposed I-69 and MS Highway 304. A planned rail spur to serve anticipated Tunica area industrial expansion would also be complemented by the alignment.

Eastern Alternative

This alignment proceeds almost due east from Benoit for about 17 miles and then proceeds in a northerly direction about three miles east of downtown Cleveland, slowly diverging from a parallel with US 61 through sparsely populated areas of Bolivar and Sunflower Counties. As the route enters Coahoma County it joins with the central alignment and runs the same as this alternative until near the Tunica County line. In Tunica County the alignment of the route remains east of US 61 and closer to the eastern boundary of Tunica County and intersects MS Highway 304.

- Urbanization - This alignment exhibits the second largest amount of existing population of the three routes with 37,956 persons, The other community on or near its path is Clarksdale. Interchanges along the Bolivar/Sunflower County line have little resident population. Similarly, interchanges in Tunica County serve very small numbers of people.
- Development Concentrations – The most significant development interchange is at the intersection of MS Highway 8 and I-69. This interchange has the greatest number of employees (as tabulated by the Mississippi Development Authority employment survey) of all the interchanges studied.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the analysis of each of the alternatives with the methodology outlined above, the three matrices below allow a conclusion to be drawn that the Eastern Alternative is somewhat better with respect to the probability of capturing economic development potential.

- *Proximity to urbanization* –Central Alternative is closer to more population centers than any of the three routes within its impact area. (Matrix One)
- *Proximity to Growth* - Eastern Alternative is closer to more existing employment than any of the three routes with over 3,000 employees within its impact area. (Matrix Two)
- *Public Facility Impact* –Central Alternative is closer to more community health centers, correctional facilities, airports, industrial sites, schools, and recreational facilities than any of the three routes. (Matrix Three)
- *Concentrating opportunities and resources* –Eastern Alternative takes greater advantage of the public and private investment already made in the Delta economy and foregoes the need for extending new facilities and services across a broad area of new development.

An alignment option that would maximize the ability to capitalize on development opportunity could be made.

The Eastern Alternative would proceed east of Cleveland to SR8. Modified I-69 would return to the Central Alternative at Merigold just north of Cleveland. The route would then remain on the proposed Central Alternative until its intersection with MS Highway 304. By following this modified alignment, the route would be able to take advantage of the heaviest concentration of industrial employment in Bolivar County at the interchange with MS Highway 8. The interchange would also link Sunflower County to the new interstate route by way of the state highway.

This modified Eastern Alternative best satisfies the objectives set forth at the beginning of this section of the report: maximizing economic development opportunities. Using the modification suggested, 41 percent of the existing reported four-county manufacturing employment tabulated by the Mississippi Development Authority is accounted for in this revised corridor.

A second refinement relates to interchanges identified for the recommended alternative route, Eastern Alternative. It would seem clear that fewer interchanges would serve to better concentrate economic development opportunities. Consequently, it is suggested that consideration be given to deferral of construction of all but the following interchanges. These preferred interchanges focus upon service to existing communities, connection to major routes, and reinforcement of existing development infrastructure.

Interchange to be Retained

Benoit
Shaw/US 61
Cleveland/MS 8
Merigold
Shelby/MS 32
Duncan/MS 444
Clarksdale South/US 49
Clarksdale North/MS 6
Lula/US 49
Tunica South/MS 4
Tunica East/Airport
Tunica North/US 61
MS 304

Table 1 Total Population for each Alternative	
Alternative	**Total Population**
Central Alternative	39,729
Eastern Alternative	37,956
Western Alternative	34,213

*Note- Population within 2.5 miles of interchanges on each alternative; some overlap may occur among alternatives population totals.

Table 2 Employment by Alternative			
Alternative	**Manufacturing Sites**	**Approximate Number of Manufacturing Employees**	**Industrial Parks**
Central Alternative	29	1,306	4
Eastern Alternative	39	3,050	4
Western Alternative	28	1,295	3
SR 8	2	44	1

*Note- Employment within 2.5 miles of interchanges or 1 mile on each alternative; some overlap may occur among alternatives employment totals.

Table 3 Public Facilities				
	Alternative			
Facility Type	**Central**	**Eastern**	**Western**	**SR8**
Schools[1]	48	42	46	3
Community Health Centers	2	1	1	0
State Penitentiary	0	1	0	0
Discharge Elimination Sites	26	16	19	2
Hospitals	2	2	1	0
Industrial Sites	4	4	3	1
Manufacturing Sites	29	39	28	2
National Register Sites[2]	7	3	3	2
Airports	3	1	3	0
River Ports	0	0	0	1

*Note- Employment within 2.5 miles of interchanges or 1 mile on each alternative; some overlap may occur among alternatives totals.

1: Included those listed with (historic)

2: These are existing sites which are within 2.5 miles of interchange; 1 mile of each alternative. Does not mean sites would be impacted.

Appendix J
2005 Economic Report

Evaluating the Local Economic Development of I-69 in the Mississippi Delta Region

I. Introduction

Transportation investments have long been linked to economic development. There are numerous avenues by which such investments can serve as catalysts for economic growth and development including:

- Linking key economic centers in a region to national markets thus making the area competitive for growth;
- Providing for more efficient flows of commerce through the region to enhance the development potential of areas traversed by the improvement;
- Facilitating the movement of people to new jobs and public services
- Opening up new sites for commercial and industrial development;
- Providing local access roads to stimulate retail development;
- Enhancing the flow of goods and services within a sub-regional trade area to increase induced economic benefits;
- Facilitating the diversification of the local economy;
- Supporting new business initiatives; and
- Enhancing economic development by lowering the cost of doing business through lower transportation cost

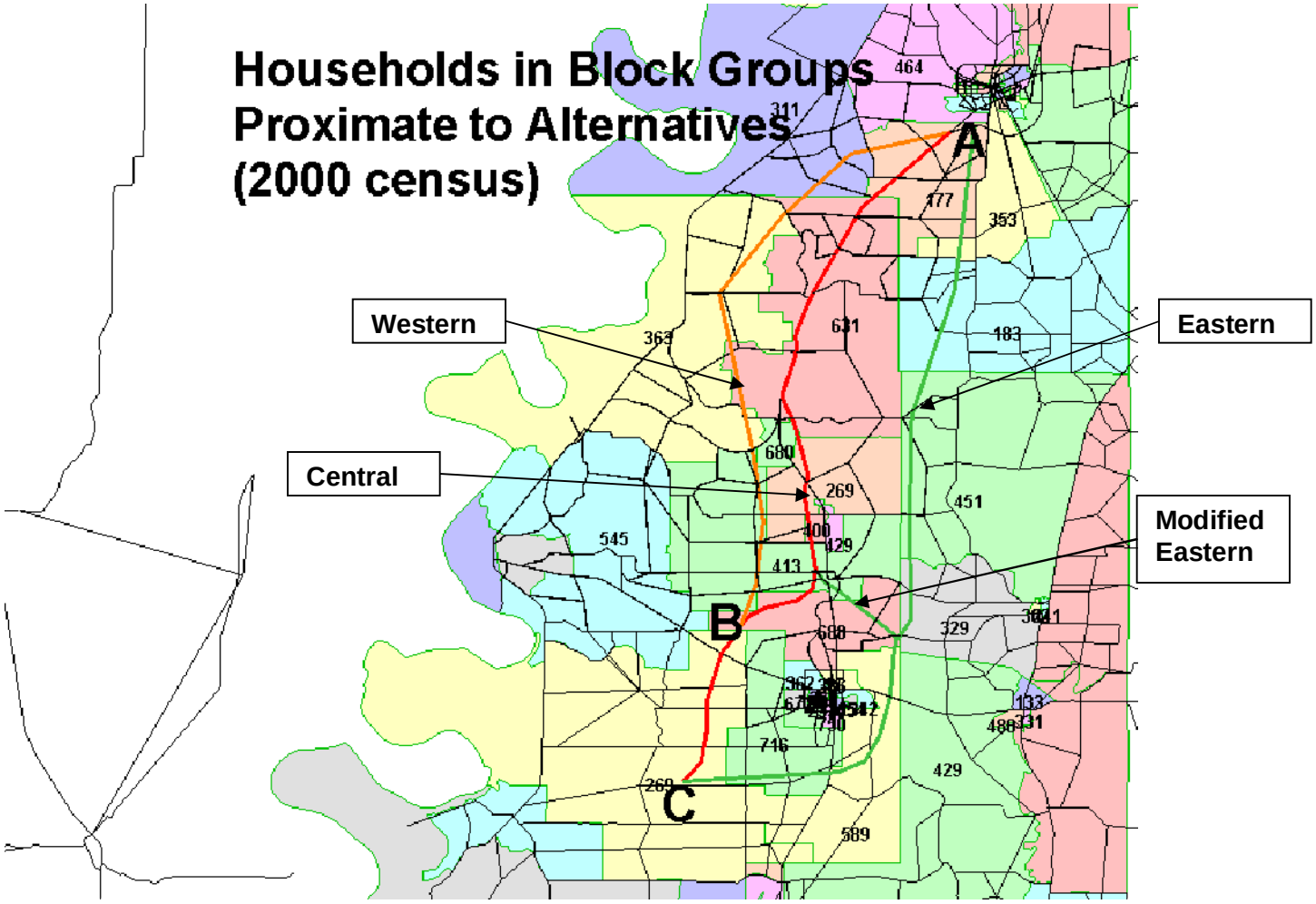
Investments as significant as a new interstate can potentially have substantial impacts on a region and given the rarity of investments of this magnitude, these “mega-projects” warrant a closer examination into the potential for economic growth.

The purpose of the current study is to conduct such an examination. The EIS statement completed in 2004 identified the Central Alternative as the preferred alternative out of four potential alternatives. However, recognition that the development of a new interstate in this economically disadvantaged region is the most significant infrastructure investment in region to date led the Mississippi Department of Transportation to commission an analysis to examine the potential for local economic development for each of the four alternatives- the western, central, eastern and modified eastern. The following summarizes the findings of this study and is organized as follows. Section two provides and overview of the alternatives and Section three discusses the methodology for estimating the impacts. Section four summarizes the results of the modeling, followed by a conclusion in Section five.

II. Overview of Alternatives and Study Area

The portion of the proposed corridor considered in the current study consists of the alternatives between Cleveland and Clarksdale. These include the Western, Central, Eastern, and Modified Eastern Alternatives. Exhibit 1 displays the alternatives with the orange representing the Western Alternative, the red representing the Central Alternative, and the green representing the Eastern and Modified Eastern Alternatives.

Exhibit 1: I-69 Alternatives between Cleveland and Clarksdale



The study consisted of four counties in the Mississippi Delta including Bolivar, Coahoma, Sunflower, and Tunica. Exhibit 2 displays general socio-demographic information for each of the counties in the study region as well as the state as a whole. Notable is the fact that the counties comprising the study region have sustained population losses in recent years while the state has posted modest population growth. In addition, the study region is overwhelmingly minority, with nearly double the percentage of minorities relative to the state as a whole.

Exhibit 2: Socio-Demographic Profile of Study Region

People QuickFacts	Mississippi	Bolivar County	Coahoma County	Sunflower County	Tunica County
Population, 2003 estimate	2,881,281	39,235	29,546	33,374	9,917
Population, percent change, April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2003	1.3%	-3.4%	-3.5%	-2.9%	7.5%
Population, percent change, 1990 to 2000	10.5%	-3.0%	-3.3%	-2.2%	13.0%
White persons, percent, 2000 (a)	61.4%	33.2%	29.3%	28.9%	27.5%
Black or African American persons, percent, 2000 (a)	36.3%	65.1%	69.2%	69.9%	70.2%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2000 (b)	1.4%	1.2%	0.9%	1.3%	2.5%
Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 2000	3.6%	2.7%	2.7%	3.4%	2.4%
High school graduates, percent of persons age 25+, 2000	72.9%	65.3%	62.2%	59.3%	60.5%
Bachelor's degree or higher, pct of persons age 25+, 2000	16.9%	18.8%	16.2%	12.0%	9.1%
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16+, 2000	24.6	19.7	24	20.6	19.7

(a) Includes persons reporting only one race.
(b) Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories.

Exhibit 3 provides comparisons of key economic indicators for the study region. The study region lags the state in all of the key indicators including home ownership rates, median home value, median household income, and per capita income. Not surprisingly, the percent of the population living in poverty is about one-third higher in the study region relative to the state as a whole.

Exhibit 3 – Key Economic Indicators for the Study Region

Economic QuickFacts	Mississippi	Bolivar County	Coahoma County	Sunflower County	Tunica County
Housing units, 2002	1,195,133	15,146	11,546	10,448	4,171
Homeownership rate, 2000	72.3%	61.1%	57.3%	61.8%	51.7%
Housing units in multi-unit structures, percent, 2000	13.3%	17.3%	18.7%	12.3%	21.1%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2000	$71,400	$57,200	$51,200	$50,000	$56,800
Households, 2000	1,046,434	13,776	10,553	9,637	3,258
Persons per household, 2000	2.63	2.79	2.83	3.01	2.8
Median household income, 1999	$31,330	$23,428	$22,338	$24,970	$23,270
Per capita money income, 1999	$15,853	$12,088	$12,558	$11,365	$11,978
Persons below poverty, percent, 1999	19.9%	33.3%	35.9%	30.0%	33.1%

Exhibit 4 displays business activity indicators for the region in terms of employment, manufacturing shipments and retail sales. The region has sustained significant job loss in recent years, as has the state as a whole. Tunica County has been the hardest hit despite the growing gaming industry. Notable is the fact that Bolivar County has escaped much of the employment loss experienced by the other counties and recorded losses below the statewide average. Another interesting point is that despite the economic depression in the region, per capita retail sales remains on par with statewide averages. This is partially attributable the significant gaming and resulting tourism industries.

Exhibit 4- Business Activity Indicators for the Study Region

Business QuickFacts	Mississippi	Bolivar County	Coahoma County	Sunflower County	Tunica County
Private nonfarm establishments with paid employees, 2001	59,056	764	636	488	192
Private nonfarm employment, 2001	926,868	10,226	8,419	6,989	16,826
Private nonfarm employment, percent change 2000-2001	-3.1%	-1.5%	-4.1%	-5.6%	-9.4%
Manufacturers shipments, 1997 ($1000)	39,658,260	417,762	236,575	508,277	NA
Retail sales, 1997 ($1000)	20,774,508	296,293	250,400	212,326	61,773
Retail sales per capita, 1997	$7,605	$7,305	$7,957	$6,181	$7,659

As the previous exhibits illustrate, the four counties comprising the study region represent an economically challenged region of the state. Therefore, an investment as significant as an interstate highway could potentially serve as a catalyst for economic development. The purpose of the current study is to examine the magnitude of this potential.

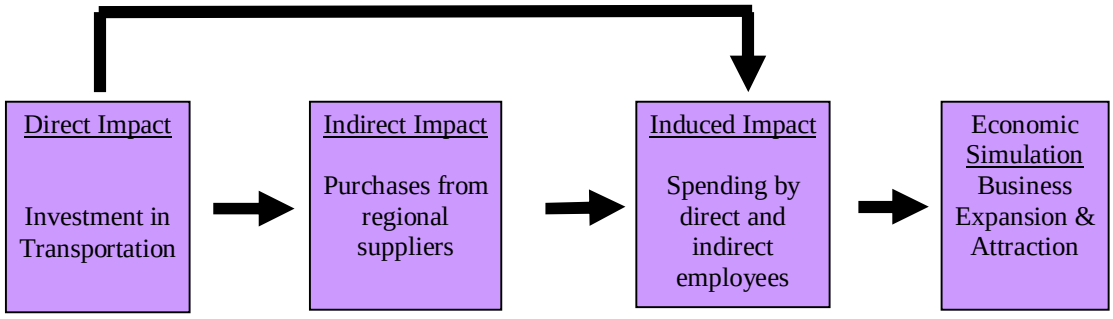
III. Methodology

Potential Economic Effects

The estimation of economic impacts quantifies the direct, indirect, and induced economic effects of different corridor alignments on the costs and savings associated with changes in travel time, emissions, safety, and vehicle operations. The direct economic effects reflect user benefits that accrue to the individuals and industries directly benefiting from I-69 once it is constructed. The indirect economic impacts arise as a result of the changes in inter-industry purchases, as local businesses respond to the change in output of major industries due to, for instance, changes in cost of doing business.

Specifically, if the building of I-69 lowers the cost of transportation and gives local businesses a competitive advantage, they will demand more intermediate goods and services from other local businesses; thus increasing purchases between local industries and leading to increased economic benefits for the region. The induced effects represent the broader implications of the proposed I-69 for households' income and spending patterns. Specifically, they are intended to capture the purchasing impacts as the dollars are spent repeatedly in the regional and statewide economy. The results of indirect and induced economic changes created by the direct effects are generally referred as multiplier effect (see Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5
The Economic Impacts Associated with Transportation Infrastructure Investments



The current study examines three categories of impacts including:

- Travel efficiencies
- Agricultural transportation costs
- Strategic development impacts

Travel Efficiency Benefits

The travel efficiencies are represented by vehicle operating costs (VOC). It should be noted that traditionally other user benefits such as travel time savings, accident savings and emission savings are included as travel efficiencies. However, modeling such impacts requires a detailed travel demand model which is beyond the scope of the current study. To the extent that such benefits would arise, travel efficiency benefits are understated.

Vehicle operating costs savings are calculated based on the number of additional miles traveled for local trips multiplied by $0.405 per mile (this represents the IRS allowable mileage charge for vehicle operation). The resulting direct user benefits are then entered into an economic impact model utilizing RIMS II multipliers developed by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis to derive the total estimated economic benefits arising from travel efficiencies.

The direct user benefits are calculated based on the number of households preferring each alternative relative to the others based on distance. This is then combined with the number of trips, travel distance, and $0.405 per mile to derive the dollar value of vehicle operating costs savings accruing to specific alternatives. Exhibit 6 displays the household counts relative to the alternatives. A more detailed view of the Cleveland is presented in Exhibit 7.

Exhibit 6 – Household Counts in Proximity to Alternatives

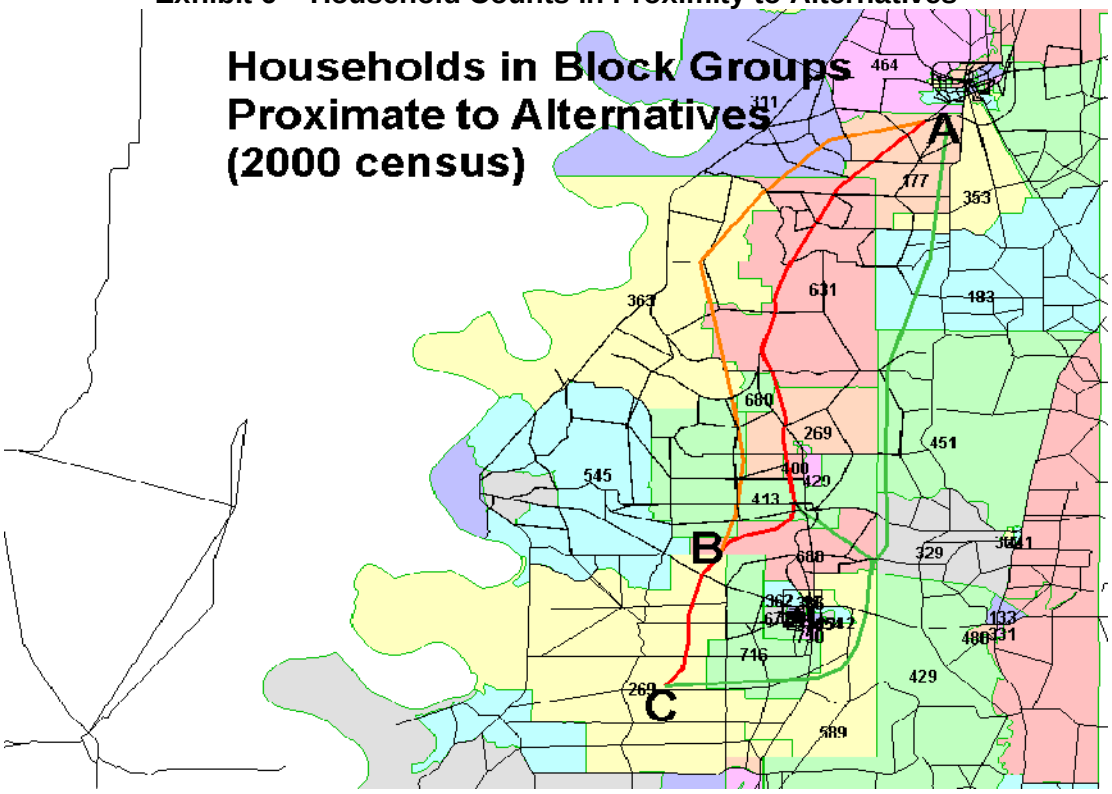
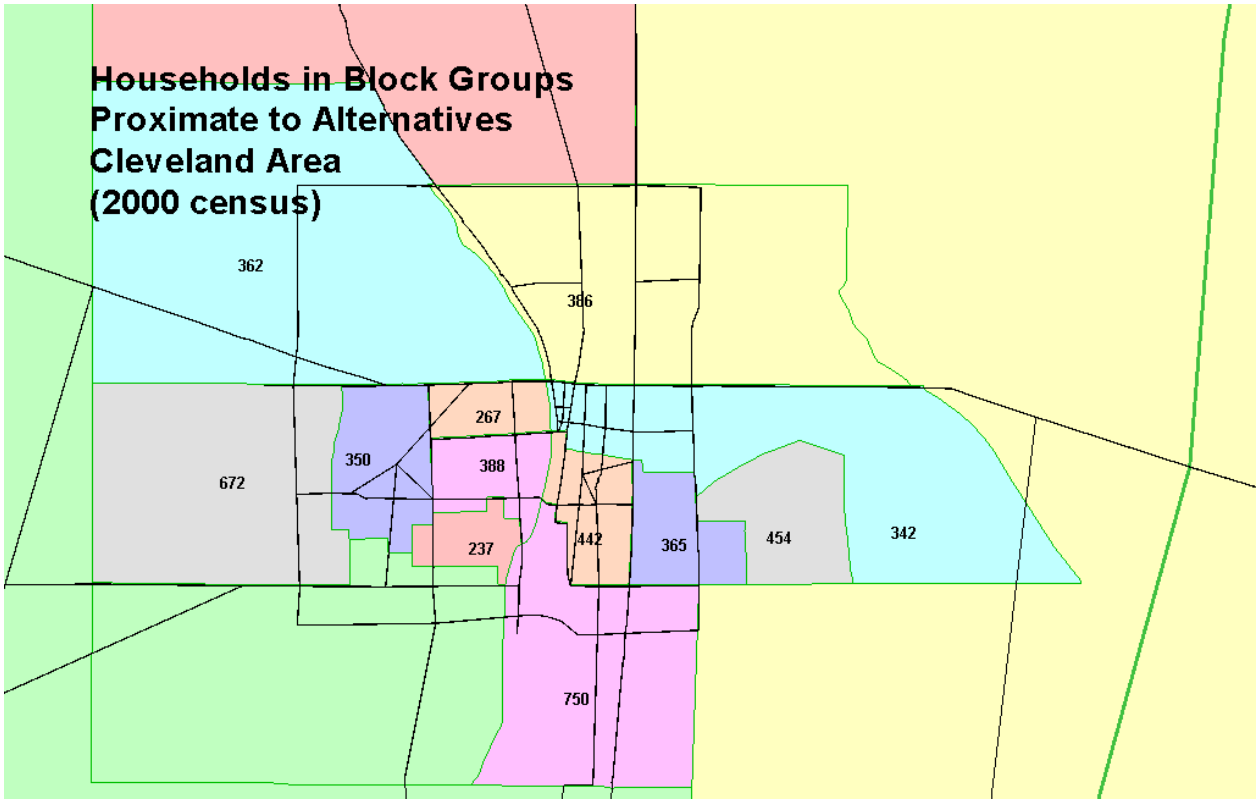


Exhibit 7 – Household Counts for Cleveland



Again, the Western Alternative is denoted in orange, the Central in red, and Eastern and Modified Eastern in green.

When comparing the Western Alternative to the Central Alternative, the sketch map above illustrates that the western portion of the study area is very sparsely occupied except near the population centers of Rosedale, Cleveland, and Clarksdale. When examining the households shown above (along with the distribution of the households within the block groups) The map illustrates that about 1100 households are best served by the Western Alternative, about 2300 households are indifferent between the Western and Central Alternatives, and at least 2100 households are better served by the Central Alternative. However, note that all residents east of the first tier of block groups shown on the map also are nearer the Central Alternative, so the balance is shifted far further toward the Central Alternative.

The Western Alternative is 1.5 miles longer than the Central Alternative between their common termini near Cleveland and Clarksdale. The Western Alternative is approximately 33 miles long and the Central Alternative is about 31.5 miles. The average distance between the two alternatives is about 3 miles. On a daily basis, the Western Alternative would require local residents to travel at least 28,500 miles more than the Central. This does not include additional miles generated by the longer route for through trips or for external trips to/from the study area.

When comparing the Eastern and Modified Eastern to the Central Alternative, the Central Alternative saves local users approximately 45,600 miles per day over the Eastern Alternative and an even more significant 85,000 miles per day over the Eastern modified. The VMT savings of the Central Alternative relative to the Modified Eastern is somewhat surprising at first glance but can be rationalized based on the premise that there is no opportunity for the large rural block groups that would prefer the east to net out the advantage of the central in the immediate vicinity of the populace in Cleveland. The fact that the vast majority of Cleveland's populace is west of US 61, traveling to the eastern alternative exacerbates the congestion along MS 8, especially at the US 61/MS 8 intersection, thus leading to increased travel time and vehicle operating costs should the Eastern Alternative be constructed.

Once the miles per day are estimated, the VOC are calculated by multiplying these by $0.405 per mile and then by 365 days to obtain annualized increase in VOC. The RIMS II multipliers were then applied to the annualized VOC costs to estimate the associated loss in income and employment associated with increased VOC arising from the Western and the two Eastern Alternatives relative to the Central Alternative.

Agricultural Transportation Costs

The second category of impacts examined is the potential change in the cost of transporting agricultural products. Agriculture is the leading goods producing industry in the region and transportation is a key input in the industry. The primary concern regarding impacts to the agricultural industry arises as a result of upgrading the existing Highway 61 facility as part of the Central Alternative. Currently, Highway 61 serves as the primary field to market route for area farmers and because it is not an interstate highway, the facility is exempt from federal weight limitations. MDOT Harvest Permits currently allow agricultural products to move at 84,000 pounds on routes not otherwise restricted. The conversion of this facility to Interstate 69 would result in the application of weight restrictions at 80,000 pounds; thus, increasing the cost of getting agricultural products to the markets.

Data regarding production of the key crops – cotton, soybeans, and rice- in 2004 was used to estimate the potential impact of the Central Alternative on transportations costs to area farmers and the resulting economic impacts. Exhibit 8 displays the tonnages and values of these crops by county.

The transportation costs associated with the production of these crops was then estimated using the direct requirements table of the Bureau of Economic Analysis' National Input Output Table. Once the total transportation costs are estimated, the increase in transportation costs resulting from the interstate weight limits being imposed on US 61 must be calculated. Not all of the transportation costs associated with the production of the crops is accrued in the study region, therefore, an assumption that 30% of the costs are incurred in the study region is applied. Further, it is assumed that the use of the existing US 61 as the Central Alternative would give rise to a 10 percent increase in transportation costs incurred in the study region. This provides us with an estimate of increased transportation costs, which are then subjected to the RIMS II multipliers to derive the resulting decrease in income for the study region. These results are displayed in Exhibit 9. Because the other alternatives would not impact the ability of farmers to carry higher weights on Highway 61, there is no associated change in agricultural transportation costs for the Western or Eastern alternatives.

Exhibit 8 – Primary Agricultural Crop Production Data, 2004

County	Commodity	common measure	2004 Production	Tons	Price	Value
Bolivar	Corn	bushel	1,431,000	40,068	1.95	$2,790,450
Coahoma			2,158,000	60,424	1.95	$4,208,100
Sunflower			3,671,000	102,788	1.95	$7,158,450
Tunica			218,000	6,104	1.95	$425,100
Bolivar	Soybeans	bushel	8,855,000	265,650	6.04	$53,484,200
Coahoma			4,520,000	135,600	6.04	$27,300,800
Sunflower			6,595,000	197,850	6.04	$39,833,800
Tunica			2,820,000	84,600	6.04	$17,032,800
Bolivar	Rice	Cwt	5,105,000	255,250	6.8	$34,714,000
Coahoma			743,000	37,150	6.8	$5,052,400
Sunflower			2,209,000	110,450	6.8	$15,021,200
Tunica			1,517,000	75,850	6.8	$10,315,600
Bolivar	Cotton	Bale	165,000	39,600	0.42	$33,264,000
Coahoma			250,000	60,000	0.42	$50,400,000
Sunflower			124,000	29,760	0.42	$24,998,400
Tunica			132,000	31,680	0.42	$26,611,200

Exhibit 9 – Changes in Transportation Costs and Income Arising for the Central Alternative's Impact on Transporting Agricultural Crops

County	Commodity	Increase trans costs	Decrease in income
Bolivar	Corn	$13,077	-$16,085
Coahoma		$19,721	-$24,257
Sunflower		$33,548	-$41,264
Tunica		$1,992	-$2,450
Bolivar	Soybeans	$250,651	-$308,301
Coahoma		$127,944	-$157,371
Sunflower		$186,679	-$229,615
Tunica		$79,823	-$98,183
Bolivar	Rice	$162,685	-$200,103
Coahoma		$23,678	-$29,124
Sunflower		$70,396	-$86,587
Tunica		$48,344	-$59,463
Bolivar	Cotton	$155,890	-$191,745
Coahoma		$236,197	-$290,522
Sunflower		$117,154	-$144,099
Tunica		$124,712	-$153,396
Totals		**$1,652,491**	**-$2,032,564**

Strategic Development/Business Attraction Benefits

The final category of benefits examined includes the strategic development impacts. These arise as result of expanding the connectivity, accessibility and mobility in communities impacted by the development of a new interstate. For example, if large tracts of developable land with completed infrastructure such as water and sewer exist, but the road leading to that land does not offer seamless connectivity to national markets, it is unlikely the land will be developed, or it may be developed in a fashion that does not represent its highest and best use. If the interstate creates better connectivity to national markets and trade corridors, new opportunities for development may arise. This represents strategic development benefits.

Transportation conditions and improvements to them have the potential to significantly affect business access to customer markets and suppliers. We can measure external transportation access in terms of the average travel time to airports, marine ports, and rail facilities (including both passenger and truck/rail intermodal terminals). We can also measure internal transportation access in terms of average speed of highway congestion levels.

Tourism is another important source of economic growth for some areas. The extent to which Interstate 69 could help boost tourism in the region is a direct result of both the strength of local attractions and the availability of access to them via highway, rail and/or air travel. Obviously, the casino developments in Tunica serve as a huge economic generator for the region and easier access to these facilities via I-69 could foster even more growth in this industry.

Other important factors affecting the study area's prospects for economic development include the conditions of industrial sites and buildings, availability of business support programs, and level of local labor force skills and education training.

As part of the evaluation of I-69, the consultant team utilized their Economic Development and Growth Evaluation (EDGE) tool to assess the potential for business attraction and strategic development benefits.[1] An inventory of local conditions for each of the counties in the study region was undertaken over a period of four days of on-site visits to provide data regarding additional business facilities and supporting resources that affect the study area's attractiveness for business. This inventory, combined with an assessment of the existing economic base, was used to identify and assess the study area's strengths and weaknesses in terms of business support programs, industrial land and buildings, labor force, and other key considerations which served as input into the EGDE model.

[1] EDGE is a proprietary WSA software tool that integrates land use and other community attributes to evaluate the business attraction potential of alternative investments, including transportation improvements.

The policy portion of EDGE model allows users to analyze the effects of future economic development policies and actions on the business growth and attraction potential of a local area. For the purposes of the current study, we modeled the potential business attraction impact of each of I-69 alternatives. Impacts of the proposed improvements are based on the relative competitive position of the study region with regards to attracting businesses. The EDGE tool provides an assessment of the regions best opportunity for growth by industry based on national industry trends as well as an evaluation of the competitive disadvantages of the region in competing to attract firms in those industries. A summary of the findings for the study region is provided in Exhibit 10. An estimate of the employment and income potential arising from increased business attraction potential was then calculated for each of the alternatives.

Exhibit 10 – Business Attraction Opportunities and Competitive Disadvantages

Alternative	Business Attraction Opportunity	Competitive Disadvantage
Western	Agricultural services, General contracting, Misc. manufacturing, wholesale distribution, General merchandise retail	Lack of sites with infrastructure, Lack of available buildings, Lack of broadband infrastructure, Worker base
Central	Agricultural services, General contracting, Transportation equipment manufacturing, Industrial machinery manufacturing, Misc. manufacturing, Trucking and warehousing, Wholesale distribution, General merchandise retail, Personel services	Worker base, Lack of broadband infrastructure, Lack of available buildings
Eastern/Modified Eastern	Agricultural services, General contracting, Food manufacturing, Misc. manufacturing, wholesale distribution, General merchandise retail, Personal services	Worker base, Lack of sites with infrastructure, Lack of available buildings, Lack of broadband infrastructure

IV. Results

Exhibit 11 summarizes the results of the economic analysis of the I-69 alternatives based on the methodology described in the previous section.

Exhibit 11 – Summary of Economic Impacts of the Proposed I-69 Alternatives

	Central Alternative		Western Alternative		Eastern Alternative		Modified Eastern	
	Income	Employment	Income	Employment	Income	Employment	Income	Employment
Travel Efficiency Impacts	NA	NA	-$6,200,700	-370	-$9,921,170	-585	-$17,405,500	-1030
Agricultural Transportation Impacts	-$2,032,564	-78	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Business Attraction Potential	$69,448,830	2757	$30,807,370	1223	$65,871,850	2615	$55,166,100	2190
Total	**$67,416,266**	**2679**	**$24,606,670**	**853**	**$55,950,680**	**2030**	**$37,760,600**	**1160**

The travel efficiency benefits are reported with the Central Alternative as the baseline. This is due to the fact that the current traffic assignment model utilizes only existing facilities. The variance from the baseline or central alternative could be either negative or positive based on the impact on travel distances. In this case, the travel efficiency impacts are negative for the Western and both of the Eastern Alternatives, indicating that the Central Alternative provides a greater portion of the study region population with a more efficient route based on travel distance.

Specifically, when comparing the Western Alternative to the Central Alternative, 1,100 households would benefit more by the Western Alternative compared to 2,300 for the Central. Households with no advantage based on travel distance totaled 2,100. The analysis reveals that when comparing the Eastern to the Central Alternative, 5,950 would be better off with the Eastern route compared to 8,203 for the Central. The Modified Eastern would be preferable by 3,989 households compared to 4,168 for the Central.

Combining the household distance preference with the distance of the alternatives and number of trips per household yields estimates of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMTs). Compared to the Central Alternative, the Western Alternative would give rise to 28,500 additional daily VMTs, the Eastern yields 45,600 additional daily VMTs, and the Modified Eastern yields an even more significant additional 85,000 daily VMTs. This translates into additional annual vehicle operating costs for the Western Alternative of $ 4.2 million and $6.7 million and $11.8 million for the Eastern and Modified Eastern Alternatives, respectively. This increase in costs translates into less additional income and jobs for the region.

The agricultural impacts are based on the assumption that updating the existing US 61 to I-69 for the Central Alternative would result in higher transportation costs for local farmers as a result of lower weight limits. Therefore, these costs are only relevant for the Central Alternative and show up as a loss in income and employment for the region should the Central Alternative be constructed. Specifically, the Central Alternative would result in $1.7 million in additional transportation costs annually. However, the jobs and income loss as a result of this increase in agricultural transportation costs does not offset the gain realized as a result of travel efficiency savings of the Central Alternative.

The final group of impacts examined is the strategic development impacts. As can be seen in the summary table, the Central Alternative led all other options in this category. The primary driver was the existing infrastructure which has been developed along the existing Highway 61. It will be much easier to develop the land along this corridor than on new location because significant complimentary infrastructure such as water and sewer access has been developed relative to the other alternatives. Not only will this result in a higher level of economic development benefits but the benefits are expected to begin to accrue much sooner along the Central Alternative.

V. Conclusion

An analysis of the potential for the new Interstate 69 to serve as a catalyst to economic development in the Mississippi Delta was conducted. The alternatives examined included the Western, Central, Eastern and Modified Eastern. Three types of potential impacts were examined – vehicle operating costs, agricultural transportation costs and strategic development impacts. The strategic development impacts proved to be the most significant source of potential benefits for the region.

Using traditional transportation economics methods and the WSA EDGE tool, the results indicate that the Central Alternative exhibits greater potential for creating additional jobs and income for the residents of the Delta Region than the other alternatives.

Interstate 69

From Benoit to Robinsonville

Mississippians Have Selected the Route for the New I-69

The final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS–a study) has been completed for a 120-mile stretch of the new Interstate Highway 69 (I-69) through Mississippi's Delta. As a result, the best, most feasible location for the future highway has been determined by citizens, the Mississippi Department of Transportation, local governments, and numerous private and non-profit organizations. The chosen route—located in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties—is known as the Central Alternative (see map on page 3) and stretches from near Benoit to near Robinsonville, Mississippi.

"We are very excited to have reached this milestone in the development of the new interstate highway," Larry L. "Butch" Brown, Mississippi Department of Transportation Executive Director said. "The EIS is an intensive study of possible impacts to an area's economic, social and environmental interests. With this study, MDOT carefully evaluated possible impacts to Delta communities, farmlands, wetlands, and wildlife for each proposed route and worked closely with the general public to receive local input and guidance."

According to Brown, the new interstate is expected to benefit the historically disadvantaged Delta region of Mississippi by bringing the following improvements:

- A high quality truck route to support international and domestic trade traffic.
- Improved quality of life by encouraging economic development and long-term stability in the region.
- Greater tourist access, while increasing safety and mobility for local and regional traffic.

Years from now, the new I-69—once completed—will stretch from Mexico to Canada. Until that time, work is underway on separate portions of the national interstate corridor called Sections of Independent Utility (SIU). There are 32 SIU's for I-69. The purpose of dividing the corridor into sections is so each SIU can be a viable project even if all of the other sections of I-69 are not completed. The Mississippi Delta section of I-69, from near Benoit to near Robinsonville, is SIU #11.

"Including the cooperating agencies, there were approximately 12 federal agencies, six regional offices of federal agencies, 11 state agencies, 36 local governments, and 16 local agencies that were invited to review the Environmental Impact Statement during draft stages."

– E. Claiborne Barnwell, Federal Highway Administration

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Q Will some homes have to be moved to construct SIU #11?

Yes, eventually, after the design and right of way plan phase has been completed. When that occurs, which could be several years from now, MDOT will work closely with residents to find suitable replacement housing.

Q Will farming operations be divided?

Even though property lines were followed as much as the natural and human environmental opportunities and constraints allowed, some division of farming operations will occur. To reduce the impact of divided farmland, options such as frontage roads and bridges were proposed where practical. Efforts were also made to follow streams that are currently dividing farming operations. By following US Highway 61 as much as possible, the study team determined that fewer negative impacts such as the division of farming operations were realized.

Q Will the new road go through the Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge?

No. The Wildlife Refuge was determined to be a location that had to be avoided.

Q How were interchanges located?

Good access to cities, towns, attractions, industrial areas, farming operations, and small communities that historically have included underrepresented populations and non-agricultural industries are very important and thus were carefully considered when locating interchanges. Every effort was made to enhance economic opportunities while minimizing impacts to communities and farming activities.

Q Will connecting roads be improved?

Yes, improvements were considered as part of this study since an increase in traffic is expected.

Q How much land will it take to build I-69?

I-69 will be built to interstate standards, which means the anticipated right of way width will be approximately 450 feet. In those areas where US 61 will be utilized as part of I-69, some of the 450 feet of needed right of way is already available. However, some locations along US 61 are only about 200 feet in width and thus more land will have to be acquired.

Q Why is the widening of State Route 8 in Bolivar County part of this study?

Part of the I-69 study is to look at ways in which different modes of transportation can be connected to form a better overall transportation system. SR 8 is one way to connect surface and water transportation at the Rosedale Mississippi River Port.

Members from the Bolivar/Sunflower

Participation

The Native American tribes that were contacted and requested to consult in the development of the EIS for SIU #11 were:

- The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
- The Chickasaw Nation
- The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- The Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
- The Tunica-Biloxi Indians of Louisiana
- The Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma
- The Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma

Governmental agencies that were Cooperating Agencies with the MDOT and the Federal Highway Administration in developing the EIS for this study were:

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- The Mississippi Department of Archives and History
- The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks

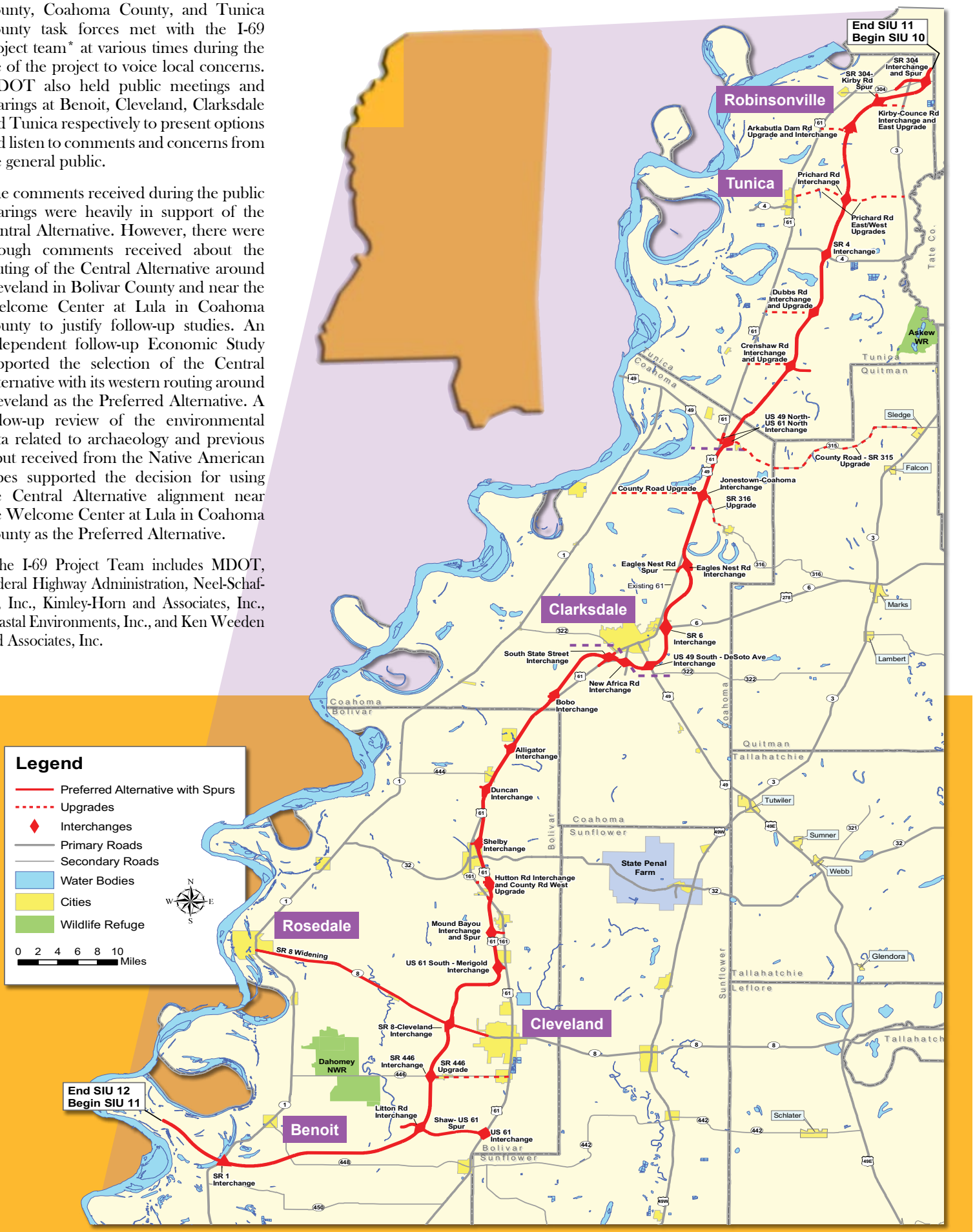
And the People Spoke

County, Coahoma County, and Tunica County task forces met with the I-69 project team* at various times during the life of the project to voice local concerns. MDOT also held public meetings and hearings at Benoit, Cleveland, Clarksdale and Tunica respectively to present options and listen to comments and concerns from the general public.

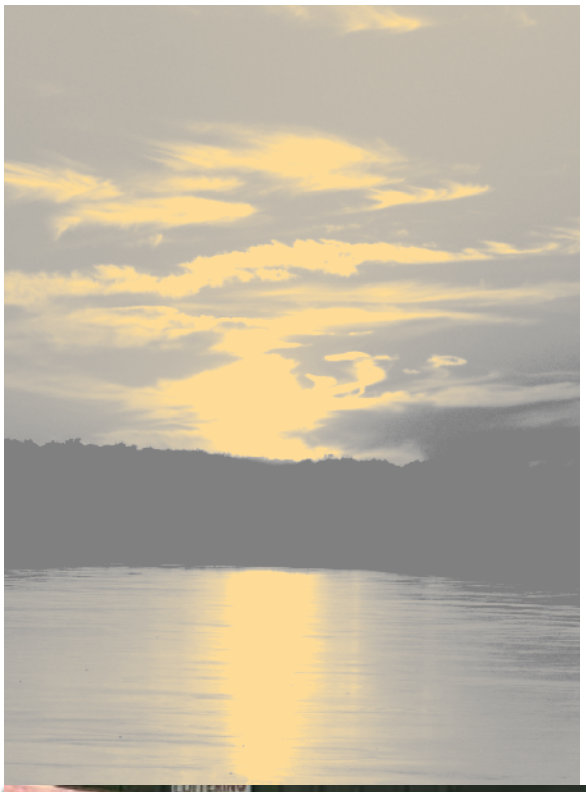
The comments received during the public hearings were heavily in support of the Central Alternative. However, there were enough comments received about the routing of the Central Alternative around Cleveland in Bolivar County and near the Welcome Center at Lula in Coahoma County to justify follow-up studies. An independent follow-up Economic Study supported the selection of the Central Alternative with its western routing around Cleveland as the Preferred Alternative. A follow-up review of the environmental data related to archaeology and previous input received from the Native American tribes supported the decision for using the Central Alternative alignment near the Welcome Center at Lula in Coahoma County as the Preferred Alternative.

*The I-69 Project Team includes MDOT, Federal Highway Administration, Neel-Schaffer, Inc., Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Coastal Environments, Inc., and Ken Weeden and Associates, Inc.

I-69 Chosen Route From Benoit to Robinsonville



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Environmental Devision
PO Box 1850 • Jackson, MS 39215-1850



What Happens Next?

During the spring of 2010, the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be distributed to all federal, state and local agencies for review. The Environmental Protection Agency will list the EIS as available for review in the Federal Register. This includes placing a copy for public review at MDOT offices in Jackson, Yazoo City, Batesville, and Leland, Mississippi, and in public libraries and Mayors' offices in the study area, as well as the offices of the boards of supervisors in Washington, Sunflower, Bolivar, Coahoma, and Tunica Counties.

The review period, which will last 30 days from its listing in the Federal Register, will be published in local newspapers. Afterwards, a Record of Decision (ROD) must be prepared and approved. Approval of the ROD should be accomplished by the end of the 2010 Calendar Year. The ROD will, among other things, identify the selected alternative, provide information on the alternatives considered and address any substantive comments that may be received during the review.

Once the ROD has been approved, a major landmark in the development of I-69 will have been achieved and transportation officials may then focus attention on I-69 right of way and construction activities. However, it will take considerable time before appreciable segments of this portion of I-69 are constructed and open to traffic, and special federal funding will be necessary for many years to come before the dream of completing Mississippi's sections of I-69 becomes a reality.

How Do I Get More Information?

To learn more about I-69 SIU #11, visit the website at
http://www.gomdot.com/home/projects/I69/home.aspx
or contact Kim Thurman, MDOT Environmental Administrator

P.O. Box 1850 • Jackson, MS 39215-1850 • (601) 359-7920

E-mail: environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us