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John Bel Edwards, Governor
Shawn D. Wilson, Ph.D., Secretary

February 11, 2016

STATE PROJECT NO.: H.003014
FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO.: H003014
NAME: I-10: LA 347 TO ATCHAFALAYA FLOODWAY BRIDGE
ROUTE: I-10
PARISHE: ST. MARTIN

Wes Bolinger
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
5304 Flanders Drive, Suite A
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808

SUBJECT: Categorical Exclusion

ATTN: Mr. Mark Stinson
Mr. Bob Mahoney

Dear Mr. Bolinger:

Attached is the Environmental Checklist with a copy of the application for the captioned project. Based on the information contained herein, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) believes this project meets the requirements for classification as a Categorical Exclusion.

On June 19, 2015, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred that this project would not affect historic properties. However, due to the addition of two roundabouts to the project description, DOTD resubmitted the Cultural Resources findings to SHPO on February 2, 2016. We anticipate concurrence on or around March 2, 2016. Upon receipt of the stamped SHPO concurrence letter, DOTD will forward the correspondence to your office.

Per the Wetland Finding (Appendix C), there are approximately **1.655 acre of potentially jurisdictional herbaceous wetlands** and approximately **3.366 acres of other waters of the U.S. within the project right-of-way**. The Department of the Army, New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers, will determine whether the identified areas are jurisdictional and the impact acreage that must be permitted with a Department of the Army, Clean Water Act permit prior to the deposition or redistribution of dredged or fill material into wetlands that are waters of the U.S.

In the event of the inadvertent discovery of human remains and/or archaeological artifacts of American Indian origin, activity in proximity to the location must cease and appropriate authorities, including the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, be notified without delay for additional consultations. Per request, **the project manager will include this stipulation on the construction plans to insure contractors are aware of the commitment.**

Mr. Wes Bolinger
February 10, 2016
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Additionally, a stormwater permit, a levee permit, and a U.S. Coast Guard, Navigational Lights determination will be required for this project. If you have any questions or comments please contact Maria Bernard Reid at (225) 242-4506.

Sincerely,

Noel Ardoin
Environmental Engineer Administrator



Maria Bernard Reid
Environmental Impact Manager

NA/MBR/mbr
attachments

cc: Nicholas Olivier

APPROVED

CARL M. HIGHSMITH
PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM LEADER
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
DATE 2-18-16

REVIEWED AND RECOMMENDED FOR
APPROVAL 
DATE 2/17/2016

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**

AND

**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND
DEVELOPMENT**

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

FOR

STATE PROJECT NO. H.003014

F.A.P. NO. H003014

I-10: LA 347 TO ATCHAFALAYA FLOODWAY BRIDGE

ROUTE: I-10

ST. MARTIN PARISH



FEBRUARY 2016

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- Appendix E: Traffic Noise Impact and Abatement Study
- Appendix F: Preliminary Plans

SUMMARY OF MITIGATION, PERMITS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

Mitigation

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) will implement the following mitigation measures to ensure that adverse environmental impacts associated with the project are avoided or minimized to the extent practicable.

- The contractor will be required to adhere to the provisions established by the *Louisiana Standard Specifications for Roads and Bridges*, 2006 edition concerning erosion control, as well as other federal, state, and local permits that may be required.
- The proposed project would impact approximately **1.655 acre of jurisdictional herbaceous wetlands** and approximately **3.366 acres of other waters of the U.S.** This finding is pursuant to the *Army Corps of Engineers' 1987 Manual* (or *2010 Regional Supplement*) with subsequent clarification memoranda and pursuant to confirmation by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Department of the Army, New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers, will determine whether the project impact areas are jurisdictional and the impact acreage that must be permitted with a Department of the Army, Clean Water Act permit prior to the deposition or redistribution of dredged or fill material into wetlands that are waters of the U.S.

Permits

It is anticipated that DOTD would acquire the following permits prior to commencement of construction activities:

- Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (LPDES), Stormwater Permit
- Department of the Army, Clean Water Act, Nationwide Permit 23
- Atchafalaya Basin Levee District, Levee Permit
- U.S. Coast Guard, Navigational Lights determination

Commitments

In the event of the inadvertent discovery of human remains and/or archaeological artifacts of American Indian origin, activity in proximity to the location must cease and appropriate authorities, including the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, be notified without delay for additional consultations. Per request, **the project manager will include this stipulation on the construction plans to insure contractors are aware of the commitment.**

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) stated that all precautions should be observed to control nonpoint source pollution from construction activities. LDEQ requires stormwater general permits for construction areas equal to or greater than 1 acre.

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION CHECKLIST

STATE PROJECT NO.: H.003014
 NAME: I-10: LA 347 TO ATCHAFALAYA FLOODWAY BRIDGE
 ROUTE: I-10
 PARISH: ST. MARTIN

1. General Information

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conceptual Layout | <input type="checkbox"/> Line and Grade | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Plans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Survey | <input type="checkbox"/> Plan-in-Hand | <input type="checkbox"/> Advance Check Prints |

2. Class of Action

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Impact Statement (E.I.S.) | <input type="checkbox"/> State Funded Only (EE/EF/ER) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Assessment (E.A.) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Categorical Exclusion (CE) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Programmatic CE (as defined in FHWA letter of agreement dated 03/15/95) | |

3. Project Description

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) proposes a full-depth pavement rehabilitation within the existing travel lanes of Interstate 10 (I-10) from the west side of the LA 347 interchange continuing eastward to the Atchafalaya Floodway Bridge in St. Martin Parish, Louisiana. Additionally, the west bound pavement would be widened to accommodate three traffic lanes, and two roundabouts would be built at the interstate ramp intersections with LA 347. Intersection improvements are proposed at LA 352 and LA 347. The project corridor is approximately 2.4 miles long and covers approximately 119.6 acres. DOTD does not anticipate the need for additional right-of-way. Refer to the Project Description Section (page 1) of the CE for additional project information.

4. Public Involvement

- Views were solicited. **April 6, 2015 and October 8, 2015 (See Appendix A of CE)**
- Views were not solicited.
- Public Involvement events held. (List events and dates in Section 11.)¹
- A public hearing/opportunity for requesting a public hearing required. (List dates in Section 11.)
- A public hearing/opportunity for requesting a public hearing not required.

5. Real Estate

- | | NO | YES | N/A |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Will additional right-of-way be required? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is right of way required from a burial/cemetery site? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is right-of-way required from a Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) property? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is required right-of-way prime farmland ? (Use form AD 1006, if needed) ... | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Will any relocation of residences or businesses occur? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Are construction or drainage servitudes required? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

6. Section 4(f) and Section 6(f)

- | | NO | YES | N/A |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Will historic sites or publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife or waterfowl refuges (Section 4f) be affected? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Are properties acquired or improved with L&WC funds affected? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. Cultural Section 106

	NO	YES	N/A
a. Are any known historic properties adjacent or impacted by the project? (If so, list below).....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ²
b. Are any known archaeological sites adjacent or impacted by the project? (If so, list site # below)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ²
c. Would the project affect property owned by or held in trust for a federally recognized tribal government ?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Natural & Physical Environment

	NO	YES	N/A
a. Are wetlands affected?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ³
b. Are other waters of the U.S. affected?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ³
c. Are Endangered/Threatened Species/Habitat affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Is project within 100-Year Floodplain ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴
e. Is project in Coastal Zone Management Area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Is project in a Coastal Barrier Resources area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Is project on a Sole Source Aquifer ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁵
h. Is project impacting a navigable waterway ?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Are any State or Federal Scenic Rivers/Streams impacted?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Is a noise analysis warranted (Type I project)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Is an air quality study warranted?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Is project in a non-attainment area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Is project in an approved Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Are construction air, noise, & water impacts major?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Will the project affect or be affected by a hazardous waste site , leaking underground storage tank, oil/gas well, or other potentially contaminated site?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Social Impacts

	NO	YES	N/A
a. Will project change land use in the area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Are any churches and schools impacted by or adjacent to the project? (If so, list below)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Has Title VI been considered?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Will any specific groups be adversely affected? (i.e., <i>minorities, low-income, elderly, disabled, etc.</i>)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Are any hospitals, medical facilities, fire police facilities impacted by or adjacent to the project? (If so, list below).....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Will Transportation patterns change?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Is Community cohesion affected by the project?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Are short-term social/economic impacts due to construction considered major?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Do conditions warrant special construction times ? (i.e., <i>school in session, congestion, tourist season, harvest</i>)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Were Context Sensitive Solutions considered? (If so explain below).....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Were bike and pedestrian accommodations considered? (explain below).....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Will the roadway/bridge be closed ? (If yes, answer questions below).....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will a detour bridge be provided?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will a detour road be provided?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will a detour route be signed?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Permits (Check all permits that may be required)

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corps Nationwide | <input type="checkbox"/> CUP/Consistency Determination | <input type="checkbox"/> LA Scenic Stream |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corps Section 404/10 | <input type="checkbox"/> USCG Bridge | <input type="checkbox"/> DEQ WQC |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Levee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> USCG Navigational Lights | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LPDES Stormwater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain below) | | |

11. Other (Use this space to explain or expand answers to questions above.)

¹**Section 4** – Two Public Meetings were held at the Recreational Building in Henderson, LA for this project: on May 28, 2015 and on November 19, 2015. Transcripts of the Public Meetings are included as Appendix B of the CE.

²**Section 7(a,b)** – Refer to Cultural Resources Section (page 3) and Appendices A and C of CE.

³**Section 8(a,b)** – Refer to Wetlands Section (page 4) and Appendix D of CE.

⁴**Section 8(d)** – Refer to Floodplains Section (page 5) and Appendix A of CE.

⁵**Section 8(g)** – Refer to Sole-Source Aquifer Section (page 5) and Appendix C of CE.

Preparer: Maria Bernard Reid
Title: Environmental Impact Manager
DOTD Environmental Section
Date: February 12, 2016

Attachments

- S.O.V. and Responses (April 6, 2015 and October 8, 2015, See Appendix A)
- Wetlands Finding (See Appendix D)
- Project Description Sheet
- Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan
- Noise Analysis (See Appendix E)
- Air Analysis
- Exhibits and/or Maps (See Appendix F)
- 4(f) Evaluation
- Form AD 1006 (Farmlands)
- 106 Documentation (See Appendix C)
- Other: Appendix B: Public Meeting Transcripts

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) proposes pavement rehabilitation within the existing right-of-way of Interstate 10 (I-10) from the west side of the Louisiana Highway (LA) 347 interchange continuing eastward to the Atchafalaya Floodway Bridge in St. Martin Parish, Louisiana using federal funding. The project area is located in Township 8 South, Range 6 East, Sections 25 and 26 and Township 8 South, Range 7 East, Section 30 or beginning at 30.314626, -91.836068 and ending at 30.323675, -91.791379.

Currently, I-10 consists of two travel lanes in each direction. The project would include full-depth replacement of the pavement within the existing lanes, widening the westbound pavement surface, and installing concrete median protection.

Pavement striping, raised markers, and rumble strips would also be installed. Post construction, eastbound I-10 would be striped with two 12-foot travel lanes, a 12-foot outside shoulder, and a 6-foot inside shoulder. The westbound pavement will be striped for three 12-foot travel lanes, a 12-foot outside shoulder, and a 16-foot inside shoulder.

A 54-inch tall concrete median barrier would also be installed in portions of the project corridor. Openings in the barrier would be located at the LA 347 interchange, the Bayou Portage bridge crossing, in forested areas of the median and at approved median crossings.

Two lanes in each direction would remain open to traffic during construction. Any lane closures limiting traffic to less than two open lanes would occur at night and would not be continuous throughout the project corridor. As part of project development, DOTD will widen the westbound Bayou Portage bridge.

Intersection improvements include the construction of two roundabouts at the eastbound and westbound I-10 ramp termini and access changes at the LA 347 and LA 352 signalized intersection.

- The roundabouts would have a single circular roadway with an 18-foot wide lane and a 13-foot wide truck apron. The roundabouts will be approximately 150 feet in diameter. The roadways approaching the roundabout (north and southbound LA 347 and I-10 on/off ramps) would have 12-foot wide lanes with 3-inch mountable curbs.
- The LA 347 and LA 352 intersection would be reconfigured, allowing right turns out of LA 352 going northbound on LA 347 and the signal would be removed. Motorists desiring to travel south on LA 347 from LA 352 would proceed north on LA 347, travel around the roundabout, to continue south on LA 347.

Estimated future Average Daily Traffic values for I-10 within the project area are 52,240 vehicles per day in 2015 and 70,359 vehicles per day in 2035. The project corridor is approximately 2.4 miles long and covers approximately 119.6 acres.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of and need for this project is to rehabilitate the existing pavement over the length of the corridor and to provide additional westbound capacity and to improve the flow of traffic at the intersections of the I-10 exit/entrance ramps and LA 347.

ALTERNATIVES

There are two alternatives for this project—the proposed Build Alternative and the No-Build Alternative. The Build Alternative would include a full-depth replacement of the pavement within the existing the lanes for the entire length of the project corridor with exception of the overpasses and bridges and widen the westbound pavement. The Build Alternative also includes the construction of a roundabout at each of the intersections of the I-10 exit/entrance ramps and LA 347 and intersection improvements at LA 347 and LA 352. The No-Build Alternative would not change the existing I-10 pavement.

IMPACTS

Right-of-Way

The project area is approximately 119.6 acres. No additional right-of-way is required for this project. There will be no displacements as a result of this project.

Wetland Reserve Program

This project is not located within a wetland reserve program area.

Prime Farmland

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), through its solicitation of views (SOV) response dated October 15, 2015, stated that the proposed construction areas are within existing rights-of-way and therefore are exempt from the rules and regulations of the Farmland Protection Policy Act, Subtitle I of Title XV, Section 1539-1549.

Section 4(f)/Section 6(f) Properties

Section 4(f) Properties

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. 303) requires the Department of Transportation to avoid public parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites unless there is no prudent and feasible alternative to such use and all practical measures to minimize harm to the area have been included in the project. On June 19, 2015, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred that this project would not affect historic properties (see Appendix C).

Section 6(f) Properties

Section 6(f) refers to parks that receive funding through the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (916 U.S.C. 4601-4 to 4601-11). Properties acquired or developed under this act cannot be converted to uses other than public outdoor recreation areas without the approval of the Secretary of the Interior.

The Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism, Office of State Parks, through its SOV response dated April 14, 2015, stated that there are no parks, sites, or other recreational areas located near the project and has no objections or concerns. No 4(f) or 6(f) properties would be impacted by the proposed project.

Section 106 and Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources

The Areas of Potential Effect (APE) are the limits of construction within the existing rights-of-way.

DOTD staff consulted the GIS databases maintained by the Louisiana Divisions of Historic Preservation and Archaeology to determine if any historic properties, including archaeological sites or standing structures eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were located within the APE (the proposed project corridor). Two archaeological surveys have been conducted within the APE. No historic properties were identified within the APE as a result of these surveys. A Phase IA archaeological survey (22-2327), conducted by Earth Search, Inc. in 2000 for a proposed fiber optic route, extended the length of the APE. The survey consisted of a background/literature search, an inspection of the corridor, a site file check and a sensitivity assessment as well as site monitoring. A Phase I cultural resources survey (22-3760), conducted by URS Corporation in 2011, is partially within the APE and did not identify any sites within or adjacent to the APE. As a result of these surveys, the Louisiana Division of Archaeology (LDOA) recommended no further field investigations, because the proposed fiber optic route runs through existing Interstate right-of-way.

The Interstate System is over 50 years of age, however the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) adopted the Section 106 Exemption regarding effects to the Interstate Highway System on March 10, 2005. Although the Interstate is exempt, the proposed undertaking effect on other historic properties must be taken into consideration. All bridges and culverts within the APE (Table 1) on the Interstate are considered exempt.

Table 1: Interstate Bridges.

Structure No.	Year Constructed	Bridge Type	Crossing
03284500607492 03284500607491	1970	Steel Plate Girder Continuous	LA 347
03284500609522 03284500609521	1970	Concrete Pre-stressed Girders	Bayou Portage

On June 19, 2015, Louisiana SHPO concurred that this project would not affect historic properties (see Appendix C).

In their SOV response dated May 14, 2015, the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians request that a survey occur prior to ground disturbance and that all cultural or archaeological sites within one mile of the project area be examined and provided to the tribe for review. On June 22, 2015, DOTD provided the Section 106 documentation prepared for the project to the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians. On November 30, 2015, the Jena Band of Choctaw

concluded with DOTD's finding that no historic properties would be affected by the project. Due to the addition of the roundabouts to the project description, all Section 106 documentation was resubmitted to SHPO on February 2, 2016 and will be forwarded to the Jena Band of Choctaw upon receipt of SHPO concurrence on or about March 2, 2016.

The Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas indicated in their SOV response dated May 15, 2015, that no immediately known impacts to cultural assets of the Tribe are anticipated. However, it is the Tribe's objective to ensure significances of American Indian ancestry, especially of Alabama-Coushatta origin, are administered with the utmost considerations. In the event of the inadvertent discovery of human remains and/or archaeological artifacts of American Indian origin, activity in proximity to the location must cease and appropriate authorities, including the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, be notified without delay for additional consultations.

Natural Environment

Wetlands and Other Waters of the U.S.

The Department of the Army, New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers, through its SOV response dated April 14, 2015, stated that there are no anticipated adverse impacts to any Corps of Engineers projects resultant of this project. Based on review of recent maps, aerial photography, and soils data, the New Orleans District determined that the project area is indicative of the occurrence waters of the U.S., including wetlands. A Department of the Army permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act will be required for the deposition or redistribution of dredged or fill material on this site. Off-site locations of activities such as borrow, disposals, haul-and detour-roads and work mobilization site developments may also be subject to Department of the Army regulatory requirements and may have an impact on a Department of the Army project.

DOTD contracted Fenstermaker and Associates, LLC (Fenstermaker) to conduct a field survey for the project area. Fenstermaker biologists conducted surveys on February 12, 2015. Fenstermaker's delineation found that the proposed project would impact **approximately 3.366 acres of potentially jurisdictional Other Waters of the U.S. and 1.655 acre of potentially jurisdictional herbaceous wetlands.** The Wetland Finding Report can be found in Appendix D.

This recommendation will be sent to the New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers, which will determine the acreage of jurisdictional wetlands and other waters of the U.S. within the project area subject to regulation pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. A Department of the Army Section 404 (Nationwide) permit will be required prior to beginning work.

Threatened/Endangered Species

On June 18, 2015, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, through its on-line Endangered Species Act and Migratory Bird Treaty Act Project Review tool indicated that the proposed project is not an activity that would affect a federally listed threatened or endangered species; nor is there proposed or designated critical habitat present within this Parish. Therefore, a "no effect" conclusion is appropriate.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), Habitat Section of the Coastal & Nongame Resources Division, through its SOV response dated April 29, 2015, stated that no impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species or critical habitats are anticipated for the proposed project. No state or federal parks, wildlife refuges, scenic streams, or wildlife management areas are known at the project site.

Floodplain

The DOTD Office of Public Works and Water Resources, Floodplain Management program, through its SOV response dated October 23, 2015, indicated that portions of the proposed project are within designated floodplains. In order to assure compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program and to ensure that appropriate permits are obtained, DOTD Floodplain Management Program requested that the project proponents should also coordinate with the St. Martin Parish Floodplain Administrator, Ms. Shanny Dodge and the municipal coordinator Henderson, Ms. Sue Dupuis.

In addition, during the improvements and construction, there must be allowance for the adequate flow of water and assurance that there will be no back up of water. There must be no instance of the creation of flooding where there was no flooding prior to construction. At this time, consideration must be given to the responsibility for cleaning debris and keeping the surrounding area clear so as not to interfere with its function.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, through its SOV response dated October 14, 2015 also requested compliance with Executive Orders 11988 and 11990 and coordination with local Floodplain Administrators.

No negative comments were received from the St. Martin Parish Floodplain Administrator (Ms. Shanny Dodge), the Town of Henderson Floodplain Administrator (Ms. Sue Dupuis), or the City Engineer.

Coastal Zone Management Area

The project is located outside of the Louisiana Coastal Zone Management Area.

Coastal Barrier Resources Area

The project is not located within a Coastal Barrier Resources Area.

Sole Source Aquifer

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, through its SOV response dated December 9, 2015, concluded that the project is located on the Chicot aquifer system which has been designated a sole source aquifer. Based on the project information provided in the SOV, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has determined that the project should not have an adverse effect on the quality of the ground water underlying the project site.

Navigability

The bridges along the project corridor cross one waterbody, Bayou Portage. The U.S. Coast Guard through correspondence dated December 11, 2014, determined that the crossings are exempt from permitting for Coast Guard Bridge Administration purposes under the Surface Transportation Authorization Act. The bridges should all be provide for navigational clearances to accommodate any recreational boating that may exist at high

water and should be at an appropriate elevation to pass floodwaters. However, the U.S. Coast Guard has also stated that the bridges are not exempt from the required lights and other signals. The Coast Guard required that DOTD requests the lighting exemptions and provide the reason, the only exemption being Title 22 CFR 118.40(b). The statement of the reason for this exemption must fulfill the requirements of this section. Specifically, if it is determined that no significant nighttime navigation occurs at these bridge sites, a statement to this effect is required before a decision can be made. This determination shall be made and provided to the U.S. Coast Guard prior to the start of construction.

Scenic Streams

There are no scenic streams located within the proposed project area.

Physical Environment

Noise

The current Louisiana Highway Traffic Noise Policy requires a noise analysis be conducted for a Type I project that involves the addition of through-traffic lanes (additional capacity) or a significant change in the horizontal or vertical alignment. The proposed project adds capacity in the west bound lanes.

A noise analysis was conducted by DOTD covering I-10 from LA 328 eastward to the Atchafalaya Floodway Bridge. Thirty-five sensitive noise receptors were identified in the analysis area, 11 of which are within the project area for this project. Noise levels were modeled for existing conditions, future levels without the project or a No Build alternative, and future levels with the implementation of the proposed project. The models showed that all 11 of the sensitive receivers are impacted currently with the existing conditions; all 11 sensitive receivers would be impacted in the future No Build alternative; and all 11 sensitive receivers would be impacted with the implementation of the proposed project. The noise analysis also determined if noise abatement barriers would be feasible and reasonable for the impacted areas within the project corridor. Multiple barrier simulations were modeled in order to determine effectiveness of installing a noise wall. Costs were generated using DOTD noise barrier cost estimates. None of the barriers modeled met the criteria for both reasonableness and feasibility; therefore, none will be built for this project. A summary of the findings are provided in Appendix E.

Air

Transportation conformity is a process required of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) pursuant to the Clean Air Act Amendments of (CAAA) of 1990. CAAA require that transportation plans, programs, and projects in nonattainment or maintenance areas that are funded or approved by the FHWA be in conformity with the State Implementation Plan, which represents the State's plan to either achieve or maintain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for a particular pollutant. The proposed project is not located in a nonattainment or maintenance area, so conformity does not apply to this project.

St. Martin Parish is classified as in attainment with the NAAQS and have no general conformity determination obligations.

Oil, Gas, and Water Wells

The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) through its SOV response on November 3, 2015, requested that DOTD use the Strategic Online Natural Resources Information System (SONRIS) to determine the location of oil, gas and water wells within the project area. SONRIS indicates that 20 oil or gas wells and two injection wells are located within 1 mile of the project area.

LDNR SONRIS identified 141 domestic and commercial water wells within 1 mile of the project area. The proposed project would not impact the quality or quantity of groundwater available.

Water

All precautions should be observed to control nonpoint source pollution from construction activities. Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality has stormwater general permits for construction areas equal to or greater than 1 acre. The project area is larger than 1 acre; therefore, a stormwater permit will be required.

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was not conducted for this project, because there is no requirement for right-of-way acquisition.

Construction Impacts

Short-term impacts, such as construction noise, possible traffic delays, and temporary increase in air pollution are expected. However, pursuant to Section 107.14 of the *Louisiana Standard Specifications for Roads and Bridges* entitled "Environmental Protection," the contractor shall comply with federal, state, and local laws and regulations controlling pollution of the environment, including air, water, and noise.

Socio-Economic

Executive Order 12898 directs Federal agencies to take the appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects of Federal projects on the health or environment of minority and low-income populations to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law. The immediate area surrounding the project site is not densely populated. The area is mostly rural with some commercial and light industrial development. Generally, homes are not associated with planned neighborhoods.

U.S. Census population estimate for St. Martin Parish, 33.3 percent of the population are minorities and 18.2 percent of the populous lives below the poverty level. The proposed project would cause temporary increases in noise and fugitive dust emissions for residence near the project corridor during construction; however, normal ambient noise levels and air quality would return following the completion of construction. Generalized adverse impacts such as potential traffic delays during construction would be shared equally among all residents who travel the I-10 corridor. All residents would also equally enjoy the benefits of the projected improvements.

There is no information to suggest that any person's civil rights will be violated, as set forth in the U.S. Department of Transportation regulations relating to Title V of the Civil Rights

Act of 1964. Access opportunities for handicapped or non-literate individuals are not expected to be adversely impacted due to the proposed project. For pedestrians and persons who do not drive in the area, the proposed project does not decrease access opportunities.

As demonstrated above, no minority or low-income populations have been identified that would be disproportionately impacted by the proposed project. Therefore, no further environmental justice analysis is required.

COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

Early in the planning stage, SOV data were sent to all appropriate federal, state, and local agencies and officials on April 6, 2015 and again on October 8, 2015 in order to identify possible adverse social, economic, or environmental effects of the proposed highway location and/or design. No adverse or negative comments were received. Copies of the SOV letters, description, map, mailing list, and all responses are included in Appendix A.

Two public meetings were held to provide the public the opportunity to comment on the project. The open house-style meetings were held on May 28, 2015 and November 19, 2015 from 4:00 to 7:00 pm at the Henderson Recreation Building. No comments were received at the May meeting and three comments were received at the November Meeting. Transcripts of the meetings are provided in Appendix B. Two of the comments received in November were regarding the roundabouts on LA 347. Specifically, the concerns were that the roundabout concept is new for the area and residents may need educational help when learning to drive through the area; and concerns regarding the suitability of the roundabouts for bicycle traffic.

Appendix A

Solicitation of Views

Appendix B

Public Meeting Transcript

Appendix C

Additional Agency Coordination:

Cultural Resources

Levee District

Appendix D

Wetland Delineation Report

Appendix E

Traffic Noise Impact and Abatement Study

Appendix F

Preliminary Plans