

Appendix C

SDEIS Comment Letters and Public Hearing Transcripts

- C-1 SDEIS Comment Letters
- C-2 Tier 1 FEIS Comment Letters

Appendix C-1 SDEIS Comment Letters

Letter #	Letter Sender
FG-1	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
SG-1	Maine Historic Preservation Commission
SG-2	Maine House of Representatives, J. Fischer
LG-1	City of Caribou
LG-2	City of Presque Isle
LG-3	County of Aroostook
C/B-1	Aroostook Municipal Association
C/B-2	Aroostook Municipal Association
C/B-3	Aroostook Partnership for Progress
C/B-4	Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development
C/B-5	Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development
C/B-6	Loring Commerce Center
C/B-7	Maine Public Service
C/B-8	Northern Maine Development Commission
C/B-9	Sleeper's of Caribou
Cit-1	Karla Bell
Cit-2	Karla M. Bell
Cit-3	Jim Brown
Cit-4	James T. & Marguerite M. Cerrato
Cit-5	Dennis & Beth Connell
Cit-6	Dave Corriveau
Cit-7	Peter & Omerine Cyr
Cit-8	Dawn DiGiovanni
Cit-9	John F. Dionne
Cit-10	Ward Gerow & Janet Snow
Cit-11	Tom Goetz
Cit-12	Thomas Goetz
Cit-13	Diana Higgins
Cit-14	Thomas C. Holmes
Cit-15	Elaine B. Jepson
Cit-16	Philip K. Jordan
Cit-17	Joan Keaton
Cit-18	Leone Knowles
Cit-19	Kevin P. Levesque
Cit-20	Almon R. McDougal
Cit-21	Ricky J. McKinney
Cit-22	Steve Sutter
Cit-23	Pamela & Wayne Sweetser
Cit-24	Harold & Emma Underhill
Cit-25	Diane M. Ward

FG- Federal Government; SG- State Government; LG- Local Government; C/B-
Community Organizations/Businesses; Cit- Citizens



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
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OFFICE OF THE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

September 7, 2006

Jonathan McDade
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614, Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330

RE: Aroostook County Transportation Study, Aroostook County, Maine, Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (CEQ# 20060285)

Dear Mr. McDade:

The Environmental Protection Agency-New England Region (EPA) has reviewed the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA)/Maine Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the consideration of various transportation corridor improvements intended to improve mobility and efficiency within northeastern Aroostook County and to support regional economic growth. We submit the following comments in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The SDEIS is consistent with the DEIS and characterizes the 2760 square mile study area in Aroostook County (population in 2000 70,576) with an inadequate transportation system limiting access, mobility, and economic opportunity. The SDEIS highlights elements of need for transportation improvements that include: the long term loss of population in the county; a higher than average unemployment rate combined with a low rate of job growth; a lack of diverse jobs to attract and retain workers; and the desire to reduce travel times and distances and improve access to jobs. Specific transportation objectives identified in the SDEIS for the region include reducing travel time in the county, enhancing reliability of the transportation system, reducing crashes, and improving traffic flow in the localized areas of Houlton, Mars Hill, Presque Isle and Caribou.

The SDEIS was developed as a tiered NEPA document to address the extended period of time likely (due to funding constraints and statewide priorities) between consideration in the NEPA process of various transportation improvements throughout the county and actual construction. The DEIS described four major north-south corridors connecting I-95 to the St. John Valley. The SDEIS maintains the four corridor approach but divides them into 11 segments that are presented as tier 2 projects that could be funded and constructed in a reasonable time if funding was realized. The SDEIS explains that the selection of a north-south corridor has been deferred by

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FHWA and MDOT because it is not likely that the corridor can be funded and constructed in a relatively short time frame. As a result, the proposed action evaluated in the SDEIS focuses on three of the 11 segments (segments 2, 4 and 7). Segment 2 is a two lane upgrade to Route 161 beginning in Caribou and ending 25.9 miles north in Cross Lake Township. Segment 4 is a new 5.5 mile east-west highway that would connect Route 161 with Route 1 in Caribou (the Caribou Connector). Segment 7 is a new 10 mile bypass highway around Presque Isle. The SDEIS explains that the remaining eight segments will be addressed in future NEPA analyses at the time when conditions warrant construction and sufficient funding is available. As we stated in our comments on the DEIS, we believe it is clear that the remaining eight segments have great potential individually and cumulatively for significant impacts and could affect the environment and residents of Aroostook County in many ways. We continue to believe that future analyses under NEPA and the Clean Water Act will be critical to determine whether any of the work within the alternative corridors and within the eight segments is viable in an environmental, social and regulatory context.

The SDEIS contains more specific tier 2 information for the Route 161 upgrade, the Caribou Connector and the Presque Isle bypass segments which MDOT believes can reasonably be funded in the near-term (in the next 20 years). We focused our review and comments exclusively on these three segments and will comment on the other eight segments in response to future NEPA analysis for those segments. Based on our review of the SDEIS we have no major concerns with the upgrade of Route 161 (Segment 2) and will continue to coordinate with federal and state agencies through the permit process for that portion of the project. Our review of the discussion of Segments 4 and 7 in the SDEIS resulted in numerous questions and concerns about the preferred alternatives presented for both the Caribou Connector and the Presque Isle Bypass. In both instances we believe that practicable and less environmentally damaging alternatives may exist to implement each of the proposed actions and recommend that these alternatives be more fully considered. For example, the SDEIS did not include the analysis of other potentially less environmentally damaging options including smaller scale upgrades, shorter bypass/partial bypass alternatives in combination with upgrades and TSM methods. As a result, additional analysis is necessary to support informed decision-making during the Clean Water Act Section 404 permit process for the Caribou Connector and Presque Isle Bypass projects.

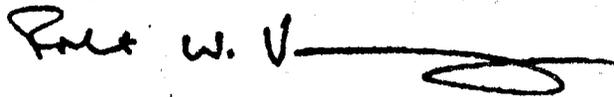
The deficiencies in the SDEIS may be due in part to the sequential rather than concurrent process being followed with respect to NEPA and Clean Water Act Section 404 review. As you know, for more than a decade, large highway projects in New England have routinely undergone combined NEPA review and wetlands permitting through the Corps of Engineers Highway Methodology. The Highway Methodology establishes a step-wise approach and process for, among other things, the framing of the project purpose, and the determination of the range of alternatives to be discussed in the EIS and the 404 process. Normally EPA would participate in meetings and discussions to help define/confirm the Corps' project purpose and would participate in one or more so-called 'Phase 1' interagency meetings to help determine an appropriate range of alternatives to be incorporated into the NEPA/404 process for detailed evaluation. That process was not followed for the SDEIS.

As we indicated during the August 30, 2006 interagency meeting to discuss NEPA/404 issues related to the project, we look forward to working with MDOT/FHWA and the other federal agencies to suggest ways to bring the NEPA and 404 processes into better alignment as part of the effort to address agency comments on the SDEIS and to increase the overall efficiency of the entire review process. The attachment to this letter describes our concerns and provides comments related to the range of alternatives discussed in the SDEIS, and impacts related to wetlands and other waters, water quality, air quality, and secondary development.

Our NEPA responsibilities require us to review and rate all federal agency EISs according to a national system to promote national consistency in federal environmental reviews. As indicated above, we have no major concerns with the proposal to upgrade Route 161 (Segment 2) and rate that portion of the SDEIS LO-1 "Lack of Objections-Adequate" (see attached rating sheet for a full explanation of this rating). The SDEIS analysis, as written, either identifies impacts associated with Segments 4 and 7 that are likely to violate environmental standards of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (especially potential aquatic resources impacts from the preferred alignments for Segments 4 and 7), or requires more information to fully present the effects of the project, other reasonable alternatives, and the selection of the proposed corridors. Because of the projected magnitude of the aquatic resources impacts associated with the preferred alignments for Segments 4 and 7--direct loss of 106 acres of wetlands and indirect/cumulative impacts to 276 acres of wetlands--and the likelihood that those impacts could be substantially reduced or avoided, we are rating those two segments "Environmental Concerns-Insufficient Information." We look forward to coordinating with MDOT/FHWA to resolve these issues and to better align the NEPA and section 404 reviews as the projects advance.

Please feel free to contact Timothy Timmermann of EPA New England's Office of Environmental Review (617-918-1025) if you have any questions about this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Varney", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert W. Varney
Regional Administrator

Attachment

Summary of Rating Definitions and Follow-up Action

Environmental Impact of the Action

LO--Lack of Objections

The EPA review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have disclosed opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

EC--Environmental Concerns

The EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may require changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce the environmental impact. EPA would like to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EO--Environmental Objections

The EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that must be avoided in order to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantial changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of some other project alternative (including the no action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EU--Environmentally Unsatisfactory

The EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of public health or welfare or environmental quality. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potentially unsatisfactory impacts are not corrected at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the CEQ.

Adequacy of the Impact Statement

Category 1--Adequate

EPA believes the draft EIS adequately sets forth the environmental impact(s) of the preferred alternative and those of the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis or data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

Category 2--Insufficient Information

The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment, or the EPA reviewer has identified new reasonably available alternatives that are within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussion should be included in the final EIS.

Category 3--Inadequate

EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potentially significant environmental impacts of the action, or the EPA reviewer has identified new, reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which should be analyzed in order to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts. EPA believes that the identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussions are of such a magnitude that they should have full public review at a draft stage. EPA does not believe that the draft EIS is adequate for the purposes of the NEPA and/or Section 309 review, and thus should be formally revised and made available for public comment in a supplemental or revised draft EIS. On the basis of the potential significant impacts involved, this proposal could be a candidate for referral to the CEQ.

Additional Detailed Comments
Aroostook County Transportation Study
Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Aroostook County, Maine

Wetland Issues

The SDEIS presents Tier 1 information for 8 of the 11 segments and Tier 2 alignment-specific information regarding three segments that comprise the proposed action. These segments total 15.5 miles of new highway and 26.5 miles of upgrades to existing highways. The 3 segments are: 1) the Route 161 Improvements (Segment 2), 2) Construction of a Caribou Connector (Segment 4) and 3) the construction of a Presque Isle Bypass (Segment 7). MDOT has also prepared two US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Highway Methodology Phase I Avoidance documents for the Presque Isle Bypass and the Route 1-161 Connector, Caribou. These documents were not part of the SDEIS but we included them as part of our review of the SDEIS as they provide information particularly relevant to the NEPA process and the review of the project under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Based on the information presented in the SDEIS and Section 404 Phase I documents we believe that there are viable and less environmentally damaging alternatives for Segments 4 & 7 that should be more fully considered in the EIS. As we stated during our recent interagency meeting to discuss the Phase I documents for the Caribou Connector and Presque Isle bypass and the SDEIS in general, extensive work remains to be done to consider and analyze alternative alignments for both segments before any informed decision-making can occur regarding the alternatives considered for the Caribou and Presque Isle projects. Some of the outstanding issues which remain include the range of alternatives considered in the SDEIS for Segments 4 and 7, whether or not the use of a four-lane cross section unnecessarily constrains the alternatives analysis, and the degree to which corridor selection should be based on the avoidance of farmland and/or impacts to aquatic resources.

Environmental Setting

As stated in Chapter 3 of the SDEIS, the majority (73 percent; 2,015 square miles, approximately 1.3 million acres) of the study area consists of forest typical of northern New England. Wetland areas comprise approximately 19 percent, or 523 square miles, of the total study area (2,760 square miles). Forests dominate the study area with shrub and upland herbaceous communities interspersed throughout. These large forested areas provide habitat for species that prefer interior forest habitat, while the interspersed forest, shrub, and open habitats provide niches for species that prefer edge and early-successional habitats. Numerous, and in some cases extensive, wetland communities within each of the cover type enhances the ecosystem diversity. Approximately 321 square miles of the study area consists of forested wetland. Shrub wetland systems include shrub bogs and shrub swamps. Approximately 92 square miles of the study area consists of shrub system wetlands. Emergent freshwater wetlands (herbaceous fens, and marshes

and wet meadows) comprise approximately 21 square miles of the study area.

These wetlands provide a multitude of ecological functions including wildlife habitat, water storage, flood conveyance, groundwater discharge, erosion control and water quality improvement. Mammal species likely to use the forested wetland habitat include moose, white-tailed deer, snowshoe hare, mink, black bear, raccoon, bobcat, beaver, and woodland jumping mouse. In addition, herpetiles such as the wood frog, spotted salamander, blue-spotted salamander, northern spring peeper, American toad, and eastern garter snake use forested wetland habitat for breeding, cover, and/or foraging. Bird species known to utilize forested wetland habitat include wood duck, pileated woodpecker, northern waterthrush, northern parula warbler, and Canada warbler.

Generally, for the Presque Isle and Caribou bypass projects, the wetlands within the study area provide valuable wildlife habitat and function to maintain water quality. These undeveloped areas are particularly important because of their increasing scarcity in the region. This region has experienced habitat loss and fragmentation mostly from agricultural activities. Forested wetlands and riparian corridors help maintain viable wildlife populations by adding to the natural connectivity of habitats already fragmented by development. Far ranging aquatic mammals as well as upland species commonly use riparian habitats for hunting and travel.

Alternatives

EPA reviewed the SDEIS and the US Army Corps of Engineers Highway Methodology Phase I Avoidance documents for the Route 1-161 Connector in Caribou and the Presque Isle Bypass which MDOT proposes to move forward through the NEPA process and into Phase II of the Corps of Engineers Highway Methodology process. The Phase I Avoidance documents provide the basis for the first iteration of interagency discussions regarding potential upgrade options and alternative alignments against a series of constraint map overlays and a test of practicability. The results of the Phase I coordination are used to develop a range of alternatives to be evaluated in the EIS that are appropriate for both NEPA and 404 purposes. In this case, based on our review of the SDEIS we have no major concerns with the proposed upgrade of Route 161 (Segment 2) because the direct and indirect environmental impacts of the project would be modest. The upgrade of Route 161 is not expected to result in significant wetland impacts, estimated at 6 acres, a total based upon the maximum amount of widening considered over the full 26-mile upgrade.

FG1-1

The balance of our comments focus on the SDEIS assessment of the alternatives and other related environmental issues considered for Segments 4 and 7. In particular, the comments provided below are generally organized by alternative type (e.g. upgrade, new bypass/road on new alignment, TSM/TDM measures, etc.). The following sections explain that we believe the SDEIS should not have dismissed upgrade alternatives along Segments 4 and 7, should have more fully considered shorter bypass options for Segment 7, and should have incorporated TSM

measures with all upgrade/bypass proposals. Our comments also identify the need for more information to more fully describe the selection process for the preferred alignment options for Segments 4 and 7 and how those preferred alignments are consistent with the requirements of the Clean Water Act.

Upgrade Alternatives

According to the SDEIS, the proposed action involves new roadway construction for Segments 4 and 7 that would result in the direct loss of over 106 acres of wetland and associated wetland habitat; approximately 60 acres of the loss is to forested wetland habitat. As stated in our previous comments on the DEIS, based upon our experience with highway projects throughout New England, upgrade alternatives which meet the project purpose and are practicable typically result in less adverse impact to wetland and other aquatic ecosystems than new location highways which affect undisturbed areas. Given the potential for such extensive adverse impacts, we believe it is critical to consider upgrade alternatives to a 4-lane divided highway. The traffic analysis does not appear to support the need for a 4-lane divided highway and the SDEIS indicates that Segments 4 and 7 could initially be built as a 2-lane highway and widened in the future as conditions warrant (SDEIS pages 2-20, 2-38).

FG1-2

Typically, smaller scale upgrades promote avoidance of environmental resources and greater flexibility to avoid structures and other cultural elements. The SDEIS does not clearly demonstrate that new roads with associated increased environmental and social impact are warranted to achieve the intended outcome. For Segment 7, for example, the upgrade of Route 1 through the downtown was dismissed in part because it would be inconsistent with the City's vision for the downtown. With respect to Clean Water Act permitting, we are in agreement with the Corps of Engineers' position on this point that community planning objectives have "no real bearing on determining practicability or meeting the basic project purpose." Moreover, mitigative measures (for parking and building use) can be undertaken to minimize the impacts of this alternative to the community. We understand the City of Presque Isle's desire for a vibrant downtown that is characterized by low vehicular speeds, reduced congestion, reduced noise, and that provides a walkable, bikable environment. We believe that upgrade solutions that provide these benefits as well as reduce environmental impacts should be explored more thoroughly. Much could be learned from other areas of the country that have faced these issues and pursued community-sensitive upgrades to existing roads instead of bypasses. Maryland DOT, for example, has worked with several communities to develop alternatives to bypasses in situations similar to those in Presque Isle. Consultations with them or with planners trained in smart growth design could lead to viable solutions that would be far less costly, economically and environmentally, than a bypass.

FG1-3

FG1-4

Shorter Bypass Alternatives

The SDEIS discusses 6 eastern alignments and 2 western alignments for the Presque Isle Bypass. All the eastern bypass routes are approximately 10 miles in length and start on Route 1

approximately 7 miles south of the city and end on Route 1 approximately 3 miles north of the city. All eastern alternatives originate from the same southern location, well south of Presque Isle. The scope of the alternatives analyzed in the SDEIS should be expanded to examine other potentially less environmentally damaging options including shorter (partial) bypass alternatives for the Presque Isle bypass, perhaps in combination with upgrades and TSM methods. It is unclear whether other starting locations closer to downtown Presque Isle were examined. We believe shorter bypass alternatives that originate closer to the downtown area should be more fully considered. For example, if the bypass began several miles further north, perhaps in the area of where MM&A railroad tracks cross Route 1, the road could be several miles shorter and still serve the same bypass function. Such a design would presumably result in much less wetland loss as well as less fragmentation of existing aquatic systems. There do not appear to be any other constraints, such as home takings, that would render such choices infeasible. Part of the shorter bypass could also be placed next to an existing road (Route 10) further reducing fragmentation to the aquatic landscape.

FG1-5

Some reductions in direct aquatic impacts (and aquatic habitat fragmentation) may also be possible for Segment 4, the Caribou Connector, if shorter alignments were adopted. For example, the 3 alignment options in the SDEIS do not include an alignment that closely follows the existing road network. We recommend that the FEIS consider an alignment that uses the existing Route 1 alignment (as a partial upgrade) as it extends north-south before it extends west to join Route 161. These measures would appear to reduce the aquatic impacts and should be fully considered in future NEPA/404 analyses.

FG1-6

TSM/TDM Alternatives

TSM and TDM actions were dismissed as stand alone alternatives in the SDEIS even though the analysis indicates that TSM measures might reduce travel time through downtown Presque Isle by improving intersection performance/traffic flow. According to the SDEIS the primary reason TSM/TDM measures were eliminated is because they would not reduce the "high level of through truck traffic in the downtown and their associated noise and air impacts." The proposed Segment 4 connector is expected to reduce downtown traffic in Caribou by 41 to 48 percent (measured in vehicles per day) resulting in a reduction of 20 to 35 trucks daily depending on the corridor selected. Segment 7 bypasses of Presque Isle to the east are expected to reduce overall traffic in downtown Presque Isle by 52 percent including 870 trucks (a reduction of 870 trucks from a no action projection of 1000 trucks daily) (see SDEIS page 4-4 and 4-5). While we agree that TSM/TDM measures alone may not be likely to meet the purpose and need for either Segment 4 or 7, we continue to believe that they should be considered in combination with any alternative considered for both segments.

FG1-7

Route 1-161 Connector, Caribou (Segment 4)

Segment 4 is common to all four SDEIS Corridors. It is a project that involves the construction of a new 5.5-mile east-west highway (according to the SDEIS to be built as a 2-lane facility initially with provisions to expand to 4-lanes as the need warrants) that would connect the Route 1/Bennett Drive intersection with Route 161 in Caribou. The SDEIS explains that the primary impacts from the alignments considered are to agricultural lands and wetlands. Direct wetland impacts (for the four lane cross-section with a 300-foot right-of-way) along the three Segment 4 build alignment options are substantial: approximately 24 acres for Alignment Option 1; 51 acres for Alignment Option 2; and 65 acres for Alignment Option 3. Impacts to agricultural lands can be classified by impact to active farmland (Option 1--81 acres of impact; Option 2-59 acres of impact; Option 3-49 acres of impact); impact to prime farmland soil (Option 1--71 acres of impact; Option 2-107 acres of impact; Option 3-119 acres of impact); and farmland of statewide importance (Option 1--55 acres of impact; Option 2-51 acres of impact; Option 3-48 acres of impact). While the SDEIS explains that disruptions to farming operations are minimized by the north-south configuration of Alignment Option 2 (avoiding/reducing the subdivision of fields), the SDEIS concludes that the impacts to agricultural land are "considered minor when compared to the available agricultural land in the Study Area." (SDEIS pages 2-33 and 4-18). Option 2 for Segment 4 was identified as the preferred alternative in the SDEIS (SDEIS page 2-49) based on reduced impacts to wetlands and Section 4 (f) resources as well as an improved ability to connect to Route 1 and Segments 3 and 5 in the future. We found that the criteria for the selection of Alignment Option 2 do not appear to be supported by information presented in the SDEIS. For example, both Alignment Options 1 and 2 have identical impacts to 4(f) resources (the National Register boundary for the Banked Dairy Barn, New Sweden Road, Woodland and the Aroostook Valley Trail-see SDEIS pages 5-17 through 5-19). Also, according to the SDEIS analysis, Alignment Option 2 will impact twice as much wetland area as Alignment Option 1 (51 acres vs. 24 acres, respectively) and the impacts are to forested wetlands. Of the 3 build alternatives, it would appear that Option 1 has the least amount of direct and indirect aquatic impacts. We understand the challenge MDOT faces in trying to minimize impacts to both farmland and aquatic resources. We also note that it may be difficult for MDOT to demonstrate that Option 2 can meet the alternatives test during the eventual Clean Water Act permitting process.

Presque Isle Bypass (Segment 7)

Segment 7 is a proposed new highway that would bypass the Presque Isle downtown and is intended to reduce overall traffic in Presque Isle, especially truck traffic. The new bypass would begin at Route 1 near the Presque Isle/Westfield town line and extend north, east of downtown Presque Isle, approximately 10 miles to rejoin Route 1 in the vicinity of Route 210. Six potential alignment options were considered in the SDEIS. Direct impacts to wetlands among the Segment 7 alignment options vary from approximately 20 acres for Alignment Option 4 to 126 acres for Alignment Option 5. According to the SDEIS all of the build alternatives are expected to have large impacts to forested wetland systems and total impacts (direct and indirect) that will

be moderate to severe. Briefly described, the wetland impacts are as follows:

Alignment Option 1 would impact approximately 64 acres in 32 wetlands in 15 systems (approximately 3,000 acres). The majority of the impacts would be to forested wetland (approximately 49 acres).

Alignment Option 2 (the preferred option) would cause the loss of approximately 55 acres of wetland in 36 wetlands in 15 systems more than half of which would occur to forested wetland (approximately 38 acres). Impacts to one wetland system are expected to be severe because the alignment bisects a large wetland that is not near any roads, and the impact location is in a wide portion of the wetland.

Alignment Option 3 would affect approximately 53 acres of wetland in 11 systems. The majority of losses would be to forested wetland (approximately 50 acres), with fewer impacts to scrub-shrub wetland (approximately two acres) and emergent marsh (< 1 acre).

Alignment Option 4 would result in the loss of approximately 20 acres of vegetated wetland among 22 wetlands of which most (approximately 15 acres) are forested. Smaller amounts of shrub (approximately three acres) and emergent wetlands (approximately two acres) would be affected.

Alignment Option 5 would result in the loss of approximately 126 acres of wetland across 13 wetland systems. Most of this loss (approximately 119 acres) would be of forested wetlands, with small amounts of emergent marsh (approximately five acres) and scrub-shrub wetland (approximately two acres).

Alignment Option 6 would result in the loss of 24 acres of wetland in 15 wetlands. Most of this loss (approximately 22 acres) would be of forested wetlands, with very small amounts (approximately one acre) each of scrub-shrub wetland and emergent marsh losses.

Farmland impacts from the options considered for Segment 7 range from 168 acres of active farmland impacted by Alignment Option 5 to 296 acres of active farmland with Alignment Option 6. Impacts to areas designated as farmland of statewide importance range from 5 acres to 85 acres (although information was only available for Options 1-3). (SDEIS page 4-18) Alignment Option 2 was designed based on coordination with farmers to develop the "least disruptive farmland alignment for the Presque Isle Bypass." (SDEIS page 4-19) Option 5 was designed to minimize farmland impacts "without regard to other resources" while Option 6 was designed to minimize wetland impacts "without regard to farmland impacts." (SDEIS page 4-19) Options 5 and 6 were developed in response to a Corps of Engineers request to provide a characterization of the low end (minimum) impacts to wetlands and farmland.

As stated above, we believe the potential for significant impacts to wetlands and aquatic habitat warrants the reconsideration of less damaging upgrades, shorter and partial bypass options, and

FG1-9

2-lane alternatives to reduce the potential for direct and indirect wetland impacts and property takings. The SDEIS explains that Alignment Option 2 was selected as the preferred alternative alignment because "it offers the best balance between wetland and farmland impacts." (SDEIS page 2-49). EPA generally supports the presentation of alternatives that characterize the maximum impacts to both wetland and farmland resources (with impacts to one reduced at the expense of another) for purposes of bracketing the potential for impacts in the NEPA analysis. While attempting to balance wetland and farmland impacts is one possible strategy for selecting a preferred alternative, it would not likely be consistent with the alternatives test during the eventual Clean Water Act permitting process.

Vernal Pools

For the SDEIS, a more detailed analysis of wetlands in the study area was undertaken to facilitate a greater understanding of potential wetland impacts along each of the corridor segments. The document states that "wetland boundaries within the SDEIS Corridors were refined from the DEIS by stereoscopic interpretation of aerial photos flown in May 2003." Chapter 3 of the SDEIS-Affected Environment, Section 3.4.3-evaluates significant vernal pools. However, the analysis is limited and does not map or attempt to identify their location relative to the new bypasses proposed. It is not clear why vernal pools were not mapped and identified as part of the analysis for the SDEIS. We note the pledge in the SDEIS to include mapping information for vernal pools in the FEIS. We support the inclusion of this mapping information and believe it should be accompanied by a discussion of appropriate measures to avoid and minimize impacts to these sensitive aquatic resources and adjacent upland areas that provide critical habitat for many vernal pool-dependent species.

FG1-10

Invasive Species

The SDEIS does not address invasive species and methods to control their spread as a result of the proposed actions. Generally, invasive species thrive in disturbed areas because they lack predators and other natural controls, and they can tolerate and adapt to a variety of environmental conditions. Invasive species threaten the diversity or abundance of native species and the ecological stability of the whole habitat. The disturbance to wetland habitats as a result of the project can increase the potential for invasive species to take hold and significantly alter the larger aquatic systems within and adjacent to the proposed project.

FG1-11

Mitigation

The preferred bypass options will directly impact approximately 106 acres of wetland with potential indirect and cumulative impacts to 278 acres of wetland in the corridor (SDEIS page 4-118). The SDEIS proposes using a 2:1 ratio to determine the appropriate size of a given mitigation site. Pending a more thorough evaluation of alternatives and more accurate information on the extent and severity of direct, secondary and cumulative adverse impacts to aquatic resources, a decision on compensatory mitigation is premature. For eventual Clean

FG1-12

FG1-13

Water Act permitting, we note that MDOT should focus on the loss of wetland function in the landscape, then consider areas most suitable for restoration, creation and/or preservation.

Secondary & Cumulative Impacts

The assessment of secondary and cumulative impacts is an improvement over that contained in the DEIS. Nevertheless, we believe it falls short on the following issues that should be addressed in the FEIS. First, the SDEIS concludes that it is difficult to predict the effect of Segments 4 and 7 on existing businesses in Presque Isle and Caribou. We believe, however, that some effort should be made to predict such effects. We understand that it may be difficult and time-consuming to collect data and information from existing businesses concerning the potential economic impacts of traffic diverted to a bypass. This is not the only manner in which this question may be addressed, however. One alternative approach is to examine one or more similar communities in which similar transportation projects were constructed. The development patterns that followed construction of the transportation improvements in these communities could be used to forecast reasonably foreseeable patterns in Aroostook County. Not only would this approach enable an assessment of the likely impacts on existing businesses, but it also would help validate the projections made in the SDEIS concerning new highway-related businesses in Presque Isle and Caribou. Second, we note that the assessment of secondary impacts relies on current zoning to project future growth. Zoning can change, and as development pressure grows at new interchanges, the pressure to rezone or grant variances may increase. Some assessment of the potential for such changes should be made.

Given that economic development is part of the project purpose, we believe there needs to be a broader discussion of factors other than transportation improvements that influence the overall economy of the region, as we noted in our comments in the DEIS. This is particularly important since, according to the SDEIS, Segments 2, 4, and 7 will produce only modest economic benefits for the region, particularly post-construction, and these three actions are not likely to meet one of the two stated purposes of the overall transportation project. Segment 7, for example, will produce 11 additional jobs in 2020, 24 in 2030, and 27 in 2035, which as the SDEIS acknowledges, will have relatively small effects on the economy. Given that funding for additional segments may or may not be available in the future, the document should describe ongoing and planned activities that will achieve the stated goal of helping to maintain and expand Aroostook County's economy.

Water Quality

Surface Water Resources

Under Public Drinking Water Supplies (Chapter 3.4.2.1 Water Resources, Table 3-30) please include a list of the public drinking water sources in the study area (as noted below) that have also been identified as impaired under the Clean Water Act (Section 303(d)) or watersheds of concern to the state of Maine.

<u>Waterbody</u>	<u>Town Served</u>	<u>Water Quality Impairment</u>
Youngs Lake	Mars Hill	Classified as Lake at Risk from new Development
Presque Isle Stream	Presque Isle	CWS 303d list for Aquatic Life, Nutrients and Bacteria,

For the potential impacts to St. John River from stormwater runoff at crossings at Cyr Rd and Cove Rd (Figure 31), please identify the stormwater BMPs that will be required to minimize impacts. FG1-19

Ground Water

Segment 2, Option 1 - This alignment would directly intersect one (1) wellhead protection area and pass close to one (1) wellhead protection area on Jepson Road in New Sweden. The water supplier responsible for these two (2) wellhead protection areas should be notified as required by Maine Public Law 761. This law requires public water suppliers be given an opportunity to review proposed development projects within their source water protection area. (30-A MRSA). FG1-20

We recommend that the BMPs implemented be consistent with the Maine Stormwater Management Law, the Maine Site Law and the recommendations in the Maine Drinking Water Program's Source Water Assessment. Please contact Mr. Andrews Tolman at the Maine Drinking Water Program at (207) 287-6196 for more information. FG1-21

At-risk Watersheds (page 3-70)

- We recommend that you delete sentences 3 & 4 that refer to the Unified Watershed Assessment (the UWA was a one-time exercise conducted and submitted to EPA in 1999). Instead please refer to Maine's 2004 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report, submitted to EPA in accordance with Sections 305(b) and 303(d) of the Clean Water Act to research water quality impairment status. The lists of impaired waters are found in the appendices of the report (Category 5 for "303(d)-listed" waters), and are organized by water body type and 10-digit HUC identifier. FG1-22

Web reference: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/docmonitoring/305b/index.htm#2004>

- We recommend that you revise the last sentence to reflect that there are several water quality limited waterbodies or impaired streams and lakes within the study area. For example, Cross Lake and Daigle Brook are both listed as impaired waterbodies under §303(d) of the Clean Water Act (the causes for both impairments relate to excess nutrient enrichment. (Refer to Volume 1 of 3, page 4-51).

Potential Impacts to Streams (Table 4-22) and Lakes (if applicable)

For an assessment of water quality impacts, we recommend that the FEIS show the locations of streams and lakes in the project area listed as "303(d)-listed" impaired waters (or listed in the more comprehensive Chapter 502 stormwater-related lists), or list the impaired or especially sensitive waterbodies with direct watersheds at risk from this project. FG1-23

Measures to Reduce the Impacts of Stormwater Runoff (SDEIS page 4-52)

Stormwater runoff from land development with impervious (hard, non-absorptive) surfaces is currently the largest contributor to the impairment of water quality in New England. Stormwater carries a mix of pollutants from roads, parking areas, etc., into water bodies during and after rainfall, and also contributes large and accelerated flow volumes. Greater quantities of stormwater runoff adversely affect the physical structure and stability of streams and the habitat for aquatic life, while increased runoff of pollutants create water quality problems, and less base flow is available to aquatic life in streams during low flow periods.

The August 2005 SDEIS Technical Report (page 4-43) mentions that mitigation measures to protect water quality will be developed as part of the final design of the Preferred Alternative. Although brief mention is made that mitigation measures "may" include stream crossings, and greater levels of protection for designs in "corridors that affect sensitive or salmon rivers" (SDEIS page 4-123), those sensitive or impaired waterbodies (for purposes of the Clean Water Act) are not identified for the different project options. For this reason, it appears to be premature for the SDEIS to conclude that no additional measures to protect water quality are necessary or proposed (SDEIS page S-15). FG1-24

The SDEIS (page 4-52) appropriately refers to the MOA between the MDOT and the Maine DEP to achieve stormwater quantity and quality controls "reasonably consistent" with the DEP's Stormwater Management Rules and MEPDES general permit for construction activity. The SDEIS generally mentions that the proposed road projects will be constructed in accordance with the MDOT's Best Management Practices manual for erosion and sedimentation control, primarily focusing on avoiding impacts during construction.

The SDEIS (page 4-123) mentions that other stormwater management measures (to reduce impacts on stream hydrology and water quality impacts) "may" be included, but there is no explanation of what level of stormwater protection will be required under Maine's revised stormwater law effective since November 2005. FG1-25

Web reference: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/docstand/stormwater/rule500and502/index.htm>

For example, the SDEIS appears to commit to only the most basic stormwater management standards which address erosion and sedimentation control. Maine State Law has four additional categories of stormwater standards (beyond the "basic" ones): general, flooding, urban

impaired stream, and other. General BMP standards mitigate for the increased frequency and duration of channel erosive flows due to runoff from smaller storms, provide pollutant removal and temperature control (in addition to the basic standards) for stream and wetland watersheds (of one acre or more impervious area, or 5 acres or more of developed area). Additional mitigation is also required for urban impaired streams, and additional flooding standards apply (stormwater management systems) if a project results in 3 acres or more of impervious area or 20 acres or more of developed area. A fifth category of standards addresses management of stormwater discharges (converting concentrated flow to sheet flow to prevent erosion of the downstream receiving area) and discharge to wetlands.

We recommend that the analysis describe the extent of impervious area, extent of developed area, as well as the potential for hydrologic changes, and increased pollution and impacts to aquatic habitat as a result of the proposed projects (also mentioned below). FG1-26

Managing Road Salt

Impacts to water quality from the application of road salt have emerged as an important issue for highway projects since we submitted our original comments on the DEIS. The proposed highway work associated with Segments 2, 4 and 7 has the potential to fill wetlands which help to purify water and will result in an increase in impervious surfaces that will contribute additional sediment, nutrients, and other pollutants of urban runoff, such as metals, oil, and gas, into streams and ground waters. Additionally, secondary development associated with the highway projects will include the replacement of natural vegetation by impervious surfaces which, in combination with increased sources of pollutants from development will increase non-point source pollutant loading to nearby streams and aquifers. The SDEIS generally mentions that the proposed road projects will be constructed in accordance with the Maine DEP Best Management Practices manual for erosion and sedimentation control and concludes that no additional measures to protect water quality are necessary or proposed. The discussion is primarily focused on mitigation measures that will help to avoid impacts due to erosion and sedimentation during construction, not on the runoff of chemicals (including road salts) to surface and ground waters.

Again, we recommend that the analysis more fully describe the potential for hydrologic changes, increased pollution and impacts to aquatic habitat as a result of the proposed projects. It has been our experience that traditional BMP's do not effectively prevent the movement of deicing compounds to surface or ground waters. Therefore, the EIS should address the potential for impacts to water quality from the application of road salt and should describe how the project would comply with applicable Maine water quality criteria for chloride, sodium, and existing antidegradation statutes for surface water quality, or with the national secondary drinking water standards. We are concerned about road salts because they can pose a significant risk to sensitive aquatic species and water supplies in the project area. In addition, salt in water supplies is especially a concern to older populations and those with high blood pressure. We suggest that the FEIS provide a description of baseline water quality conditions in project area surface and ground waters (including existing salting practices) and the documents should also discuss any FG1-27
FG1-28
FG1-29

planned instream sampling of pollutants prior to and following highway construction to demonstrate BMP design, feasibility, and effectiveness. EPA is willing to coordinate closely with MDOT/FHWA and Maine DEP to help develop a plan to understand baseline water quality conditions and to evaluate the impacts of road salt application associated with the projects on water quality and to present that information in the EIS.

In addition, EPA New England recommends that MDOT/FHWA contact the Maine DEP Sand and Salt Pile Program Coordinator, Erick Kluck at (207) 287-3901 regarding potential siting for any salt and sand storage piles associated with the proposed projects. Public Drinking Water Suppliers are also required to be notified if potential facilities may be sited within drinking water source protection areas as required by Maine Public Law 761. This law requires public water suppliers be given an opportunity to review proposed development projects within their source water protection area. (30-A MRSA). FG1-30

Air Quality

Conformity

The proposed highway facilities associated with the alternatives in the Aroostook County Transportation Study all by-pass the Presque Isle Maine PM10 (particulate matter with an aerodynamic less than or equal to a nominal 10 micrometers) attainment area¹ which has a PM10 maintenance plan in place. Hence, the proposed project is not located within (1) a nonattainment area or (2) attainment area with a maintenance plan, and is not subject to transportation or general conformity.

Presque Isle Maine PM10 Attainment Area with a Maintenance Plan

The Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement now identifies the Presque Isle Maine PM10 attainment area with its maintenance plan, and indicates the build alternatives will not adversely impact this area.

Air Quality Analyses and Technical Support

Without reviewing the MOBILE and CAL3QHC modeling EPA can not make an independent

¹That area of the City of Presque Isle bounded by Allen Street from its intersection with Main Street east to Dudley Street, Dudley Street south to Cedar Street, Cedar Street west to Main Street, Main Street south to Kennedy Brook, Kennedy Brook northwest crossing Presque Isle Stream to Coburn Street, Coburn Street northwest to Mechanic Street, Mechanic Street west to Judd Street, Judd Street northeast to State Street, State Street northwest to School Street, School Street northeast to Park Street, Park Street east to Main Street. This defines the 0.6 square mile area which circumscribes the area of high emission densities and ambient PM10 levels. (60 FR 2885, January 12, 1995)

evaluation of the mesoscale and microscale air quality analyses.

In our comments on the DEIS EPA requested that all technical support documentation for the intersection carbon monoxide analyses be made available, including the MOBILE emission factors input files, the CAL3QHC Version 2.0 input and output files and all technical assumptions and parameters. In the response to comments, ID 5.48, it was stated that, "the technical support documentation is available in the SDEIS environmental technical report". Unfortunately, the air quality technical support documentation was not included in the SDEIS documents submitted, nor available on Maine Department of Transportation website:

<http://www.state.me.us/mdot/major-planning-studies/major-planning-stds.php> or

<http://www.vhb.com/aroostook/sdeis.htm>.

Documents submitted included:

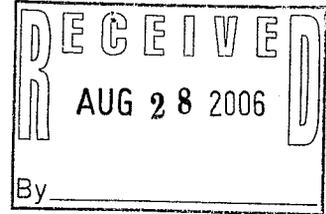
- Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Volumes 1, 2 and 3 (Volume 1 - Text, Volume 2 - Figures, Volume 3 - Response to Comments);
- Route 1 Corridor Management Plan - Caribou to Van Buren;
- Route 1 Corridor Management Plan - Presque Isle to Caribou;
- Corridor Traffic Analysis Technical Memorandum;
- Economic Technical Report; and Environmental Technical Report - Volumes 1 and 2 (Volume 1 - Text, Volume 2 - Figures).

We have contacted the consultant that helped prepare the SDEIS and anticipate receiving the requested technical support documentation in the near future.



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
55 CAPITOL STREET
65 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333



EARLE G. SHETTLEWORTH, JR.
DIRECTOR

August 11, 2006

Lisa A. Standley, Ph.D.
Deputy Project Manager
Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
101 Walnut St. / P.O. Box 9151
Watertown, MA 02471-9151

Project: MHPC #0449-02 - Aroostook County Transportation Study Supplemental Draft
Environmental Impact Statement
Town: Aroostook County, ME

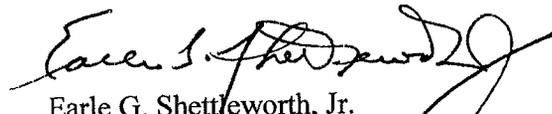
Dear Dr. Standley:

In response to your recent request, my staff and I have reviewed the above referenced Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) received July 10, 2006 to continue consultation pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966.

Based upon our review, I have concluded that the DEIS is acceptable in all respects. As is noted in the document, consultation on various aspects of this undertaking involving both architectural and archaeological resources is ongoing. SG1-1

Please contact Mike Johnson of my staff if we can be of further assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,


Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
State Historic Preservation Officer





HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SG2

2 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002
(207) 287-1400
TTY: (207) 287-4469

Jeremy Fischer

6C Third Street
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Residence: (207) 551-3097
E-Mail: RepJeremy.Fischer@legislature.maine.gov

August 4, 2006

Ray Faucher
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Mr. Faucher:

As the state representative for House District 5, Part of Presque Isle, I would like to submit comments and concerns surrounding the Department of Transportation's Aroostook Transportation Study.

I feel it is imperative to promote quality infrastructure that allows our products to get to market and our citizens to travel safely and efficiently. Aroostook County's separation from the state's major highways prohibits most industries or lucrative economic prospects from even considering locating in our area. And, as you know, safe driving has been compromised by severe road conditions on US Route 1 in the County for many years now. It is important that our citizens know that they are not forgotten in Maine's plan for a brighter economic future and that their concerns are heard and acted upon.

SG2-1

Along the same note, the Study should include in-depth communication with the landowners who are going to be affected by transportation projects. Many of our citizens are large land-owners with property that has been in their family and served their financial needs for generations. Although they might agree that the economic promise of an upgraded transportation route is needed, their voices should not be lost when eminent domain comes to play.

SG2-2

I appreciate your attention to these concerns and invite you to contact me if you have any questions or if I can be of help with any information gathering for this project.

Sincerely,

Jeremy R. Fischer
State Representative

CITY OF CARIBOU, MAINE
In City Council Assembled

May 23, 2006

Title: RESOLVE, TO DECLARE THE INTENT OF THE CARIBOU CITY COUNCIL TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE CITY OF PRESQUE ISLE TO DEVELOP A CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE U.S. ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR BETWEEN THE TWO CITIES.

WHEREAS the City of Caribou wishes to further the goals of the *Aroostook County Transportation Study* of the Maine Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS the City of Presque Isle and the City of Caribou have mutual and shared interests in maintaining and improving the economy, efficiency, and safety of travel along the U.S. Route 1 corridor through and between the two municipalities; and

WHEREAS the U.S. Route 1 corridor, hereinafter Corridor, linking Presque Isle and Caribou is integral to the safe, economical, and efficient movements of goods, services, and persons to and from northern, central, and southern portions of Aroostook County; and

WHEREAS the U.S. Route 1 corridor linking Presque Isle and Caribou is integral to the overall viability of the *Aroostook County Transportation Study*; and

WHEREAS the City of Presque Isle and the City of Caribou recognize the value of a safe and efficient transportation Corridor linking the municipalities compliant with the scope of the *Aroostook County Transportation Study* and protective of the natural and man-made environment; and

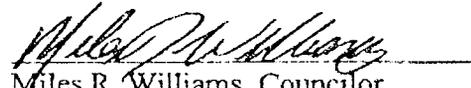
WHEREAS the City of Presque Isle and the City of Caribou have acknowledged the benefits of having complementary and compatible zoning and land use regulation throughout the Corridor;

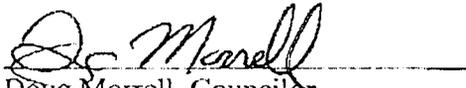
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Caribou City Council directs its City Manager and staff to join with the City of Presque Isle in the preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding leading to contractual services for the development of a Corridor Management Study that, in turn, forms the basis for a Corridor Management Plan, potential Land Trust and identifiable necessary funding sources as might be required acceptable to the City of Caribou and the City of Presque Isle, and the Maine Department of Transportation.

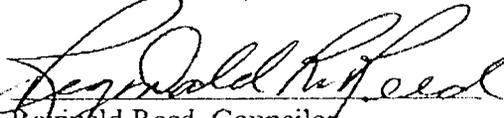

Philip McDonough, Mayor

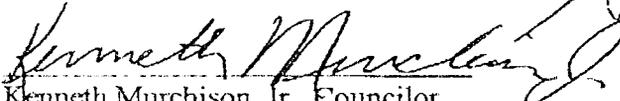

Mark Goughan, Deputy Mayor


Wilfred Martin, Jr., Councilor

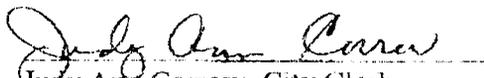

Miles R. Williams, Councilor


Doug Morrell, Councilor


Reginald Reed, Councilor


Kenneth Murchison, Jr., Councilor

Attested this 23rd day of May, 2006


Judy Ann Corrow, City Clerk
City Seal

City of Presque Isle

12 Second Street
 Presque Isle, ME 04769-2459
 Fax (207) 764-2501

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the City of Presque Isle wishes to further the goals of the *Aroostook County Transportation Study* of the Maine Department of Transportation, and

WHEREAS the City of Presque Isle and the City of Caribou have mutual and shared interests in maintaining and improving the economy, efficiency, and safety of travel along the U.S. Route 1 corridor through and between the two municipalities; and

WHEREAS the U.S. Route 1 corridor linking Presque Isle and Caribou is integral to the safe, economical, and efficient movements of goods, services, and persons to and from northern, central, and southern portions of Aroostook County; and

WHEREAS the U.S. Route 1 corridor linking Presque Isle and Caribou is integral to the overall viability of the *Aroostook County Transportation Study*; and

WHEREAS the City of Presque Isle and the City of Caribou recognize the value of a safe and efficient transportation corridor linking the municipalities while protecting the natural and man-made environment, and

WHEREAS the City of Presque Isle and the City of Caribou have acknowledged the benefits of having complementary and compatible zoning and land use regulation throughout the corridor

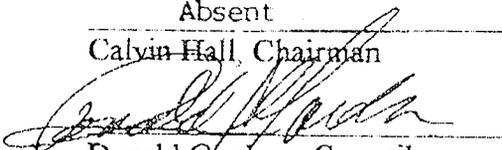
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Presque Isle City Council directs its City Manager and staff to join with the City of Caribou in the preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two municipalities. The Memorandum of Understanding will guide the development of a corridor management study which, in turn, will form the basis for a corridor management plan acceptable to the City of Presque Isle, the City of Caribou, and the Maine Department of Transportation. It also will direct, as applicable, the development of a local land trust and cooperative exploration and pursuit of funding sources to implement an acceptable Corridor Management Plan.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES:

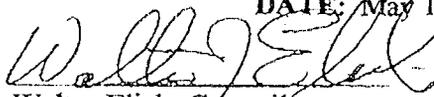
DATE: May 15, 2006

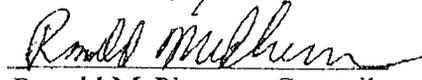
Absent

Calvin Hall, Chairman


 Donald Gardner, Councilor

Edwin Nickerson, Councilor


 Walter Elish, Councilor


 Ronald McPherson, Councilor

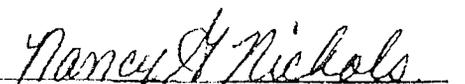

 Richard Scott, Councilor



Absent

Jennifer Trombley, Councilor

Attest:


 Nancy G. Nichols, City Clerk

Local & Regional

Presque Isle, Caribou team up on Route 1 plan

BY RACHEL RICE
OF THE NEWS STAFF

PRESQUE ISLE — During the first joint meeting in recent memory of the Presque Isle and Caribou counties.

THE COUNTY

panelists agreed to move forward on a corridor management plan for U.S. Route 1 between the two cities.

Presque Isle City Manager Tom Stevens said Friday the two panels met Wednesday to discuss the plan, which would lay out strategies for streamlining the road to allow cars and trucks to move quickly and safely between the two cities.

Both councils had discussed the concept during the past two weeks at individual monthly meetings.

Stevens said the meeting Wednesday gave the panels a chance to decide, first, whether they endorsed the idea, then, whether they wanted to consider a corridor management study as the basis of the corridor management plan. He said there was unanimous consensus to move forward.

"Because we have a lot at stake in the two communities in how we move traffic north and south, why wouldn't we want more control and input on our own destiny?" Stevens said.

A supplemental draft of an environmental impact statement from the Aroostook County Transportation Study indicates that all or a portion of the existing Route 1 corridor from Presque Isle to Caribou be used, as opposed to building a new road for the proposed North-South Highway.

It is in the two communities' best interests to create a management plan for maintaining the integrity of the highway and to become involved in any intersection or exit changes and in determining how controlled access is maintained, Stevens said.

Stevens pointed out that if the cities do not create a corri-

ridor management plan, the state Department of Transportation will "take care of it."

"This is not trying to cut them out but to assist the MDOT in a regional transportation plan," he said.

Possible results officials would like to see in the plan:

- A 20-year master plan to guide the development and use of the corridor.
- A uniform speed.
- Realignment of the road, in whole or in part.
- Limited access to the corridor.
- Right of way access rights and development rights acquisition.

- Shared driveways.
- Intersection improvements.
- Installation of so-called intelligent traffic control devices.
- Accommodations for bicycles, snowmobiles, ATVs and farm equipment.
- Consistent and compatible zoning and land use regulations along the corridor in both cities.

With the outline in place, Stevens said, individual councils will discuss passing resolutions about a memorandum of understanding between the two cities which would guide the development of the corridor management study.

For Presque Isle, that will be on Monday; for Caribou, on May 23. If the resolutions are approved and if funding is found to implement the study, the cities would send out a request for proposals in the coming months, drawn up with the assistance of DOT, and choose a consultant to conduct a corridor management study and lay out a plan with recommendations.

The finished plan could be submitted to the councils for review and approval within the next year.

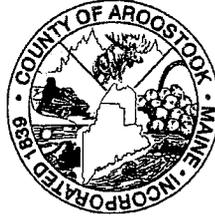
In the meantime, Stevens said, if resolutions have been passed by both panels, the councils expect to meet together again in June.

County of Aroostook

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

DOUGLAS F. BEAULIEU

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

PAUL J. ADAMS
HOULTON

NORMAN L. FOURNIER
WALLAGRASS

PAUL J. UNDERWOOD
PRESQUE ISLE

August 17, 2006

Mike Fogarty, President
Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development
P.O. Box 779
Caribou, Maine 04736

Dear Mike:

Please let your membership know that the Aroostook County Commissioners voted unanimously last night, August 16, 2006, to support the position of Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development (LEAD) on the North/South Highway as articulated in your letter to me, which was received August 11, 2006. We will convey our sentiments to the Maine Department of Transportation by copy of this letter.

The County of Aroostook wants to commend LEAD for taking an active role in promoting highway improvements in the County.

Sincerely,

Douglas F. Beaulieu
County Administrator

Pc: County Commissioners
Department of Transportation
John Melrose ✓
File

DFB:dg

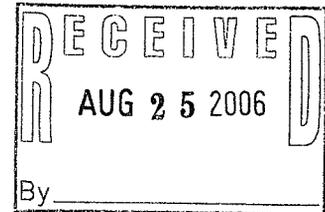
Aroostook Municipal Association
PO Box 779
Caribou, ME 04736

John Edgecomb
President

Dan Foster
Vice-President

Rita Sinclair
Secretary

Phillip Levesque
Treasurer



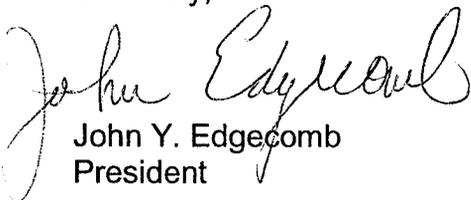
August 23, 2006

Ray Faucher P.E.
Project Manager
Maine DOT
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Dear Mr. Faucher:

The Aroostook Municipal Association agrees with the "Action Plan " as presented in the Aroostook County Transportation Study DSEIS and feels that the work to date is on target. The Association sees the work accomplished thus far as a good first step and strongly recommends that this project assertively continue forward to its completion. AMA supports and emphasizes the importance of providing a safe and efficient highway to serve Aroostook County.

Sincerely,


John Y. Edgecomb
President

AROOSTOOK MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

April 10, 2006

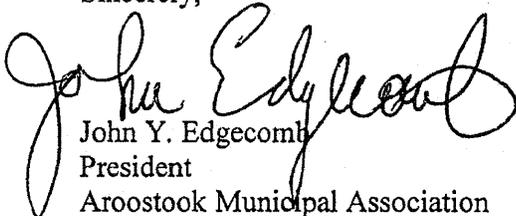
Mr. Mike Fogarty, President
Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development
Pines Health Services
PO Box 40
Caribou, ME 04736

RE: Aroostook Municipal Association

Dear Mr. Fogarty:

The membership of the Aroostook Municipal Association at a meeting on Friday April 7, 2006 voted to endorse the work of Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development (LEAD) and the LEAD Transportation Committee regarding the north-south highway issue. Our organization believes that an improved transportation system for Aroostook County is long overdue, that the time for talking is over and the time for action is now. If there is anything our Association of Aroostook County municipalities can do to help in any way, please feel free to contact me at 764-3754. Thank you for your time and consideration.

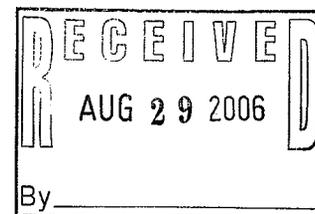
Sincerely,



John Y. Edgecomb
President
Aroostook Municipal Association

Pc: Rod Thompson, Executive Director, LEAD
Janet Hughes, Chairperson, LEAD Transportation Committee
John Melrose, Maine Tomorrow

PO BOX 779
CARIBOU, ME 04736



A public-private partnership committed to economic growth in Northern Maine

August 28, 2006

Mr. Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
MDOT
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

RE: Aroostook County Transportation Study
PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462 (10)

Dear Mr. Faucher:

The Aroostook Partnership for Progress was created at the request of Aroostook County community and business leaders during the 2003 Empowerment Summit. The Partnership is an economic development public-private initiative whose mission is to work to reverse our out-migration trends by attracting new jobs and investment to the County.

The Partnership recognizes that a reliable and efficient infrastructure is an important element to our mission and the County's economic future. An improved transportation system is a key component of this infrastructure and is an essential component to attracting and retaining business in the County.

CB3-1

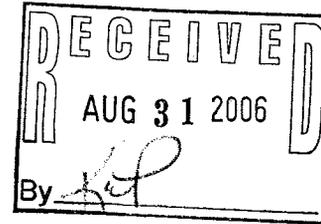
The Partnership has followed the Aroostook County Transportation Study process with great interest and supports the overall goals and objectives of the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) and specifically endorses the long term objective identified by LEAD as a four-lane, divided highway designed to interstate standards connecting the St. John Valley to I-95 in southern Aroostook County. We understand the SDEIS is recommending that decisions on some corridors would be deferred; however, the segments proposed for completion in the near term are integral to the long-term objective and will secure transportation benefits to the region. APP joins LEAD in its support for the SDEIS as presented by LEAD during the public hearings conducted August 14, 15 and 16.

Sincerely,

Walter J. Elish
President & CEO

LEADERS

Encouraging Aroostook Development



August 30, 2006

Mr. Raymond E. Faucher P.E., Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Mr. Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614, Federal Building
Augusta, ME 04330

Dear Mr. Faucher and Mr. Hasselmann,

The hearings on the SDEIS this month appear to have left the false impression with some that there is a lack of support for the overall initiative proposed in the SDEIS.

In our view, while there were many comments received of a negative nature, these comments focused on detailed design issues not germane to the current SDEIS comment request. In fact, as final locations for Segments 4 and 7 are selected nearly all of these comments may well be satisfactorily addressed. Other comments that sought actions north of Segment 4 are not contradicted by the SDEIS which retains the option under a Tier 1 analysis to pursue the actions requested. Still other comments pertained to funding matters that also are not germane to the SDEIS review.

To our knowledge, no organizations are on record opposing the Tier 2 actions proposed in the SDEIS encompassing Segments 4 through 7. On the other hand, you already have LEAD's position on record which was unanimously adopted by the LEAD Transportation Committee, the membership of which is attached. In addition, the support of the Maine County Commissioners and the Aroostook Municipal Association are noted in the attached letters and I believe you are also in receipt of direct communications from them.

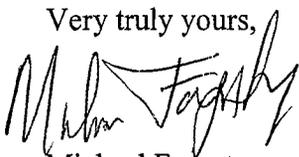
The Cities of Caribou and Presque Isle, the locale for segments 4 through 7, have both filed testimony with you supporting the SDEIS even as they express preferences for alignments contained in the SDEIS that vary from the preferred corridor. These comments appear to be most in keeping with the type of information MaineDOT and FHWA should be seeking through the SDEIS review. To our knowledge they are not asking for any action not already fully considered in the SDEIS. If you have a different interpretation we wish to be so advised. Finally, in regard to these two communities you have been made aware of the resolutions passed by each specifically supporting the proposed CMP and pledging to work toward its preparation and implementation. I have enclosed copies of these resolutions as well.

Other organizations have gone on record in their support of the SDEIS. I include for your consideration the positions taken by the Loring Development Authority, the Northern Maine Development Commission and the Aroostook Partnership for Progress.

In its entirety, this letter and attachments represents an impressive statement of support for the SDEIS document now under review. We urge MaineDOT and FHWA to expeditiously proceed toward the completion of an FSEIS.

Thank you for this consideration.

Very truly yours,



Michael Fogarty
President, LEAD

cc: Governor Baldacci
Commissioner Cole

LEAD TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

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EX OFFICIO

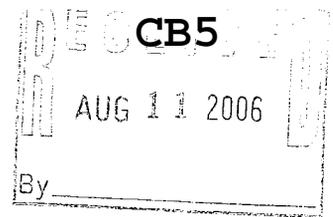
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Presque Isle, ME 04769

John Melrose
Maine Tomorrow
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Hallowell, ME 04347
623-4883
jmelrose@mainetomorrow.com

LEADERS

Encouraging Aroostook Development



Mr. Doug Beaulieu
County Administrator
144 Sweden Street, Suite 1
Caribou, ME 04736

Dear Doug:

For over twenty years Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development, LEAD, has advocated for highway improvements in the County that will reduce travel times, increase safety, improve reliability and expand the economy of our region. Today, we seek to assure that federal funds for the Aroostook North-South Highway are used at the earliest feasible date in the most effective manner possible. At a minimum, our vision is to establish a two lane limited access highway with a 300' right of way that will allow for future expansion. Today, a section of such a road already exists on Route 1 extending a couple of miles just north of the Caribou Motor Inn.

Our long term objective is a four lane, divided highway comparable in design to the Interstate. However, we do not seek an Interstate designation since federal truck weight limits are more restrictive on the Interstate than on other state roads. We want a road that improves the productivity of our economy. We want a road that begins in the Saint John Valley and ends at Interstate 95 in southern Aroostook.

Momentum is gathering to significantly upgrade Aroostook's North-South Highway connections. Maine's Congressional Delegation has now secured the money needed to build the first sections of a new road. In early July this year, MaineDOT and the Federal Highway Administration signed off on a key environmental document needed to advance these road improvements. On the ground, MaineDOT is presently engaged in critical work that will lead to the final location and design and environmental permits for these improvements. Meanwhile, the Cities of Caribou and Presque Isle have entered into a historic cooperative agreement to safeguard the free flowing capacity of Route 1 lying between the two communities.

Within a year and a half, after final design work is completed and environmental permits are in hand, we expect construction to begin on the first two segments of the Aroostook North-South Highway. One five mile segment will begin at Route 161 in Caribou north of the downtown. It will extend easterly to cross over Route 1, travel just north of the hospital and end at the intersection of Routes 1 and 89 where it will connect to the Caribou by-pass. This segment supports any of the three options now under consideration for connecting the North-South Highway to the Saint John Valley.

The second segment of new road is ten miles long and would begin at the Brewer Road off Route 1 north of Presque Isle and extend southerly across the Aroostook River east of Presque Isle reconnecting to Route 1 near the Presque Isle-Westfield boundary. This segment supports either of the two options now under consideration for connecting to I-95. Given limited funding this segment may be built in phases. For example, phase one might be from the Brewer Road to the

Conant Road or phase one might be from Routes 163/167, the Fort Road, to Route 1 in Westfield. Phase two would complete the segment. It is also likely that both segments will initially cross other roads at grade but, in time, grade separated intersections would be built.

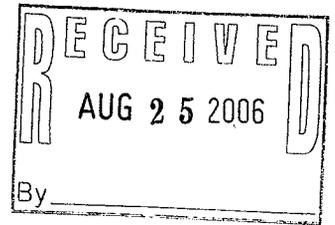
A road map of Maine quickly reveals that Aroostook, with a population of 74,000, has only two ways to connect to the Interstate, Route 1 or Route 11. Washington County, with less than half the population, has three ways to connect, Routes 1, 9 and 6. Route 9 has a National Highway System designation like Route 1 has in Aroostook. While Route 9 received over \$60 million in much needed improvements over the last couple of decades and now has a new Calais border crossing and an I-395 connector moving to construction, Aroostook's proposed north-south improvements have been mired in talk for decades. The Caribou and Presque Isle improvements can now be launched with the \$43 million Congress has set aside. The time for talk is nearing an end. We all need to pull together to get this project going so we can move on to fulfilling our complete vision for an Aroostook North-South Highway.

In this regard, on behalf of LEAD, I ask that the County Commissioners go on record in support of the position taken by LEAD as set forth in this letter and also endorse the proposed actions of the MaineDOT and FHWA contained within the recently released DSEIS and consistent with LEAD's position. It would be most helpful if your position could be formed before the upcoming hearings on the DSEIS and the position of the County Commissioners be placed into the record for these hearings.

Sincerely,



Mike Fogarty, President
Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development



LORING COMMERCE CENTRE

POSITION OF THE LORING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF MAINE
REGARDING THE
SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(FHWA-ME-EIS-02-1-SD)
AROOSTOOK TRANSPORTATION STUDY

FOR
THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
AND
THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Loring Development Authority Maine (LDA) was created by the Maine Legislature in response to the U.S. Air Force's announcement in 1991 that Loring Air Force Base would be recommended for closure under the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. Our mission has been to redevelop the former Air Force Base to utilize the formidable real estate assets to support job creation and economic development. To date we have more than replaced the civilian workforce formerly employed by the Air Force, and have made significant progress toward regaining the level of economic activity associated with the Air Force Base. Furthermore, there remains tremendous upside potential for additional development, given the unique characteristics of the Loring property. With the confluence of air, rail and highway transportation and the presence of infrastructure capable of supporting multiple large industrial and commercial projects, Loring has the potential to grow substantially and it represents a key economic opportunity for Aroostook County. Any new development at Loring will touch off additional development and commercial activity throughout the region.

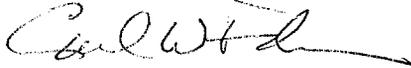
In keeping with its economic development mission, the LDA has been a major proponent for the north/south highway improvement project since our inception. From the beginning, the LDA recognized that the successful development of the former Loring Air Force Base depends on, among other things, the presence in the region of solid infrastructure systems to support business operations. Many of the ingredients are

present already: telecommunications, availability of air and rail transportation, water and wastewater treatment, university and community college campuses to support our human resources. One area where we have lagged behind is highway transportation. Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development (LEAD) has outlined the progress being made in other parts of the state, and it is clear that if Aroostook County does not address the highway transportation needs we will face in the coming decades, we will simply not be able to take advantage of the considerable opportunities we have. An improved and reliable transportation system is a key component to our economic future and it is an essential tool for attracting business to Loring, as well as to all Aroostook communities.

We have participated in the Aroostook County Transportation Study and are familiar with all of the benefits and drawbacks presented by each of the proposed corridor upgrades and new corridor construction scenarios. We wholeheartedly support and endorse the long-term objective identified by LEAD as a four-lane, divided highway designed to interstate standards, connecting the St. John Valley to Interstate 95 in southern Aroostook. While we appreciate that the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) that has been proposed would defer some decisions on some corridors, the segments proposed for completion are integral to the long-term objective and will secure significant transportation benefits to the region, helping to relieve the burden on our present inadequate highway system and assisting the movement of employees, goods and services between points within Aroostook County as well as to and from points outside of Aroostook – including Canada, southern Maine and beyond. We join LEAD in its support for the SDEIS.

I would be happy to address any questions.

Respectfully submitted,



Carl W. Flora
President & CEO
Loring Development Authority of Maine



August 31, 2006

Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Daniel T. Lee, P.E.
Manager of Engineering

Dear Mr. Faucher:

Maine Public Service Company appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on SDEIS for project FWHA-ME-EIS-02-1-S. MPS supports improvements to the highway system in Aroostook County. However, MPS believes this project should not cause financial harm to our customers. We would like to address some concerns by submitting the following comments:

1. MPS believes that it should be more involved in the Projects economic analysis in the future. **CB7-1**
2. Segment 2 was discussed at the August 15, 2006 public hearing in Caribou as an upgrade to the existing Route #161 with minimal ROW acquisition. MPS believes that MDOT has the responsibility to provide suitable locations for its poles, guys, and sufficient room to trim trees. Please refer to **23 CFR 645.205, Section 2305-B of Title 35-A**, and especially **Section 2517 of Title 35-A of the MRSA** referring to utility relocations, "Other suitable locations ... must be granted..." Recently the MDOT has required utilities to the edge of the ROW which sometimes results in insufficient room for guying or trimming. In these instances the utilities are required to obtain additional ROW for their facilities. This practice results in cost shifting to the Company's customers. **CB7-2**
3. Under the **Federal-aid regulations** the MainedOT must have either relocated all utilities or made provision for the timely relocation of utilities before advertising a highway construction project using Federal-aid funds. MPS is not aware that the appropriate agreement(s) are in place at this time. MPS looks forward to working with the MDOT in order to comply with this requirement in the near future. **CB7-3**
4. MPS has reviewed the routing of Segment 4, the Caribou Bypass Alignment 3, and has determined that the Segment passes through an existing MPS transmission private ROW corridor. MPS requests that the site maps be updated to reflect this condition. **CB7-4**
5. Segments 4 and 7 will impact approximately 12 MPS distribution lines and 4 MPS transmission lines. Early communication and coordination between MDOT and MPS will help minimize the cost for at grade two-lane construction. **CB7-5**

6. If Segments 4 and 7 are fully developed as four-lane raised highways, it will require a major effort to reroute around, go underground, or construct lines over the bypasses. **CB7-6**

Once again, MPS appreciates the opportunity to participate in this process. The Company looks forward to working with all stakeholders and contributing to the success of this project.

Due to the evolving nature of this project, MPS reserves the right to make future comments and to preserve its rights through the negotiation and the approval process noted in item 3. For more information or clarifications please contact me or Tom Osgood at (207) 760-2520.

Sincerely,



Daniel T Lee, P.E. MIEEE

CC: Mark Hasselmann

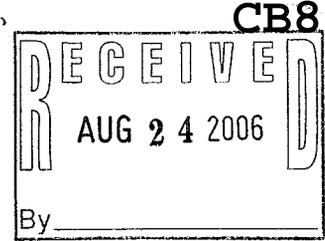


MAINE PUBLIC SERVICE
PO BOX 1209
PRESQUE ISLE, ME 04769-1209

Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016



**Northern
Maine
Development
Commission**



Northern Maine Development Commission

Aroostook County Transportation Study

Whereas, Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) has been a leader in planning, community development, economic development, and business assistance activities in northern Maine since 1967, and

Whereas, that if Aroostook County does not address the highway transportation needs and deficiencies faced in the coming decades, the region will not be able to take advantage of its considerable economic opportunities, and

Whereas, NMDC has participated in the Aroostook County Transportation Study and is familiar with the benefits and drawbacks presented by each of the proposed corridor upgrades and new corridor construction scenarios, and

Whereas, NMDC supports the overall goals and objectives of the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) released by the Maine Department of Transportation, and

Whereas, Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development (LEAD) is requesting that federal and state funds dedicated to this project are used at earliest feasible date and in the most efficient manner possible, and

Whereas, the Cities of Presque Isle and Caribou, while supportive overall of the SDEIS, have specific concerns regarding the mitigation of community impacts.

Whereas, NMDC supports the future construction of the North South Highway as an economic development initiative and necessary improvement to public infrastructure for the safe and efficient transportation of people, goods and services for the State of Maine and the Northeastern United States;

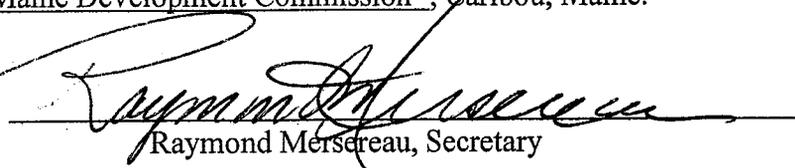
Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that the Executive Board of NMDC hereby supports the overall goals and objectives of Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement of the Aroostook County Transportation Study.



Adopted on August 17, 2006 at the Executive Board meeting held at the

Northern Maine Development Commission, Caribou, Maine.

ATTEST:



Raymond Mersereau, Secretary



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency

www.nmdc.org

11 West Presque Isle Rd., PO Box 779, Caribou, ME 04736
Voice: (207) 498-8736, Toll Free in ME: 1-800-427-8736, Fax: (207) 493-3108, TTY: (207) 498-6377

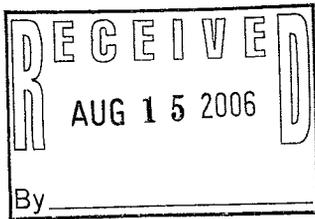
CB9

SLEEPER'S

99 Lyndon Street
Caribou, Maine
04736

Phone: 207-498-8181
Fax: 207-498-8182
Email:
David@MaineLobsterShop.com

OF CARIBOU
SINCE 1914

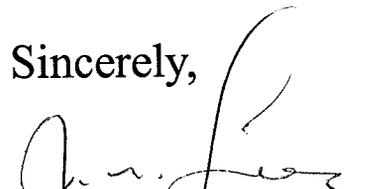


August 15, 2006

Dear Maine Department of Transportation,

We own and operate Joseph Sleeper and Sons on Route #1 in Caribou. The store has been a family run grocery and clothing now its third generation and we are currently celebrating our 92nd anniversary. We now are threatened by a proposed change to the Caribou bypass that would **CB9-1** eliminate the Lyndon street access point to Route 1/Caribou bypass. The closure of this road would result in severe economic hardship, and the likely elimination of at least fifteen full time equivalent jobs. If this road is closed, we request that the property be purchased at fair market value, as it would have no economic value without access to our traffic base on route #1. We look forward to growing in our present location and hope that the uncertainty this proposed change has caused will be resolved quickly. We do appreciate all of the effort that has been put forth so far in an attempt to improve the road system in Northern Maine. Many portions of this project will be beneficial and we look forward to continued progress. We appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Joseph Sleeper II



David Sleeper





MaineDOT

COPY



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Comment Sheet

Public Hearing

Aroostook County Transportation Study
PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462(10)

August 15, 2006

The Maine Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are accepting written comments concerning the Aroostook County Transportation Study until **August 31, 2006**. The comment sheet can be submitted to a study team member following the meeting or mailed to one of the following addresses:

Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614
Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330

Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Cit1-1 *As a citizen of Caribou, Maine, I am writing in opposition to the 'Caribou Connector'. We were promised a four lane highway west of our city and now have be offered this stop gap plan in order to spend the money. The Connector has the potential to seriously harm the economic vitability of our city. It could destroy businesses, harm the neighborhood close by and Caribou would lose jobs, tax revenue, homeowners as the Connector carries people away from our City. Spend the money on Route 1 connecting Caribou + Presque Isle. Spend it to improve the road to Van Buren. Safety at the hospital has been addressed + is being worked on as I write this letter. How about the rail road option. Makes sense with the increased price of petroleum + the decreased supply of petroleum. Most people at the meeting at the Caribou Inn + Convention Center opposed your plan. We are fine with existing roads if they are improved. Fix existing infrastructure. Please don't destroy the economic centers of two cities. We will never recover resiclty in less tax revenue, poorer schools, fewer shopping options and on and on.*

KARLA BELL

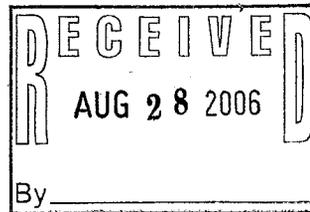
Name (Please Print)

5 CORRIVEAU STREET

Street

CARIBOU, MAINE 04736

City - State - Zip



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Comment Sheet

Public Hearing

Aroostook County Transportation Study
PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462(10)

August 15, 2006

The Maine Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are accepting written comments concerning the Aroostook County Transportation Study until **August 31, 2006**. The comment sheet can be submitted to a study team member following the meeting or mailed to one of the following addresses:

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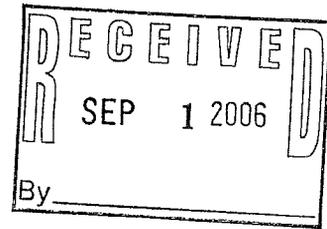
Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Cit2-1 As a citizen of Caribou, Maine, I am writing in opposition to the stop gap proposals for Caribou + Presque Isle. NORTHERN ME. was promised a 4 lane highway, please don't proceed with the ~~the~~ plans in order to spend what money you have. The only acceptable option is a 4 lane west of our fair cities. Caribou would lose businesses, jobs, tax revenue and people would leave the area. We can't afford that. Have you researched the option of rail? Makes sense as petroleum products are expensive and in limited supply. The Caribou Connector has the potential to seriously harm Caribou's only viable shopping area. Safety at the hospital has been addressed + is being worked on now. Fix the road - route 1 - between Caribou + Presque Isle. Look at the road to Van Dusen. Rt. 161 is fine. I drive it on a regular basis. Please do no harm to the existing cities economy. Please do no harm to our environment. ~~People~~^{People} who wish to visit or move to "The County" find a way + love the area. We know as we previously rented camps + lodging at homelake in Sinclair. Listen to the people who spoke at the Caribou Inn + Convention Center. They were a large group mostly opposed to the plans for Caribou + Presque Isle. Don't proceed just because there is money to be spent!

KARLA M. BELL
Name (Please Print)

5 CORRIEau STREET
Street

CARIBOU ME 04730
City - State - Zip



August 29, 2006

State of Maine
Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04330
Attn: Raymond Faucher

Re: Presque Isle By-Pass

Dear Mr. Faucher:

I own a farm in Presque Isle consisting of approximately 160 acres (My farm is outlined in black on Enclosures numbered 2 and 5). Approximately seventy (70) acres of my farm is rented to a commercial farmer and I operate an organic vegetable farm on approximately four (4) acres.

Cit3-1

First, I want you to know that I am disappointed with the way your department has managed the political aspects of this proposal. Your department has had surveyors, biologists, geologists and others on my farm off and on most of this summer. As far as I can tell, there are at least six (6) potential routes considered for the proposed by-pass. Each of the proposed routes would split my farm in two. Despite that, no one from your department has contacted me. At various hearings your spokespeople have advised us that "all impacted" people have been contacted. That is absolutely not the case. At the conclusion of these various hearings I have given my personal contact information to your speakers and I have always been told that the state would "be in touch". To date, no one has ever contacted me and I find that very hard to understand given the circumstances. This farm is my home and primary source of income and you and your representatives refuse to talk to me face to face even though each of your proposals would divide my farm in two and deprive me of both income and property value. To my way of thinking that's bad politics.

My farm land is considered prime and I am going to include several soil surveys for your general information. As you can see from Enclosures numbered 5 through 8, there are substantial amounts of land designated CgB and GgC2 which are pretty much the cream of the crop in terms of agricultural farm land. The financial effects of your proposal would be devastating. This farm includes already established permacultures for blueberries, raspberries and asparagus. My four acre organic farm would be discontinued and it takes approximately five years to re-establish organic farm ground without any chemicals or chemical residue. The cost to me would be many thousands of dollars. In addition, the commercial rental income probably would be eliminated entirely because your proposal would dissect the prime tillable acreage and would leave me with two smaller probably untillable parcels. Again, the loss of rental income would be thousands of dollars for years to come. **Cit3-2**

On Enclosure number 2, my house is shown as a red dot. This building is a railroad station built for the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad in the 1800's and was moved to this farm in the 1950's. People in the area familiar with the railroad and the railroad station still come to look at it because it is constructed very differently than modern buildings. This building is probably not listed on any National Registry but it is and should be considered a historic building. Would you please reconcile this with Section 4.3.6.1 of your Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Enclosure 9). **Cit3-3**

This farm is a natural crossing route for deer, bear, moose and other wildlife. This is common knowledge in the area and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife can verify that fact. I'd like to see copies of any studies done by your biologists or by any state agency bearing on this issue and I would appreciate being advised how you intend to reconcile that result with your Environmental Impact Statement (Enclosure number 10). **Cit3-4**

A substantial portion of my farm and abutting farms are wetlands and the options you are considering would cross the easterly portion of those wetlands. In your Environmental Impact Statement, you note that Alignment Option 2 would cross that wetland area diagonally on the easterly portion. In that same paragraph, you point out that Alignment Option 4 would pass to the west of the wetland area and would have no impact on it. Please explain why Alignment Option 2 is the preferred option if Alignment **Cit3-5**

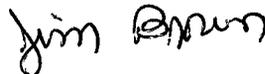
Option 4 would avoid the wetland area entirely? (Enclosure number 11, re: Segment 7).

Are there any plans to construct an underpass so my tenants and I can pass from one part of my farm to the other part with large farming equipment? Please advise. **Cit3-6**

You need to understand that this farm is not only the location of my home but it is my primary asset and I intend to fight as hard as my resources will allow in opposition to any proposal that would dissect the farm. I would appreciate a face-to-face meeting with your representatives in the very near future. My home phone number is 207-769-2107.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,



Jim Brown

JB:amr

Enclosures

cc: Richard A. Langley, Esq.

Aroostook County

Transportation Study

Aroostook County, Maine

#1



Federal Highway Administration

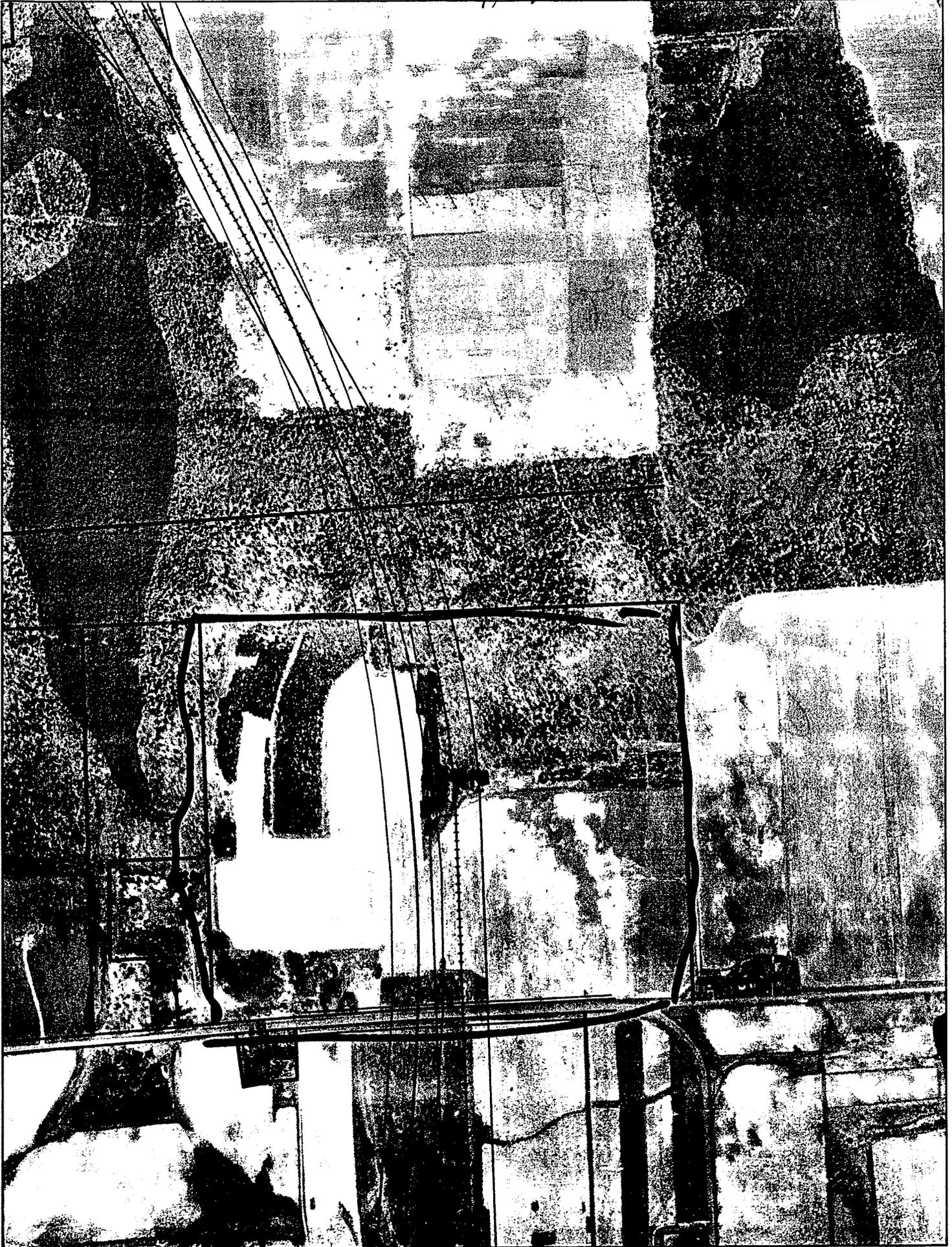


Maine Department of Transportation

June 2006

Volume 1 of 3

2



#3

As shown in Figure 3-10, active farms are concentrated in the south and central portions of the Study Area, between Houlton, Presque Isle, and Caribou. Farm fields are the dominant landscape feature throughout these portions of the Study Area. Farmland is also concentrated in the St. John Valley, between Fort Kent and the Town of Grand Isle. Route 161 from Caribou to New Sweden, Fort Kent to Daigle, and the region from Oakfield to Presque Isle are dominated by forest and contain few farm fields.

3.3.2.3 Prime and Unique Farmland Soils

The FPPA regulates four types of farmland soils: prime farmland, unique farmland, farmland of statewide importance, and farmland of local importance. Farmland subject to FPPA requirements is based on soil type and does not have to be actively used for agriculture. It can be pastureland, forested, or other land types, but not open water or developed urban or transportation areas. FPPA requirements apply if a project completed by a federal agency or with assistance from a federal agency will irreversibly convert farmland to non-agricultural use.

Prime farmland, unique farmland, farmland of state wide importance, and farmland of local importance within the SDEIS Corridors were digitized from USDA soils maps into a GIS compatible format. The large Study Area made mapping the entire Study Area impracticable.

Prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance were the only regulated soil types found in the SDEIS Corridors.

Prime Farmland is defined by the NRCS as *"land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, oilseed, and other agricultural crops with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, and without intolerable soil erosion, as determined by the Secretary. Prime farmland includes land that possesses the above characteristics but is being used currently to produce livestock and timber. It does not include land already in or committed to urban development or water storage."*¹⁰

Prime Farmland Soils are listed in Table 3-7 on page 3-28.

Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance is defined as *"farmland, other than prime or unique farmland, that is of statewide or local importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, or oilseed crops, as determined by the appropriate State or unit of local government agency or agencies, and that the Secretary determines should be considered as farmland for the purposes of this subtitle."*¹¹

Farmland of Statewide Importance is listed in Table 3-7 on page 3-28.

¹⁰ United States Department of Agriculture. Final rule effective August 6, 1984. Section 2 [7 United States Code 4201] of the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981.

¹¹ Ibid.

#4

3.3.2 Agricultural Land

Agricultural land is defined as land suitable for use in farming. Agriculture is one of the major economic sectors of the Study Area, and cultivated land and farms are the dominant landscape elements along most of the Study Area highways (Figures 3-10 and 3-11). Agricultural land is defined as land suitable for use in farming. It occupies approximately 425 square miles (15 percent) of the 2,760-square mile Study Area.

Farms and farmlands are important factors in evaluating the benefits and impacts of transportation corridors, since these are directly connected to economics, communities, and visual character. This section describes active farms and regulated farmland soils. Potential impacts on agricultural land from construction of Segments 2, 4 and 7 and measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate these potential impacts are included in Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences (Section 4.3.1, page 4-10).

3.3.2.1 Regulatory Context

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981⁹ was enacted by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure that significant agricultural lands be protected from conversion to non-agricultural uses. For highway projects receiving federal aid, the regulations promulgated under the FPPA require MaineDOT to coordinate with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

3.3.2.2 Active Farms

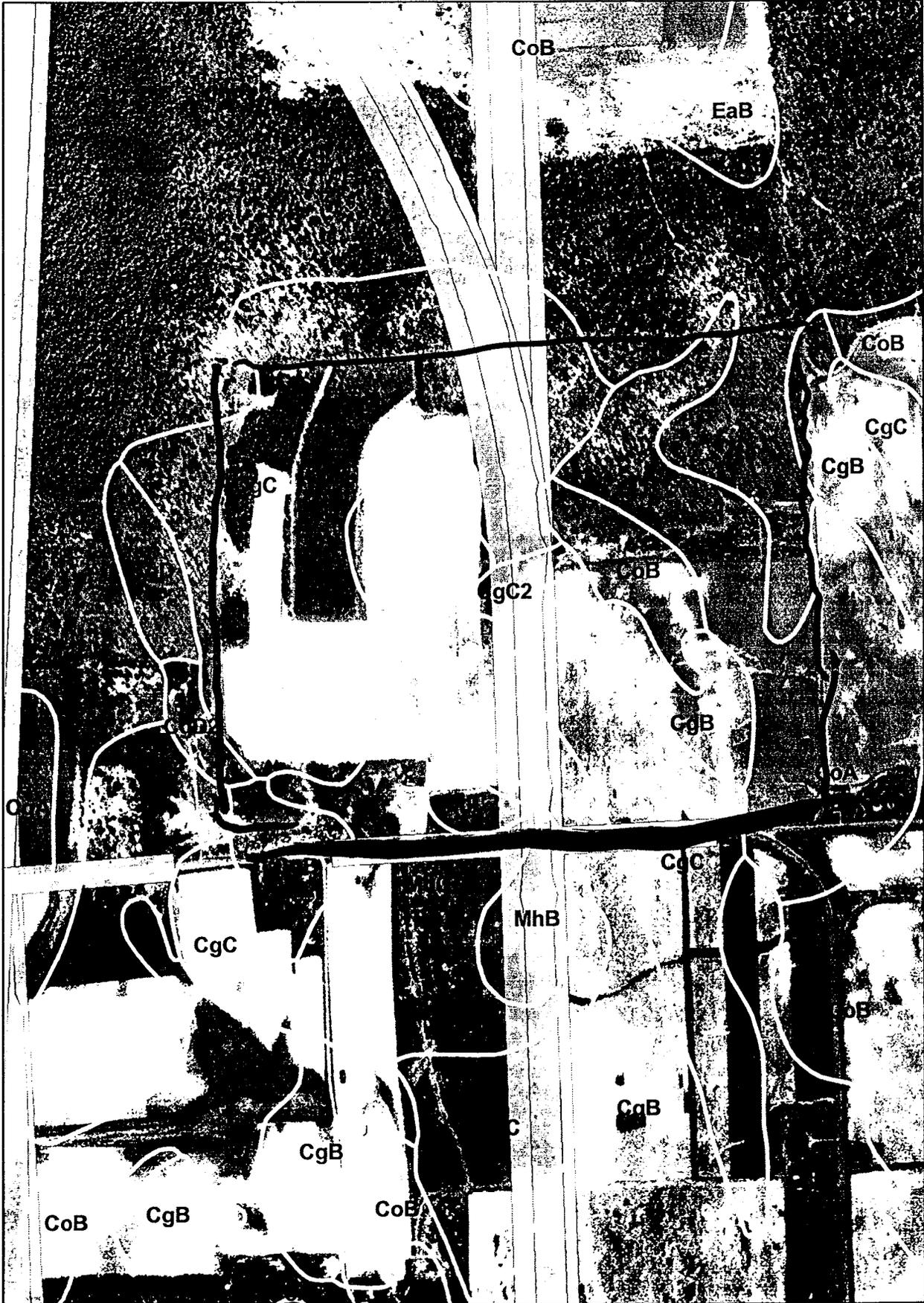
Aroostook County is one of the largest potato growing regions in the United States. The cool climate and moist soils of this region are also ideal for cultivating broccoli. Other commercially grown crops include seed potatoes, barley, and canola. Crops are rotated making acreages of each crop within the Study Area variable from year to year, but as a whole, active agricultural land comprises approximately 15 percent of the Study Area.

Active farm fields are defined as agricultural land currently in use for farming. Active farm fields along the SDEIS Corridors were identified through meetings with local farmers, site reconnaissance, and review of aerial photography. Active farms generally occupy designated farmland soils, but may also occur in less productive soils. Meetings with the agricultural community helped identify highly productive agricultural land as well as less productive fields. Key field access points and storage facilities were located as well as where large farm equipment crosses highways. Site reconnaissance confirmed the locations of active fields, field access points, and locations where farm equipment crosses highways. Fields were delineated using aerial photography of the Study Area and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software.

⁹ United States Department of Agriculture. Final rule effective August 6, 1984 Section 2 [7 United States Code 4201] of the Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981.

#5

Farm in Black



Approximate scale 1" = 660 ft (1:7920)

8

RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (B)

CAMP AREAS	SEVERE-WETNESS	PLAYGROUNDS	0-6% SIL, L: SEVERE-WETNESS 6+% SIL, L: SEVERE-SLOPE, WETNESS 0-6% GR: SEVERE-SMALL STONES, WETNESS 6+% GR: SEVERE-SLOPE, SMALL STONES, WETNESS
PICNIC AREAS	0-8% SIL, L: MODERATE-WETNESS 8-15% SIL, L: MODERATE-SLOPE, WETNESS 0-8% GR: MODERATE-WETNESS, SMALL STONES 8-15% GR: MODERATE-SLOPE, WETNESS, SMALL STONES	PATHS AND TRAILS	MODERATE-WETNESS

CAPABILITY AND YIELDS PER ACRE OF CROPS AND PASTURE (HIGH LEVEL MANAGEMENT)

CLASS- DETERMINING PHASE	CAPA- BILITY		POTATOES, IRISH (CWT)		OATS (BU)		ALFALFA HAY (TONS)		GRASS- LEGUME HAY (TONS)		PASTURE (AUM)			
	NIRR	IRR	NIRR	IRR	NIRR	IRR	NIRR	IRR	NIRR	IRR	NIRR	IRR	NIRR	IRR
0-8%	2W		420		85		4 0		3 5		7 0			
8-15%	3E		330		85		4 0		3 5		7 0			

WOODLAND SUITABILITY (C)

CLASS- DETERMINING PHASE	DRD SYM	MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS					POTENTIAL PRODUCTIVITY			TREES TO PLANT
		ERDS'N HAZARD	EQUIP LIMIT	SEEDL. MORT'Y	WINDTH HAZARD	PLANT COMPET	COMMON TREES	SITE INDX	PROD CLAS	
0-15%	10W	SLIGHT	SLIGHT	SLIGHT	MODER	MODER	EASTERN WHITE PINE	75	10	EASTERN WHITE PINE
							WHITE SPRUCE	65	10	NORTHERN WHITE- CEDAR
							PAPER BIRCH	63	5	

WINDBREAKS

CLASS- DETERMINING PHASE	SPECIES	HT	SPECIES	HT	SPECIES	HT	SPECIES	HT
	NONE							

WILDLIFE HABITAT SUITABILITY (D)

CLASS- DETERMINING PHASE	POTENTIAL FOR HABITAT ELEMENTS							POTENTIAL AS HABITAT FOR:				
	GRAIN & SEED	GRASS & LEGUME	WILD HERB	HARDWD TREES	CONIFER PLANTS	SHRUBS	WETLAND PLANTS	SHALLOW WATER	OPENLD WILDLF	WOODLD WILDLF	WETLAND WILDLF	RANGELD WILDLF
0-3%	FAIR	GOOD	GOOD	GOOD	GOOD	-	POOR	POOR	GOOD	GOOD	POOR	-
3-8%	FAIR	GOOD	GOOD	GOOD	GOOD	-	POOR	V. POOR	GOOD	GOOD	V. POOR	-
8+%	FAIR	GOOD	GOOD	GOOD	GOOD	-	V. POOR	V. POOR	GOOD	GOOD	V. POOR	-

POTENTIAL NATIVE PLANT COMMUNITY (RANGELAND OR FOREST UNDERSTORY VEGETATION)

COMMON PLANT NAME	PLANT SYMBOL (NLSFN)	PERCENTAGE COMPOSITION (DRY WEIGHT) BY CLASS DETERMINING PHASE			

POTENTIAL PRODUCTION (LBS./AC. DRY WT):
 FAVORABLE YEARS
 NORMAL YEARS
 UNFAVORABLE YEARS

FOOTNOTES

- A ESTIMATED SOIL PROPERTIES BASED ON TEST DATA FROM 7 PEDONS IN MAINE.
- B RATINGS BASED ON NATIONAL SOILS HANDBOOK, PART 603, JULY 1983.
- C RATINGS BASED ON NATIONAL FORESTRY MANUAL, PART 537, SEP 1980
- D RATINGS BASED ON SOILS MEMORANDUM 74, JAN 1972

9

4.3.6.1 **Impacts to Properties Listed on or Eligible for Listing on the National Register of Historic Places**

Historic properties were considered impacted if the proposed right-of-way for any of the segments of the Proposed Action intersected the National Register boundary for the property. Evaluation of adverse effects under Section 106 was conducted in accordance with 36 CFR, *Assessment of Adverse Effect*.

Potential adverse effects resulting from the Proposed Action include demolition of all or part of a historic property, land takings from a historic property resulting in a loss of integrity, and the introduction of visible or audible elements that diminish the integrity of historic property. Impacts resulting in no adverse effect could include minor frontage takings along an existing highway segment, or isolated strip takings on an associated parcel far removed from the eligible resources.

Table 4-15 (page 4-38) lists the effects of each segment of the Proposed Action on historic properties within the APE. More detailed descriptions of these properties and the effects of the Proposed Action are presented in Chapter 5 and the *Section 106 Determination of Effect Report* for the Study.⁹

Frontage takings are the most common and variable effect of the Proposed Action on historic properties. For purposes of assessment, frontage takings are characterized in Table 4-15 (pages 4-38 to 4-40) as being minor, moderate, or substantial. A "substantial" frontage taking means that the majority of the land between a historic structure and the highway would be acquired, resulting in demolition or a loss of integrity for the property. Substantial frontage takings typically result in a finding of Adverse Effect under Section 106. A "moderate" frontage taking means that some of the land between a historic structure and the highway would be acquired. Moderate frontage takings can result in a finding of No Adverse Effect or Adverse Effect depending on whether the taking removes character-defining features from a property or diminishes the integrity of the property. A "minor" frontage taking means that a narrow strip of land along the highway edge would be acquired, with negligible or no effect on the property's integrity. Minor frontage takings typically result in a finding of No Adverse Effect.

⁹ Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. January 2006. *Section 106 Determination of Effect Report, Aroostook County Transportation Study*.

Mitigation

10

Mitigation measures for impacts to wildlife habitat may include a variety of structural measures intended to prevent wildlife mortality and to mitigate fragmentation effects of a new highway facility, as well as measures to protect water quality and habitat quality.

Constructing wildlife crossings can mitigate impacts to wildlife from highways. Wildlife crossing structures can be incorporated into the design of new highways as well as retrofitted along upgraded road segments. For upgrades, such as those along Segment 2, often only minor changes may be necessary, such as providing vegetative screens and fencing. Crossing opportunities for both large, high mobility species, and small, low mobility species, may be provided along highways and roads. Several factors are important in designing successful wildlife underpasses. Overall, wildlife crossing structures should maintain landscape connectivity rather than redirect movements, and should be placed in known wildlife migration/travel routes. Determining species distribution and corridors of movement, as well as understanding target species biology, is critical in designing effective wildlife crossing structures. A community/ecosystem approach rather than species-specific has been found to be most effective in maintaining habitat connectivity and ecological functions.

Three types of wildlife crossing structures will be considered as mitigation for impacts to wildlife habitat and may have the potential to reduce conflicts between motorists and moose or deer:

- Wildlife overpasses are land bridges over a buried highway or road section that can connect suitable habitat for large animals, such as moose and deer, and may provide habitat for small mammals and birds. MaineDOT will coordinate with IF&W to determine if there are any wildlife travel corridors that would conflict with the Proposed Action segments to an extent that would warrant construction of an overpass.
- Extended bridges can maintain habitat connectivity by providing an unsubmerged area adjacent to the waterway and maintain riparian corridors for wildlife. Extended bridges will be considered at all locations where bridge structures are required.
- Oversized culverts are effective for both terrestrial and aquatic species, and consist simply of a pipe or culvert designed larger than flow capacity requires.

Seasonal timing of construction to avoid critical breeding or migratory periods for wildlife can also minimize indirect effects on wildlife resources. Other measures, such as habitat preservation and vegetation management, may mitigate for impacts to wildlife habitat.

11

- Jim Krysiak, Fire Chief, Town of Presque Isle, Fire Department; and
- Jerry McAvaddey, Code Enforcement Officer, Town of Presque Isle, Code Enforcement

The interviewees were unaware of any unreported major spill events along Segment 7.

**Table 3-27
 Known Spills within One-Half Mile of Segment 7**

Location	Date	Details
1. Mike Grant Farm	05/15/88	Drums of pesticides were dumped into an open ditch. Soil tests found high concentrations of the pesticide dinoseb.
2. Al Irving	11/18/93	Approximately 500 gallons of propane was released. The propane dispersed rapidly, and tests with an explosimeter found no continuing risk.
3. Parker K. Bailey Facility	03/08/95	Approximately 0.25 gallons of pesticides were spilled. The pesticides was MOCAP 6EC, an organophosphate which was identified as very toxic. The Maine DEP placed the material in an over pack drum.
4. Perry's Mini-Mart	05/17/95	Approximately 128 cubic yards of gasoline-contaminated soils were discovered during removal of two USTs. The soil was subsequently removed. In June 1995, a water test on the Mini-Mart's well water identified gasoline in the well water. The Maine DEP installed a carbon filter on the well plumbing and began water quality monitoring.
Irving Forest Products Truck at Perry's Mini-Mart	09/07/01	Approximately 15 gallons of hydraulic fluid was discharged from a truck. The fluid was recovered and removed from the site.
5. Presque Isle Public Works Department	02/12/03	Approximately 25 gallons of hydraulic fluid was discharged from a snowplow truck. The fluid was recovered and removed from the site.

3.3.6 Cultural Resources

This section describes cultural resources within the Study Area that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register. The National Register is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Districts, sites, buildings, structures, objects, and properties of traditional cultural significance may be listed on the National Register if they are greater than 50 years old, meet one of four evaluation criteria, and possess integrity. The four evaluation criteria are:

- Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or representation of the work of a master, or possession of high artistic values, or representation of a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

11

Segment 4

All three of the alignment options for Segment 4 pass through a mixture of urban, farm, and small patches of forest. The southern terminus of all three alignment options, south of Route 89, is within the developed area of Caribou, where there is little to no wildlife habitat. The northern or western terminus of all three alignment options would have essentially the same impacts, as they are on very nearly the same alignment over their westernmost 7,000 feet. This area is a mix of agricultural and mixed deciduous forest north of the Caribou Country Club (Figure 2-8). In their middle sections from Route 1 to north of the Caribou Country Club, all three alignment options cross through active farm lands. From Route 1 south, Alignment Option 1 remains on Route 1 and would have no impact on wildlife habitat. In the area north of the Cary Medical Center, between Route 1 and Route 89, Alignment Options 2 and 3 pass through a mixture of forest and agricultural land. Each would have some impact to the forest habitat that borders Hardwood Brook. Alignment Option 2 would be somewhat less intrusive to this forest area than would Alignment Option 3. This patch of forest between large agricultural areas is too small to be considered an unfragmented forest block.

Segment 7

All of the alignment options for Segment 7 would pass through a similar landscape, dominated by cleared agricultural fields and patches of forest and wetland, as shown on Figures 2-10a and 2-10b. North of the Aroostook River, all of the alignment options would be almost entirely within agricultural areas. Only a narrow band of woodland associated with a stream west of and parallel to Higgins Road would be crossed. Alignment Options 3, 5, and 6 would have the greatest impact on this small forest area.

South of the Aroostook River, all six alignment options run essentially north-south between the River and Route 1 near the Westfield town line. This approximately 7-mile long area is predominantly in active agricultural use and contains a patchwork of forest. Farms and residences are located sparsely throughout the area.

There are two large forested areas in the vicinity of the alignments south of the Aroostook River that would provide the greatest amount of wildlife habitat in the area. Both contain large areas of wetland (PFO). The first is located between Conant Road and Easton Road. It is approximately 425 acres in size. Option 5 would pass down the center of it and would impact it the most. Alignment Option 4 would pass to the west of the area and have no impact to it; Alignment Option 2, the Preferred Alignment Option, would make a diagonal crossing of it that would avoid the central portion, but would cross on its east side (Figure 2-13a).

The second forest block is located between Easton Road and Williams Road (Figure 2-13b). All of the alignments with the exception of Alignment Option 5 largely avoid this area. Alignment Options 2 (the Preferred Alignment Option), 1, and 6 cross it near its southeastern limit. Alignment Options 3 and 4 pass to the west of it.

COPY

**The Cerrato Family Ranch
303 Van Buren Road
P.O. Box 99
Caribou, Maine 04736**

**Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614
Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330**

August 15, 2006

Reference: the Caribou Connector Segment 4

It is the opinion of my wife, Marguerite, and me that the PAC has made an irresponsible choice for the Caribou Corridor; Segment 4, Option 2. Cit4-1

This suggested route does not take into consideration the safety issue of traffic entering and exiting Cary Hospital. There is no suggestion for an overpass and if a traffic light is being considered then why is so much spin being made to close several side streets between the Fort Fairfield bridge and the intersection of highway one and highway 89? We were told that these streets were being minimized to assist in the continuous flow of commercial traffic and for the additional purpose of saving time for the operators of these vehicles traveling the northern corridor between Houlton and Madawaska. Cary Hospital is a major Health Center in Caribou and with heavy traffic entering and exiting the facility 24/7. Cit4-2

How do we expect to safely access this health facility without an overpass or traffic signal?

Another issue is the inconsiderate planning to either eliminate or relocate more than 14 small businesses at the junction of Cit4-3

highway one and 89. The Ford sales facility will occupy a major amount of the green tree area and the remaining land is not suitable for the above businesses to reclaim their current business and remain solvent.

Property adjacent and to the west of the Caribou Convention Center was eliminated from consideration but actually this has the least amount of negative impact on the economic growth for small business in caribou and we as a community will not recognize a noticeable loss or increase in revenues with the proposed corridor bypassing Caribou to the west to connect with 161.

Cit4-4

The manner in which commercial traffic is being routed around Caribou with the existing bypass is more than adequate for the amount of traffic and anticipated wear and tear of the existing roadways.

Cit4-5

By routing the proposed connector to the west of the Caribou Motor Inn would eliminate the acquisition and relocation of over 14 small businesses and not negatively impact the safety of the current traffic for residents and tourists to this community.

Cit4-6

This letter is to officially notify you that we as citizens of Caribou are being forced to accept a plan that will cut the economic throat for any long term growth for small business and that our safety is not being considered.

In the end it appears that the "NO Build Option" is the best option for us now and for the 20 year future.

Respectfully submitted,

James T. Cerrato


Marguerite M. Cerrato





MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Comment Sheet

Public Hearing

Aroostook County Transportation Study
PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462(10)

August 15, 2006

The Maine Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are accepting written comments concerning the Aroostook County Transportation Study until **August 31, 2006**. The comment sheet can be submitted to a study team member following the meeting or mailed to one of the following addresses:

Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614
Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330

Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

We live on Jacobson Hill on Rt. 161 in New Sweden. We own and live in the original Jacobson hand-hewn log home (built in 1871). Our home has been approved for nomination to the National Registry of Historical Places, because it is one of the original log homes built by the first group of Swedish settlers and has some unique architectural features such as **Cit5-1** inside log walls and two story log walls. Timmer huset, the log home, directly across the street from our home, is on the National Registry of Historical Places. Both homes have the original orchards planted by the first group of Swedish settlers. These orchards sit close to our homes and the road. We have worked very hard on →
(over)

Dennis + Beth Connell

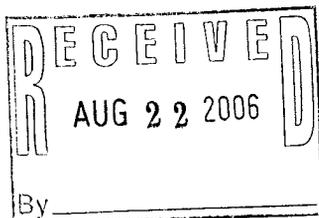
Name (Please Print)

452 New Sweden Rd.

Street

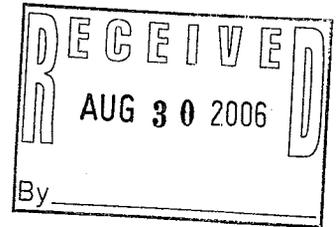
New Sweden, ME 04762

City - State - Zip



our home to maintain and improve it, while still retaining its historical integrity. We are opposed to having a passing lane added between these two historical homes. The only way to fit another lane would be to lose one or both orchards and to ruin the historical integrity of both our homes.

thank you,



To: Maine Department of Transportation
 From: David Corriveau
 Subject: Corridor Bypasses

Dear Mr. Faucher,

After attending the Caribou public session on the bypass for the North-South highway, I have come to the conclusion that too much animosity, lack of cohesiveness, and trust exist to further the process. With these beliefs in mind, I cannot support another ten to fifteen years of studies to be done by your department to correct the deficiencies. In lieu of the above, I will submit three points for consideration.

1. If a community such as Caribou, wants a bypass for safety concerns, let them be the lead-man, with MDOT providing some funding assistance and a guiding hand. Civic leaders could appoint a bypass committee that would find negotiated avenues to pursue and relate the findings to MDOT. Cit6-1
2. Improve 161 to acceptable standards - not the eight-foot wide lanes without any passing and breakdown lanes. It would also be prudent to keep US Route 1 in excellent shape. Cit6-2
3. Since it is impossible to satisfy everyone, I propose you strongly consider the recommendation of one of the commentor's at the public meeting. He suggested you start in Smyrna and build a straight shot through the woods bypassing all whining towns; with the 95 all the way to Madawaska to join the Transcanada Highway. If all you accomplish is 5 miles a year, then surely in 30 years we'll have an acceptable road system. Cit6-3

The present course of action gives us not one good road, and no substantial improvements. It gives us more of the same one-inch overlay on very tired road beds, and no I-95 statewide.

Thank – you for your time and consideration.

Regards,
 Dave Corriveau



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Comment Sheet

Public Hearing

Aroostook County Transportation Study
PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462(10)

August 15, 2006

The Maine Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are accepting written comments concerning the Aroostook County Transportation Study until August 31, 2006. The comment sheet can be submitted to a study team member following the meeting or mailed to one of the following addresses:

Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614
Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330

Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Dear Mr. Faucher,

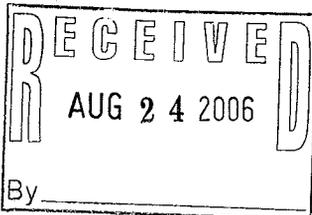
*We are concerned residential property owners from
The Van Buren Rd. of Rt 1 - We would like the ^{Cit7-1}
Caribou Corridor to go through the western part
of our town. This move would not disturb so
many business and destroy entire neighborhoods.*

*Three years ago we returned to Caribou in
our same house, thinking this would be our
retirement home. We had been displaced once before
due to Spring Air Force Base Closures. We managed to keep
our home intact for a stay of 10 years in Missouri. Upon
returning we find ourselves displace again. We refuse
to take this matter lightly. Sincerely,*

Peter + Amerine Cyr
Name (Please Print)

393 Van Buren Rd
Street

Caribou ME 04736
City - State - Zip



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Comment Sheet**Public Hearing****Aroostook County Transportation Study**
PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462(10)**August 16, 2006**

The Maine Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are accepting written comments concerning the Aroostook County Transportation Study until **August 31, 2006**. The comment sheet can be submitted to a study team member following the meeting or mailed to one of the following addresses:

Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614
Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

I recently reviewed the Aroostook County Cit8-1
Transportation Study and I am pleased
with the plan. I would however like to
see more interest in correcting the
volume of traffic using the RT.1 Corridor
from Houlton to Mars Hill. The amount of
truck traffic heading north from Houlton
seems to have reached the dangerous
level. In review of the study I see an
alternative route from Smyrna to P.I. Bypass and
support it. Greatly to reduce RT.1 traffic. This segment
should be built to connect to P.I. Bypass when P.I. Bypass
is ready. The future is now.

DAWN DiGIUANNI

Name (Please Print)

1151 W.S. Hwy. 1

Street

LITTLETON, MAINE 04730

City - State - Zip

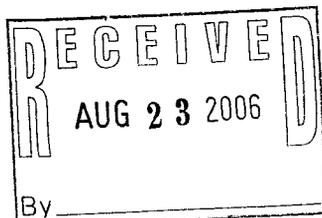
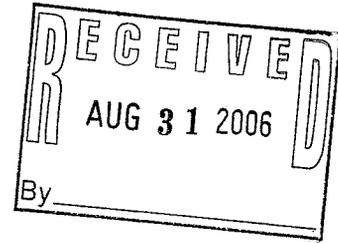


Exhibit # 3

To: Raymond E. Faucher, P.E., Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016



From: John F. Dionne
P. O. Box 13
Grand Isle, Maine 04746

August 28, 2006

RE: MDOT, Comment on Public Hearing, Aroostook County Transportation Study
PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462(10)

Please accept my corrected, August 14, 2006 Hearing Oral Comments as exhibit # 1. Exhibit # 2, our proposed highway map copy, North of Caribou, and exhibit # 3, including this letter.

We wish to add at this time few very responsible facts.

- A. As was demonstrated at the Frenchville Hearing, we have a united front from Caribou North with my plan or a similar plan. We are ready to begin. Please give us a plan.
- B. Financially, we may have a plan with our Federal funds, a combination of toll fees and a consortium to help the finance.
- C. Bring back on the table the lost of focus. Let us stick to the completion of Highway North and make use of our Federal funding diligently.
- D. We do not agree that we in Northern Maine are under-populated. The opposite is the truth. The New England States, including Southern Maine are just over-populated. As example, look at Boston Big Dig the un-necessary billions spent. And, why families had to be stuck in traffic hours to go to work and hours making it back home? Let us expand developments to rural areas in the 21st century.
- E. We have a surplus of potato land in Aroostook. We, and some friends are willing to give some of our land for free toward a highway right-of-way.
- F. We want to be on records against the few greedy farmers and merchants from central Aroostook who want to control our destiny and our honest rights. Do not yield to the few outspoken that are against but follow the great silence majority.
- G. We demand highway plan that will cover, as it should, an Aroostook County as a whole with a North termination and offer justice to all.

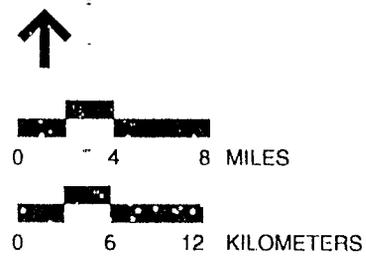
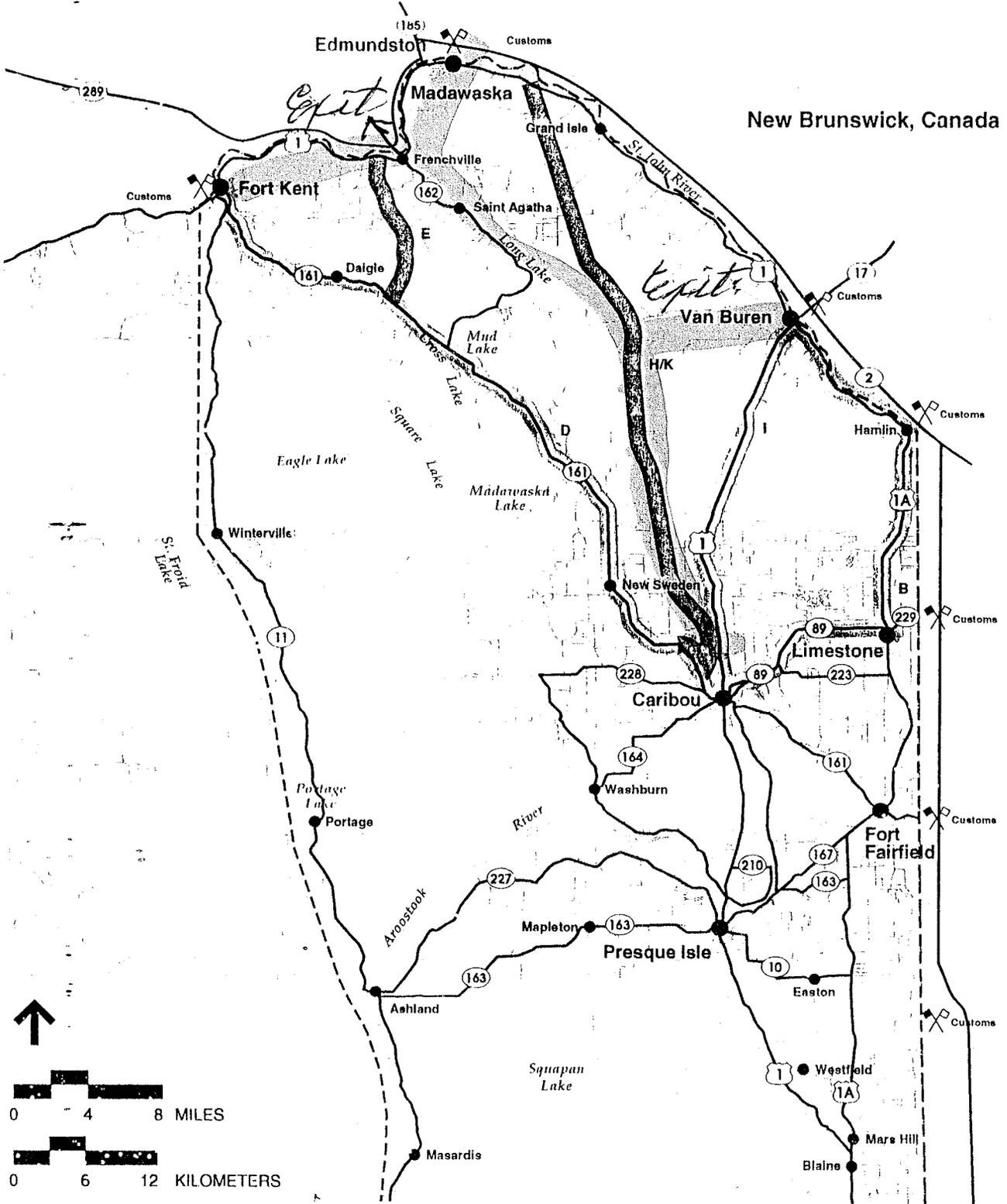
Cit9-1

Let it be in the records that my voice represents the great majority of our Aroostook population. My involvement on the termination of highway 95 North began many years ago with great support from our Federal people and the respect of our fair and honest Aroostook and Maine citizen. We have come a long way and we repeat again that it would be a real tragedy not to complete this Highway so needed for our developments, especially with the support of our Federal people at this time.

A very dedicated Highway Advocate

John F. Dionne, P. O. Box 13, Grand Isle, Maine 04746

Epit # 2



-  Upgrade Highway Link
-  New Highway Link
-  Local Road
-  Major Community
-  Minor Community

Aroostook County 
Transportation Study

Range of Northern Options

Highway New Plan

For the records...I wish to present myself, my name is John F. Dionne from Grand Isle, Maine, Phone # 207-895-3453. First thing that I want to say is let us the Valley and the County work together as a whole. It is the only way that we will ever get something done for our people, children and grandchildren. I am not a public speaker but please, I am not young and give me a break... It is tonight our Hearing Process. It is our opportunity to make our case heard, our case recorded and our case known. This is democracy and diplomacy at work and our opportunity to point our honest comments.

I brought with me tonight a St. John Valley Times Newspaper dated, June 17, 1998, published over eight years ago, and on the front page, it states: "Northern Maine roads: lots of studies, little action. Then it says in the news, written by Julia Bayly, John Dionne of Grand Isle received a standing ovation from an audience numbering more than 200 following his outline of the myriad of studies, committees and funds all dedicated over the past 30 years to the improvement of roads in the St. John Valley. Was I popular then... By the way, if it wouldn't be part of my efforts and my involvements, I believe that we would not be here tonight, not in Caribou tomorrow and in Houlton the next day. By itself, it is a small victory and did help to us get on the map but we are still have a long way to go and we must continue to meet the challenges and fight together toward our rights. Let me get to the specifics and explain to you the route that we should build North of Caribou.

I wish to present to you, tonight, a plan that will satisfy all people North of Caribou. It is a plan that will also be acceptable to the Swedish colonies of New Sweden and Stockholm, the Madawaska Lake people that are also opposed to your present State route 161 plan. We should respect those people. Now, let me explain:

Our plan is (a two lane highway for now) that should pass North-west of Van Buren and North-East of Long Lake with an exit to the Van Buren Cove Lake Road that would eventually help improve that road, a future connection to a Commercial Port of Entry. A Commercial Port of entry and a Highway connection work hand in hand. Without such connection with the Caribou Hills the chances are that you will never get this Commercial Port. Also, this Van Buren exit would also connect all people with Canada Route 17 and 11 toward the famous and so popular tourist attraction, the Gaspé Coast and the fishing regions of Miramichi and the Restigouche. Van Buren deserves to be on the map.

Cit9-2

The plan then proceed Northeast toward of Long Lake Golf Course, an exits at the end of Long Lake, to take care of St. Agathe, Sinclair and Frenchville, the a small loop with an exit to connect Fort Kent, with its University and Hospital, all other infrastructures, and all of North-West region of Aroostook. This highway will then proceed toward the Frenchville Airport and toward the Madawaska region to connect with Trans-Canada Highway. This plan will help the whole people North of Caribou. It will create the needed credibility and the needed clout to our cause. We have nothing against the improvement of secondary State Road 161. But this route has no impact on our commerce, no impact on our safety and it does not connect us Interstate-wise. In fact, passing lanes as the State wants to build are called Suicidal lanes. Secondly, we just don't build a highway to a Dead end as in Cross Lake. It just does not make sense. Who, the Transportation Department, think, we are? I have already sent a copy of my plan to our Governor Baldacci who requested that information from me.

Cit9-3

On the economic side of the issue: Let me give you just one or two examples. Jim Pelletier of Pelletier Brothers and the Dumais Brothers of Frenchville, perhaps here tonight, can attest that the difference rate between here and to Houlton Highway 95 is over a freight difference of 85 cents per cwt. Do you know that this

makes over \$400.00 per load because of our small unsafe small roads and with our hills toward Houlton? That was last year rate before the current energy crisis. And even in winter months, they say, outside truckers do not even want to come load up here. As the other example, look at Fraser Paper with its 30 to 40 loads a day. Just multiply 30 by \$400.00 and by 365 days a year, what that means? It perhaps means its survival or not. Why such deprivation to our businesses and to our people in this 21st century? The study shows that an Interstate to the Valley would increase traffic and the circulation by at least 20 to 30%. Imagine the great boost and endorsement it would give to our tourist industry and all other businesses and its people. Why should we keep Aroostook County in the dark and why should we keep this St. John Valley, one of the nicest Valley in America, in the dark and out of the modern traffic System?

Cit9-4

Our Transportation Commissioner Cole publicly recently stated at the 50th anniversary of the Federal Highway Act of America Interstate Highway System in the Bangor Area, I quote, "You couldn't support an economy without an Interstate. Our Governor Baldacci says that he wants to support developments to all region of our State. Well, let us see if these leaders are sincere and have the will to support what they preach. Governor Baldacci and Commissioner Cole, we need your leadership, your wisdom and your vision into this affair. We need your involvement and expertise with our Federal representatives, with our Homeland Department, with our GSA of the Custom personnel of Boston and with our Canadian counterpart. We have the best Federal Senators and Representatives who are very willing to support and help us get the necessary funds. Imagine all the benefits that are at our disposal. It would be a great Tragedy to pass this great opportunity at this time. Why would you be against our development and our share of prosperity? There is an old saying, and I quote: "When there's a will there's a way". It is really your duty to support this highway North throughout Aroostook.

Some in our County people say that our Valley is divided on this highway issue. Divided on what? How can we be divided as we have not been offered, as yet, a highway plan North of Caribou. I call these statements, very irresponsible. Some County people will say we do not see any benefit that a highway would bring. I call this statement out of touch with the reality of the 21st century and again highly irresponsible words. And, the argument that a highway need to pass in our front door in order to survive, I call this, my friends, follow the modern times, wake-up and get us out of the dark. The reality is that the increase traffic with exits will more than offset the lost of business that you now have.

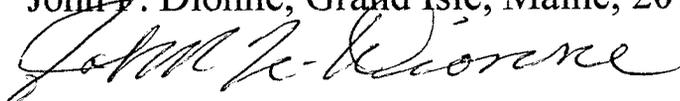
I wish to close with statements that I recently took out from my Computer News: The State of Texas embarked in a super Highway Project that will make ordinary Interstates look like a cow-paths at a cost of \$175 billions dollars. Imagine this... Then, Senator Ted Stevens from the State of Alaska was able to get nearly 400 millions to build a huge bridge to connect 100 to 200 people. The cost of this bridge alone, cost nearly as much as the whole completion of 95 North. And, the State people say, we do not have the finance. Where are you coming from? Please, give us a break. With the turn of events, I recommend that perhaps the State people should stay out of this highway finance agenda. We want an equitable Highway plan in Aroostook as a whole. We believe that we can do a much better job in financing this project. As we see it, you already spent many millions for plans and as of yet after years of planning and meetings, we do not even have a plan to get started. Irving Oil is building his own roads without much complication. Why can't we? We know this territory much better than you do from Augusta. We believe in fact, that perhaps we can and we should build our own Highway. Your administration certainly do not work with us and what good it is to us. The plan that you present to us tonight, I call this, a no plan and it is not acceptable. We perhaps should plan on a Consortium as the

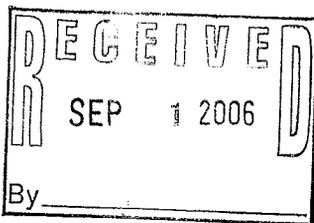
Province of New Brunswick has initiated to build their Trans-Canada Highway. I believe that we can learn a lot from them. New Brunswick has only a (third) of our economy and Canada has only 10% of our population and look what they are doing. They do take care of all of their people. When we began working on the completion of Highway 95 with Past Senator Edmund Muskie and past Senator George Mitchell is was essentially design and help give justice to the St. John Valley against the great discrimination. Why have we lost that real focus and why are you not giving us justice.

Our highway stretch from Caribou North is the County least expensive and County less complicated Segment to do. We, the majority of our people are in accord. Therefore, if you still want to work with us, let us see to take the best option. Draw us a plan and let us begin the works from North down with a two-lane highway. This will also give us the assurances that we will not be excluded or left out of this highway process. It will also guarantee that the Federal earmarked funds voted for us will be spent wisely, to the good use and for the right purpose. It is our duty so see that these funds be spend properly. If central Aroostook cannot agree on anything positive, we can. We must not lose those funds. Your plan, route 161 improvement is not a realistic highway plan and we say again that it is not acceptable. We can call this in some way an insult to our region as if we do not live in Aroostook, Maine and USA. I recently advised our Governor that our Transportation Department is not straight with us and they do not give us justice on this issue. Please, see to accept our Plan as an exhibit. We will with determination see to challenge you to do so and we will proceed with practical means.

We thank all you for the time allowed and for your patience to hear me. A very devoted highway advocate, Sincerely,

John F. Dionne, Grand Isle, Maine, 207-895-3453





Monday, August 28, 2006

Mr. Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
 Project Manager
 Maine Department of Transportation
 Bureau of Planning
 16 State House Station
 Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Re: Public Hearing, Aroostook County Transportation Study – PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462(10)

Dear Mr. Faucher:

As citizens of Aroostook County and Presque Isle, Maine we are prompted to comment on the Aroostook County Transportation Study (ACTS), and the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Study (SDEIS) out of concern for the future of Northern Maine resources and future development here. The project unveiled in the SDEIS is not the north-south highway project that Aroostook citizens have asked for for years. That project which would provide the configuration, travel savings, and economic benefits shown in the SDEIS would not be complete in the foreseeable future and perhaps not until the year 2035. The near term proposal is nothing but a hodge-podge of local projects or segments. We were recently reminded of this fact at the Caribou public hearing on August 15, 2006 where the study was summarized by MDOT's external consultant John Feinstein and also commented by Raymond Faucher, the project manager. At that meeting, citizens of the County voiced serious and strong concern, even opposition to the project as proposed. They told the MDOT that this proposal is a pale substitute for a north-south highway they had visualized. The full project still does not even connect Fort Kent Maine at the top of state to the proposed corridor, and does not make adequate provisions for connecting to the Trans-Canadian Highway on the other side of the border. In the case of the Presque Isle Bypass, segment #7, one of three key segments slated for fast tracking over the next few years, and slated to cost \$45 million (eventually \$120 million when completed as a divided 4-lane, limited-access bypass) the deficiencies of the plan are especially glaring. Presque Isle's special traffic problem is from east-west truck traffic between the vicinity of the McCain and Huber plants near Easton and the areas west of Presque Isle extending to Ashland and beyond. This is associated with the flow of raw materials for woods product and potato processing operations. The SDEIS document asserts that the P.I. Bypass will solve the truck traffic problem but shows little real understanding of the problem. One part of the P.I. Bypass in particular, the proposed new Aroostook River bridge crossing and the segment joining to Route 1 heading to Caribou, does nothing in the short term and little in the long-term to address this problem. It is merely a convenient connector for the overall project which is not slated to be completed before 2035.

Cit10-1

Cit10-2

Cit10-3

We searched the summary of the SDEIS and Chapter 4, "Environmental Consequences and Mitigation" for comprehensive cost-benefit support for this project.

There are at least three fundamental principles that should be satisfied by any public project in order to justify the expenditure of public tax monies, (1) the project must actually address the public goals, (2) the project must provide more benefit than cost, and (3) any property taking for the purpose of the project must be carefully justified in relation to the net benefits of the project. The proposed project as described in the SDEIS appears to fail all three tests. As mentioned above, test #1 fails because the project does not really adequately address the long-term public goals, and the segment #7 project does not address the short-term needs. Test #2 fails because the REMI model seems to assume that the full north-south highway is in place in order to produce the economic benefits to jobs, personal income, and gross regional product resulting from decreased travel time and increased connectivity. With respect to segment #7 it appears that the benefits are so marginal as to raise questions about which communities are achieving the economic benefits. The assertions about economic improvements resulting from the REMI model are difficult to evaluate without being able to scrutinize the inputs to the model which are not provided. That test #3 fails, is easy to show by reference to the segment #7 bridge crossing of the Aroostook river and the connector with Route 1 crossing over valuable farm land. This connector can serve little useful purpose locally until the whole north-south configuration is complete. Actually it makes more economic sense to use the existing Fort Road as the connector along with the existing Aroostook river bridge while is a 2-land road until all segments of the north-south highway have been built and segment #7 is expanded to 4 lanes. This now seems to be the position taken by the City of Presque Isle. Further, the discussion of required property takings in connection with this segment fails to adequately address the economic and societal costs of environmental and cultural externalities associated with these properties. These can not be simply dismissed as too difficult to measure.

Cit10-4

Cit10-5

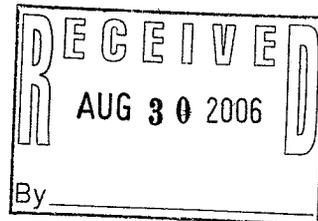
Cit10-6

In sum, the scaled down project consisting of three segments, segment #7 (P.I. Bypass), segment #4 (Caribou), and segment #2 (Route 161) appears to be going forward in a rush in an attempt to salvage something from the investment spent over the years on the entire corridor plan. In our humble opinion the prudent thing would be to restudy the project with more attention to the immediate concerns of the people affected by each of the individual segments. The people are now listening!

Ward Gerow and Janet Snow
56 Dyer Street
Presque Isle, Maine

Cc:
Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614
Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330

1754 New Sweden Rd
Woodland, Me 04736
19 August 2006



Raymond Faucher
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Sir:

Thanks for your Caribou 15 August presentation and personal attention to my questions regarding the Route 161 road project. I appreciate your straightforward answer to my questions and the information you and your team brought with you.

As I understand it, Jon Feinstein may have more detailed larger scale engineering drawings of the project of the Route 161 segment near the Woodland-New Sweden Town Line. If this is true, I would like to see them if possible without interfering with your and his busy work schedule.

How do I go about scheduling a very short visit to accomplish this? I would like to do this during Fall 06 before the weather gets bad so I can make the trip with a light aircraft. I assure you my intent is simply to gather information about the project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom".

Tom Goetz

Tom Goetz
 1654 New Sweden Rd
 Woodland, Me 04736
 12 August 2006

COPY

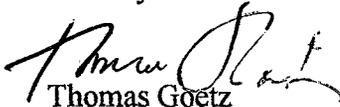
Mark Hasselmann
 Ray Faucher

Gentlemen:

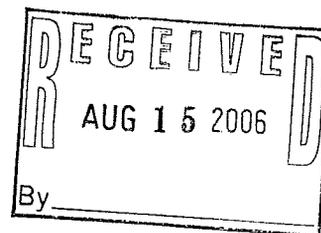
I have a few questions about the north south high way project:

1. Are you planning or intending to or is it in any future plan to take by eminent domain or otherwise procure a 300 ft right of way anywhere from Caribou to Cross lake? Cit12-1
2. Considering that MDOT is unable to complete its maintenance projects (ref Bangor Daily article) for this year due to budget limitations, how will the new road impact future budgets? After we buy this road, how will we maintain it? Cit12-2
3. Who will bear the cost of the effects of construction blasting on wells and foundations? Cit12-3
4. Who will bear the cost of driveway relocations including culvert? Cit12-4
5. Will work proceed through the winter months as well? Cit12-5
6. How long will electrical service and phone service be interrupted? Cit12-6
7. The road from Cross Lake to Ft Kent is in much worse shape than Caribou to Cross Lake. Why aren't we focusing on repairing that portion first? Cit12-7
8. The detailed map I have from several months ago shows the construction exactly overlaying the current route 161. Is this still accurate? That is, is there no plan to wiggle the road about existing structures and terrain features, to cut off some of the curves or avoid hills? Cit12-8
9. When I go to the website referenced in the recent flyer, I am unable to get any detailed map. How can I get access to an updated detailed map (the one with the aerial photos)? Cit12-9
10. How close to a road am I allowed to build a house? I guess my real question is if my house will have to be destroyed or not—how close to the house does the road have to be to require the house's removal altogether? Cit12-10

Thank you in advance for your response,


 Thomas Goetz

To: Raymond Faucher, P.E.
 Maine Department of Transportation
 State House Station 16
 Augusta, Maine 04333-0016



From: Diana Higgins
 41 Reach Road
 Presque Isle, Maine 04769
 northernpi@hotmail.com
 207 764 5237

Re: SDEIS
 August 15, 2006

I applaud the efforts of our citizens, community leaders and government officials to address the County's economy through improved transportation routes. Safer routes will assist the movement of product and people in and out of the County.

I have two points to discuss about the Presque Isle Bypass known as Segment 7 in the SDEIS Proposed Action

First, the Bypass is meant to remove truck traffic from downtown Presque Isle improving safety, air quality and noise reduction. The proposal has routed the traffic on the northern end of the Segment across the Aroostook River through the Reach Road-Higgins Road-Brewer Road neighborhood. An informal survey would reveal that this neighborhood is becoming a vibrant development of Presque Isle consisting of agricultural, commercial and residential components. Located close to Presque Isle, yet in the 'country' has made this area a desirable community to live, work and play in.

You can find the following within the Reach Road-Higgins Road-Brewer Road boundaries:

- McCain's Storage Facilities
- 3 potato farms - Grass, Roope, Cavendish
- 3 Maple syrup operations
- 1 Christmas tree farm
- 1 Beef/horse farm
- WAGM TV Station
- The Sign Place
- Turner Electric
- Perceptions of Aroostook
- Presque Isle Water District
- Town & Country Apartments (4 large buildings of apartments)
- Trailer Park
- 'Official' ATV/ Snowmobile trails (bordering the Aroostook River)
- 'unofficial' snowmobile trails (Sweetsers allow snowmobiles to cut across their land)
- Neighborhood XC/snowshoe trail
- Numerous residential homes/duplexes
- Migratory path of the Canadian geese
- Home to bear, deer, moose, owls, partridge, eagles, hawks, fox, skunk, ...

All of the above is contained within the Reach Road-Higgins Road-Brewer Road boundaries, an area that is approximately within a two mile radius, that the northern end of Segment 7 will bisect. Segment 7 **Cit13-1** has removed traffic from downtown Presque Isle and placed it in another busy neighborhood, thus not eliminating the problems of safety, air quality and noise reduction, only relocating it. This end of Segment 7 needs to be revisited and relocated to prevent future issues of communities and traffic. Running Segment 7 through this neighborhood will have detrimental effects on current and future development within this desirable neighborhood.

The second point I wish to address concerns the northern endpoint of Segment 7 where it reconnects **Cit13-2** to Route 1. It is in this area you will find the only two access points for the Higgins Balsam Tree Farm located at 148 Caribou Road. This is a 127 acre potato/balsam fir tree farm in current production. Due to the age of the aerial photographs of this area, it cannot be located on the study materials. The aerial photographs show what is now tree fields to be in their older state of production of potato and grain fields 15 years ago.

As mentioned, there are only 2 access points to this farm both of which are impacted by Segment 7. The first access point is located across from the Brewer Road and is a 35' right of way. South of this 2/10 of a mile on the Caribou Road is the second access point with 200' of road frontage. The second access point has its periods of being too wet to travel which necessitates an alternative entry.

All of the proposed endpoints of Segment 7 seem the effect the access to this farm which include a retail Christmas tree lot in December on Route 1. This farm is currently the sole livelihood of the P Stephen Higgins family. Losing safe and convenient access to this farm will devastate the family's income and render that land useless. Quality potato ground cannot be found just anywhere and a Christmas tree farm cannot be moved. There is a time commitment of 6-8 years to raise a tree ready for market and currently there are approximately 10,000 trees in various stages of growth on the farm.

It is my hope that you address these two concerns that I have raised with alternative routing. If you feel you need to cross the Aroostook River with a second bridge you may consider connecting farther east on the Reach Road (below Roope's Farm), using the lower Reach Road for Segment 7, traveling through Lane's and using the Craig Road to reconnect to Route 1. In this area you will find fewer residents, businesses and agricultural production.

Thank you for your time and efforts. I appreciate the opportunity to voice my concerns. Feel free to contact me with questions. I would appreciate a reply concerning the impact to our farm at 148 Caribou Road and how we will continue to have safe, convenient, year round access with Segment 7 connecting on Route 1.

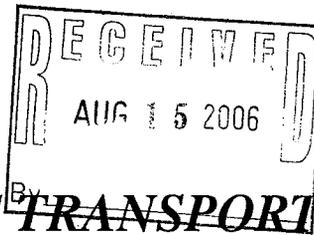
Sincerely
Diana Higgins
Diana Higgins

CC: Mark Hasselman
LEAD, Sam Collins
Presque Isle City Council



MaineDOT

Cit14



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Comment Sheet

Public Hearing

Aroostook County Transportation Study
PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462(10)

August 15, 2006

The Maine Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are accepting written comments concerning the Aroostook County Transportation Study until **August 31, 2006**. The comment sheet can be submitted to a study team member following the meeting or mailed to one of the following addresses:

Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614
Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330

Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

The counts of Residents - Needs To be more accurate, to show the true number of people that will be directly influenced by the proposed segments. This requires Homes to be contacted so that the state can better inform the public of INDIVIDUALS that will lose their livelihood and place of Residence. Cit14-1

Thomas C. Holmes
Name (Please Print)

P.O. Box 102 540 Houlton RD
Street

Westfield - ME - 04787
City - State - Zip

COPY

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Comment Sheet

Public Hearing**Aroostook County Transportation Study
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Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Pear Mr. Hasselmann,

I was born in New Sweden in 1926 and spent my childhood years here. I returned after living in the Boston area for 10 yrs. while attending high school and nursing school. New Sweden has a unique history in that when Abraham Lincoln was president, he appointed a War-Consul to Sweden (Wm. Widger Thomas Jr.) and on March 23, 1870 the legislature passed an Act authorizing a Board of Immigration, naming Thomas as Commissioner of Immigration, Thomas selected the first group of 51 Swedes and led the first settlers from Sweden to New Sweden, (founded on July 23, 1870.) Many accounts have been written on the settling of New Sweden, and over the years the history has continued to be preserved. Many people in this area believe that the Rte 161 Corridor through the Swedish Colony, should never have been considered. Mr. Ray Faucher spoke at a meeting in New Sweden, a while ago and said that Rte 161 was not chosen because of traffic congestion or safety issues, but to make a direct truck route to improve the economy of the St. John Valley. (OVER)

Elaine B. Jepson

Name (Please Print)

613 New Sweden Rd.,

Street

New Sweden ME 04762

City - State - Zip



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Comment Sheet

Public Hearing

Aroostook County Transportation Study
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Augusta, Maine 04330

Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Cit15-2

*Even though it may take decades and funding of a new overall corridor, such as
HM/103, from Caribou north to Madawaska, it seems to be the least controversial
route. Funding for this project could start by using all the millions of dollars designated
for other unpopular by-passes and corridors, and build segments as other funding becomes
available. Bringing the North-South highway to the St. David Site & making the international bridge
between Madawaska & Edmundston, making a connection to the Trans-Canada is a still better idea.
There may be environmental issues to consider in building a road "through the woods"
but as a local game warden said to me, "Better to have 200 frogs lose their homes
than people having their lives and properties devastated."
People who choose to live in the quiet countryside do not want a freeway
going by their homes, for any reason.*

Sincerely

Elaine B. Jepsen

Name (Please Print)

613 New Sweden Rd,

Street

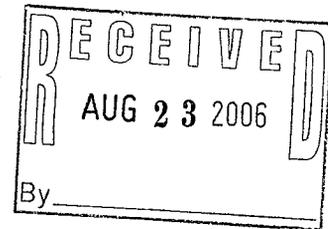
New Sweden ME 04762

City - State - Zip

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FAX 207-532-9518
E-MAIL pkjordan@pwless.net

August 18, 2006

Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04330

Dear Mr. Faucher:

As a resident of Presque Isle from 1941 to 1967 and a resident of Houlton from 1972 to present, I have a vested interest and an understanding of Aroostook County. Aroostook County definitely needs an improved highway system to serve the entire County. Basic goals of an improved highway system are as follows:

- 1) Serve the entire County;
- 2) Create the least negative environmental impact;
- 3) Improve highway safety;
- 4) Improve the efficiency of time travel;
- 5) Not duplicate existing highways with the result of maintaining two separate highways at the risk of the secondary road system not being maintained.

The final four proposals will be addressed as follows:

Corridor Hm and Composite Corridor 2

These proposals divide Aroostook County by cutting off the southern 1/3 of the County by virtue of the interchange from Smryna north to Presque Isle. One should realize that Houlton is a service center for Southern Aroostook County as Presque Isle is a service center for Central Aroostook County. As a result, trucks that transport product to these services centers would continue to use the Route 1 as it presently exists. For example, trucks delivering to Walmart in Houlton would then continue from Houlton to Presque Isle on Route 1 as presently exists. This is just one of many examples of trucks transporting product to the respective service centers that would continue to use U.S. Route 1 to transport goods and service from one service center to another.

It should be recognized that there are many people who travel everyday on Route #1 from Houlton and communities in between to the Central Aroostook area and conversely from the Central Aroostook area to areas in between to Houlton as a part of their job. They may either be residents in between the two communities or in the alternative have jobs which necessitate them to travel between Southern Aroostook and Central Aroostook. These two proposed corridors would benefit only a small percentage of trucks and passenger cars wanting to travel the most direct route possible from I-95 to Presque Isle.

Cit16-1

These two corridors would also result in the most negative environmental impact on the unspoiled area between east of Route 11 and west of Route 1 from Smyrna all the way through to Presque Isle. It should also be noted that it would impact adversely on the watershed on the Presque Isle stream, which is a water source for the City of Presque Isle. In addition, it would also impact adversely upon uses of this significantly untouched area for recreational purposes, including, without limitation, snowmobiling, hunting and fishing.

These two corridors would result in the significant double expense of maintaining two separate highway systems. From the point of economics, it is totally absurd economically to create two totally different highway systems to serve the same area.

Corridor Km

Corridor Km would result in the significant double expense of maintaining two highway systems. From the point of economics, it is totally absurd economically to create two totally different highway systems to serve the same area.

Cit16-2

From an environmental impact point of view, Corridor Km would be a less negative environmental impact than Corridor Hm and Composite Corridor 2, however, there would still be a significant negative environmental impact. Even though, Corridor Km would facilitate the efficiency of time travel and highway safety, it is my understanding that the difference in time travel is insignificant compared to Corridor Hm/Composite Corridor 2.

Composite Corridor 1

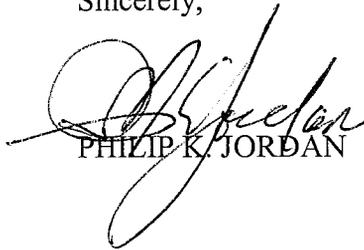
Composite Corridor 1 meets all the goals most effectively, as hereinabove set forth. It is my understanding that Composite Corridor 1 would be a four lane highway on a significant portion of the existing U.S. Route #1, Route 161 and Route 162. This would serve the entire County over much of an existing highway system and not result in denying the benefits of an improved highway system to any part of Aroostook County.

Cit16-3

Composite Corridor 1 has the least negative environmental impact of all four proposals. This is extremely important for Aroostook County being an area that is promoted as being basically unspoiled.

In addition, Aroostook County has the potential for being developed as an eco-tourism area. Even though Composite Corridor 1 may be more expensive to build, it would be less expensive to maintain for the next 100 years, as opposed to maintaining two separate highway systems serving the same area. Composite Corridor 1 is the ONLY proposal which serves the entire needs of Aroostook County with the least negative impact.

Sincerely,



PHILIP K. JORDAN

PKJ/jw

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Comment Sheet**Public Hearing****Aroostook County Transportation Study**
PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462(10)**August 15, 2006**

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Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614
Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330

Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Cit17-1

IN MY OPINION, I DON'T BELIEVE WE NEED
THAT NEW ROAD UP HERE.

THE MONIES SHOULD BE USED TO WIDEN
SOME OF THE EXISTING ROADS.

WITH THE NEW ROAD, A LOT OF PEOPLE
WOULD LOSE THEIR HOMES AND BUSINESSES
AND I DON'T THINK THAT IS PROGRESS

Ms Joan Keaton

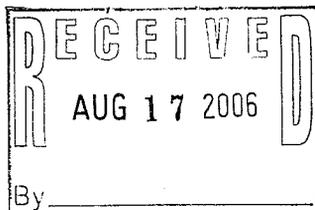
Name (Please Print)

56 Lower Lyndon St.

Street

CARIBOU MAINE 04736

City - State - Zip



8 Granite Street
 Rockland, ME 04841
 August 14, 2006

Raymond E. Faucher P.E., Project Manager
 Maine Department of Transportation
 Bureau of Planning
 16 State House Station
 Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Dear Mr. Faucher,

I want to express my appreciation for your sending me a notice of the meetings about the Aroostook County Transportation Study which I received a few days ago. I am sending you my letter dated April 2004 since I do not know if you have seen it before. I had no address to send it to at that time and therefore had to rely on some Aroostook people to e-mail it to the correct addresses.

My biggest concern over the proposed route is as a taxpayer. **Cit18-1**
 This state has many bridges badly in need of repair and replacement. Approximately one and a half to two miles away from where this new bridge is to be built is a four-lane bridge crossing this same river. It was built to withstand an enemy attack which could cut off supplies going to Limestone Airbase. The number of steel girders driven deep into the bedrock and supporting this bridge amazed all who watched the process. The strength built into the construction of this bridge makes all other bridges I have seen built in this state seem absolutely puny to me.

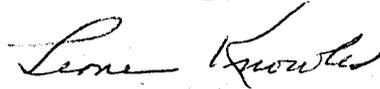
A western route around Presque Isle would allow this bridge to be used as part of the bypass. Why in the name of common sense is the state planning to replace this maximally constructed bridge with its usual type bridge? Who is so anxious to cut **Cit18-2**
 off Presque Isle and turn the city into what the MDOT touts as "a true village center" that they are willing to spend state money in order to do it?

In addition, it is certainly very probable that a new bridge **Cit18-3**
 will endanger the aquifer that provides a public water supply for Washburn, Fort Fairfield, Presque Isle, and Caribou. (The proposed new bridge would only be about 2500 feet from Presque Isle's water wells.)

A western route around Presque Isle would destroy far less **Cit18-4**
 farm land, make for easier and quicker access to the Presque Isle airport, and, from what I can tell, would close off fewer of the country roads leading to the city. Balancing the small damage to some wetlands that a western route would cause against using the eastern route and turning a city into a "village,"

endangering a very important aquifer, destroying acres of outstandingly fertile farm land, and costing the state the price of building a new and unneeded, lesser-quality bridge makes for an easy choice for me. What are we missing here?

Yours truly,



Leone Knowles

Owner of:

106 Higgins Road

107 Higgins Road

56 Reach Road

} Presque
Isle

8 Granite Street
Rockland, ME 04841
April 20, 2004

Dear Sir or Madam:

On reading my hometown local paper, The Presque Isle Star Herald, I was surprised to see that the route slated for the bypass highway around the city of Presque Isle is one that will negatively affect property that I own in the area. I would have expected being given the opportunity to express my concerns before decisions were made.

I am hoping that there is still time for at least small changes to be built into the project so that the value of my property and that of my Higgins Road neighbors will not suffer as much. From what I am able to ascertain when looking at maps showing the bypass route, anyone owning my land will have their distance to the center of the city increased from the present $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to around 8 miles.

This will require that fire trucks, ambulances, and other emergency vehicles spend more time reaching my property. It will increase the distance, and time, and cost required for getting crops to market as well as for getting equipment-repair people to the farm. I suspect that electric and telephone lines will need to be rerouted. In addition, it will require the use of a seldom traveled-upon, somewhat isolated part of this road that is frequently difficult to keep free of snow during big storms in the winter. These access complications may seem like little problems, but I have found that one of the most effective selling points for property in this area is its close proximity to the business district and to the fire station. Cit18-5

In addition, it seems unnecessarily cruel to place the route where it will destroy historic farm buildings where at least five generations from the same farm family live and have lived. Cit18-6

Both of these problems could be avoided if the route were moved a relatively few yards to the west side of the Higgins Road and its adjoining brook at the point where they cross the Reach Road. The route could then continue for a bit along an area west of the brook and close to the boundary line separating the Reach Road farms and the Higgins Road properties. In this manner, historic buildings would not have to be destroyed and the Higgins Road residents could continue to have easy and quick access to the city. (This presupposes that there will be an underpass or overpass where the bypass crosses the Reach Road.) Cit18-7

It may now be too late for greater changes to the plan, but since I had no opportunity to comment before, I would like to add reasons why I feel a western route around the city would have been more appropriate:

(1) The present, recently-built, four-lane bridge over the Aroostook River in Presque Isle is extremely strong and solid in its construction, the most strongly built bridge in Maine, I believe. Why not plan the bypass route so as to take advantage of this bridge rather than spend money on a new bridge at a time when money is tight and when many of Maine's present bridges are in desperate need of repair or replacement?

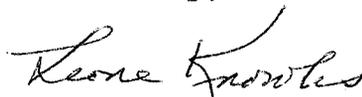
Cit18-8

(2) The tar-scar you are planning to build east and north east of the city of Presque Isle is routed over some of the most beautiful land in the state. It is the land that Mrs. FDR called "fabulous." Some of it is the land that the defense department rejected for the airbase they eventually put in Limestone because, as the government surveyors told us, "The land is too valuable as farmland for us to tear it up and tar it over." It is land about which an artist-professional friend of mine from Portland exclaimed, "It is so beautiful here, I can't breathe!" It is land that another friend, who lives on Crescent Beach in Owls' Head, is moved, each time that she sees it in summer, to say, "I just love it here! It is so lovely! It is so uniquely beautiful!"

In closing, I urge you to rethink the route. At the very least, move it just a few yards to the west at the Reach Road crossing, as this letter suggests.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



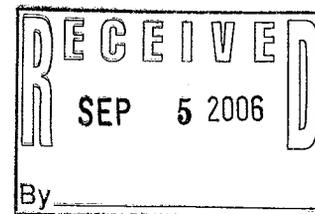
Leone Knowles

Owner of:

106 Higgins Road

107 Higgins Road

56 Reach Road



Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
 Project Manager
 Maine Department of Transportation
 Bureau of Planning
 16 State House Station
 Augusta, ME 04333-0016

August 31, 2006

Mr. Faucher:

I have watched closely as LEAD, the State of Maine Department of Transportation (M-DOT) and the Northern Maine Development Corporation (NMDC) work with the state's independent highway study commissioned by VHB as they toiled over many years to finally yield four possible avenues for a four-lane highway from Madawaska to Houlton, Maine. The process is frozen pending any further comments from Maine Citizens and after 31 August, VHB will, as you know, write another study for public comment.

I watch this entire process in dismay. First, most of the public comments presented as public record in the SDEIS are against the project except in the form that it was originally presented to the people of Northern Maine and tasked to MDOT, and that is the commissioning of a true North-South highway. Most want the I-95 to be extended as it should have been fifty years ago. The work of all parties named above claim that this four-lane highway is part of that work and that is patently false. Instead, the route of the I-95 will run a different course from the proposed 4-lane highway altogether. The proposal before us today is a band-aid approach to our long-term transportation needs. The project itself will displace families and hamper primary transportation arteries in Aroostook County for years to come as construction is undertaken. In the end we still will be no closer to having I-95 access anywhere north of Houlton.

Cit19-1

Second, as in any project that takes time and millions of dollars, the public citizens' comments and pleas (since the current plans calls to destroy acres and acres of private housing) haven't seemed to have any weight within the process. Bangor Daily News reported that, as public forums recently vented to the VHB in public meetings, hundreds of people are against the four-lane highway. Why does this not matter as much as the plans of the minority who want to build a highway? It truly makes one wonder what is really at stake here.

Cit19-2

Thirdly, since it was made into a State of Maine Law by Senator John Martin (D) Eagle Lake, an independent study on a rail system must take place as plans for a highway are made. Why hasn't this rail study occurred?

Cit19-3

Finally, I want for you to understand that while I have respect for the work that you and your teams have put into this project, I feel that MDOT has veered off the path of what was originally commissioned for them to accomplish.

As a citizen of northern Maine, I have to say that I am vehemently opposed to the colossal waste that would be this four-lane highway through private housing, farmland, wetlands and pristine acreage.

Many voices didn't get the recognition they should have at the public meetings held recently because the process had already "concluded" until the next phase, Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). But I appeal to your sense of fairness. Money shouldn't charter the future of communities, the citizens should. The majority of citizens that I have spoken with do not support the current plans of the Maine DOT for Northern Maine as presented in the SDEIS. We'd rather put these plans on hold and get the I-95 extension that we have patiently waited for.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. P. Levesque', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kevin P. Levesque
PO Box 969
Caribou, ME 04736



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Comment Sheet

Public Hearing

Aroostook County Transportation Study
PIN 006462.10/NH-HP-6462(10)

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Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Cit20-1

We feel that the road as it is from
Caribou on Route 161 to Cross Lake is in
excellent shape and needs no upgrading.
From Cross Lake to Ft. Kent the road
is in very poor condition and needs
improvement.

I approve of the original proposed
route of a new road from Sherman
to Madawaska through the woods,
a lot of money can be saved.

Mr. + Mrs. ALMON R. McDOUGAL
Name (Please Print)

14 CAPITOL HILL RD.
Street

NEW SWEDEN, ME. 04762
City - State - Zip



MaineDOT

COPY



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Comment Sheet

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27 AUG 06

Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614
Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330

Raymond E. Faucher, P.E.
Project Manager
Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Please flip a spade of dirt somewhere in the northern St-John River Valley area as a gesture of good faith that something in the way of a highway will someday be built.

The Madawaska, ME/Edmundston N.B. settlement is the longest north of Bangor.

The Trans Canada Highway runs the outskirts of Edmundston and is a stone's throw away from Madawaska, Maine's northernmost border crossing directly abutting the T.C.H.

Madawaska's paper mill has 8 paper machines, the most in any one town in Maine, which employs 800 people. Delivery and service trucks are continually coming and going.

Cit21-1

The by-passes in Caribou and Presque Isle will help us in our trek south but the worst part of a trip from Madawaska is having to travel 25 miles east to Van Buren before heading due south. A road from Madawaska west to Daigle will save us no mileage over using U.S. Route 1 to Caribou. It will continue as a deterrent for T.C.H. traffic not to veer into Maine at its northeasternmost tip, then travel the entire length of the state.

Ricky J. McKinney

RICKY J. MCKINNEY

Name (Please Print)

161 MOUNTAIN VIEW

Street

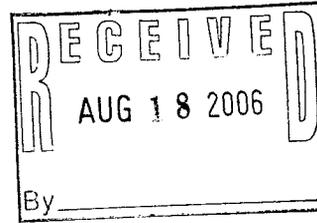
MADAWASKA, ME 04756

City - State - Zip

I
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IKE

August 15, 2006

To: Raymond Faucher, P.E.
Maine Department of Transportation
State House Station 16
Augusta ME 04333-0016



My name is Steve Sutter. I am a longtime resident of Reach Road in Presque Isle. I hold a Masters Degree in Agricultural and Resource Economics and have a strong interest in environmental issues in the Aroostook River watershed. Thank you for convening this important hearing.

Having studied the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, prepared by Maine DOT consultants, I offer for your consideration some comments about the projected economic benefits and the environmental costs of the proposed Presque Isle By-Pass.

For economic analysis, MDOT consultants used the regional economic model REMI (Regional Economic Models, Inc.). Although used by government agencies throughout the nation, REMI is often rightly criticized for disregarding government budget constraints. That is, it treats tax expenditures on projects as cost-free. Although the model has important scientific merit, REMI inevitably exaggerates the net benefits of government projects.

REMI is a complex computer model that is hard for the general public to understand or evaluate, so claims based on it that "the best scientific model available shows x dollars of personal income created by the project" often carry the day.

In reviewing the SDEIS volumes, I stopped abruptly at Table 2-7 "Effects of SDEIS Corridors on Aroostook County Economy (2035). For the proposed Presque Isle By-Pass, I'm not sure even REMI conclusions can make economic sense for us.

The \$120.8 million construction cost of the Presque Isle By-Pass would yield only \$3.79 million in aggregate personal income to the year 2035. After construction, change in personal income is shown by REMI to be minimal – meaning most personal income would be construction payroll (and much of that from outside the region or state). **Cit22-1**

Some economists, including this one, question whether a project's short-term construction wages should be part of long-term public benefits.

The REMI model also predicts the incremental change in retail sales due to the proposed Presque Isle By-Pass as positive – but a minuscule \$230,000 in total from 2008-2035.

The National Environmental Policy Act requires that an SDEIS put environmental concerns on equal footing with economic outcomes. Unfortunately in this case, this

principle has been upheld. The assessment of environmental impacts appears as weak as that of the economic returns.

The proposed new bridge would be built little more than one mile downstream from our current 4-lane bridge. MDOT says that it “will coordinate with Maine DEP” during bridge design to ensure the crossing meets all of the Natural Resources Protection Act criteria with regard to natural resources -- aquatic and wildlife habitat, water quality, and recreational features, such as access to the river and “minimizing visual impacts.”

Cit22-2

It’s my understanding that under Maine’s Natural Resources Protection Act (Title 38 Chapter 3 §480-P), the lower Aroostook River is among Maine’s “outstanding river segments” afforded special (ORS) protection under Article 5-A.

Cit22-3

Section 480-D (8) of the Act requires that crossing the river with a new bridge would be conditioned on MDOT demonstrating to Maine DEP, in an expected NRPA permitting application in 2007 or 2008, that no reasonable alternative exists which would have less adverse effect upon the natural and recreational features of the river segment.”

MDOT consultants dismiss ORS protection, saying the existing bridge carrying Route 1 over the Aroostook River would only partially satisfy the project’s “Purpose and Need.”

But, a 2002 draft environmental assessment for the Easton Industrial Access Road (MDOT PIN 6462.11), with a corridor terminating at Route 163/167 (without crossing the river), was deemed satisfactory in meeting that project’s Purpose and Need – providing “immediate benefit to the Easton/Presque Isle transportation system by improving safety, access, and mobility for materials and finished product.” Annual Vehicle Hours Traveled to Easton Station would be reduced by over a third.

This SDEIS refers to a US Army Corps of Engineers assertion (July 11, 2005) that the “Presque Isle By-Pass” project’s purpose is to “improve east-west and north-south traffic movements in and around the City of Presque Isle along Routes 1, 163/167, 10, and 227 in order to improve public safety and relieve traffic congestion.”

Cit22-4

MDOT consultants now say the intersection at Route 1/Route 163 is a “High Crash Location.” That label deserves a definition. How many crashes have occurred at that intersection in the last 10 years involving farm or other heavy duty trucks?

MDOT consultants also declare that there are no EPA-designated “sole source aquifers” used as public water sources in the area. If there were one, EPA review would be required -- which could prevent a commitment of Federal funding.

Cit22-5

The sand and gravel aquifer surrounding and under the Aroostook River, however, is a highly-productive public supply to Washburn, Fort Fairfield, and recently Presque Isle and Caribou, and it would likely qualify for sole-source status. I recently contacted U.S EPA Region 1 to request guidance material in preparing a petition to have it designated as such.

The proposed new bridge would be about 2,500 feet from Presque Isle's new drinking water wells, even closer to McCain Foods supply wells. This distance (although up-gradient) *may* be within the radius of influence for multiple wells in the coarse alluvial deposits of a gravel bar adjacent to the Aroostook River. Potential pollutants could be drawn by pumps into these important water supplies.

Cit22-6

Should this aquifer become contaminated, alternative sources of surface water may no longer be available due to tightened EPA drinking water standards and the large excess of phosphorus from point sources documented by Maine DEP in a report simply *footnoted* in this SDEIS.

Finally, I believe that the SDEIS insufficiently considers adverse effects on the human environment of citizens that would have to live near the proposed by-pass. Its only attention in this regard is to a requirement to consider properties "eligible" for the National List of Historic Properties, such as an old farmstead at 138 Reach Road.

Cit22-7

It is puzzling and troubling to me – and it should be to you – that the consultants characterize the area north of the river where the preferred option would cross, as generally agricultural. From my vantage point, a corridor there would also cross acres of wetlands, woodland, and Raymond Brook, and it would destroy a rural neighborhood.

Cit22-8

Choose the No-Build Alternative.

Thank you for consideration of these comments. Please contact me if you have questions.

Steve Sutter



P.O. Box 129

Presque Isle, ME 04769

Cc: Mark Hasselmann

Federal Highway Administration

Room 614, Federal Building

Augusta, Maine 04330

Honorable Governor John E. Baldacci

Office of Governor

#1 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333-0001

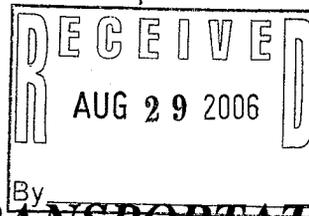
Commissioner, Maine DOT

Commissioner, Maine DEP

City Manager Tom Stevens, Presque Isle

Managing Editor, The Star Herald

Selected Legislators



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Comment Sheet

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The Aroostook County Transportation Study, Aroostook County, Maine, Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Maine Department of Transportation. June 1, 2006, admits that construction of the north-south highway in Aroostook remains a matter of conjecture because "the costs and environmental considerations . . . are very likely to change . . . [and] it is prudent . . . to defer any decision" on the rest of the highway until "conditions warrant construction and there is reasonable funding available" (2-2).

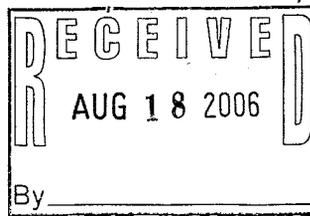
However, MDOT and FHWA's "Proposed Action" insists it is ethical and economically feasible to move forward with segments that create as yet unmeasured hardship, emotional and financial drain on those whose properties, livelihoods, and lifestyles will be wiped out. REMI predicts the economic gains for those not destroyed by construction will be but a tiny fraction of the costs in tax dollars required to build the segments. Common sense says this is financial folly. Nevertheless, Raymond Faucher tells the press as soon as this "comment" period ends and a "decision" is reached, the construction jobs will go out to bid. Conversely, local politicians such as Representative John Churchill (R) tell us the north-south highway will never be built. These persistent contradictory statements raise serious questions about why segments must be built if the future of the north south highway is uncertain.

The ACTS has itself shown that the "Proposed Action" to construct segments is an economic and environmental mistake that harms existing communities and brings virtually no benefit to Aroostook County citizens. Furthermore, this project has emerged as a highly unethical and perhaps illegal procedure that informed, involved citizens will be demanding to be investigated. MDOT and FHWA must listen to their own study results and choose the NO-Build Option at this time.

Pamela & Wayne Sweetser
52 Higgins Road
Presque Isle, ME 04769



MaineDOT



Cit24



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Comment Sheet

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Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Cit24-First - We very much support the proposals to provide bypasses around Caribou and Presque Isle and to upgrade Rt 161. We do not support a full extension of I-95 to the Sebasticook Valley - the huge cost far outweighs any supposed benefits.

However, we do question why none of the proposal alternatives for the Caribou bypass go West of the city - such a route would appear to be shorter and would avoid the lights and traffic on the current 'bypass' of Rt 1 along the 'Old River Road'.

HAROLD + EMMA UNDERHILL

Name (Please Print)

188 US Rt 1

Street

Frenchville, ME 04745

City - State - Zip



MaineDOT



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Comment Sheet

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Project Manager
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Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

MIR. HASSLMANN;

Cit25-1

HAVING ATTENDED SEVERAL OF THE MDOT MEETINGS CONCERNING THE I-95 EXTENSION (OR WHATEVER NAME YOU CHOOSE TO CALL IT), IT SEEMS THERE IS A LOT OF CONTROVERSY CONCERNING WHETHER THIS ROAD SHOULD BE BUILT. AFTER HEARING THE COMMENTS ON AUG. 15TH (CARIBOU MEETING), IT SEEMS THIS ROAD IS TO BE BUILT IN BITS AND PIECES, NOTHING REALLY CONTRIBUTING TO ANYTHING REMOTELY HELPFUL TO THE TRUCKERS. AM I CORRECT IN UNDERSTANDING THAT THE MAIN PURPOSE FOR THIS ROAD IS TO HELP TRUCKERS MOVE THEIR PRODUCTS FROM CANADA, MADAWASKA, EAST MAIN, AND EASTON MORE QUICKLY TO I-95, SO THAT THEY WILL NOT HAVE TO SLOW DOWN IN SMALL TOWNS AND HEAVY TRAFFIC AREAS? IF THIS IS TRUE, THEN BUILDING THE CARIBOU/PROSPECT BRASS AND UP-GRADING RT-161 IS TOTALLY USELESS!

IN HEARING ALL THE COMMENTS ABOUT THE COST OF THIS PROPOSED ROAD "IN LINES NOT CONNECTED TO ANYTHING," THE LOSS OF PROPERTY THAT PEOPLE DO NOT WANT TO LOSE

("WE THE PEOPLE" HAVE RIGHTS TO OUR PROPERTY - THIS IS NOT A COMMUNIST COUNTRY - IS IT?), AND THE HORRIBLE INCONVENIENCE OF HAVING ROADS TORN UP

Cit25-2

FOR YEARS, CAUSING STRESS TO EVERYONE, ESPECIALLY OUR SENIOR CITIZENS, THEN THIS ROAD COULD ONLY LOGICALLY BE BUILT THROUGH THE WOODS FROM SMYRNA TO MADAWASKA, WITH EXIT/ENTRANCE ROADS TO THE LARGER TOWNS. YOU COULD EASILY BUILD THROUGH THE WOODS WITHOUT DISTURBING ANYONE. AND WHEN THE FUNDS RUN OUT, YOU CAN JUST STOP



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Comment Sheet

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Project Manager
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Bureau of Planning
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Page 2

WHERE YOU ARE UNTIL YOU SECURE MORE FUNDS TO CONTINUE THE ROAD. THIS IS THE CHEAPER OPTION, SO YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET MORE OF THE ROAD BUILT FOR THE AMOUNT OF MONEY YOU HAVE. ALSO, THE TREES CAN BE HARVESTED BEFORE THE ROAD IS BUILT, SO EVERYONE SHOULD BE HAPPY - NO DESTROYED HOMES/FARMS!! I LIKED THE COMMENT ABOUT PRESERVING WETLANDS/WILDLIFE, AND THAT PEOPLE WILL ALWAYS BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANIMALS. I LOVE ANIMALS AND WILDLIFE, BUT PEOPLE DO HAVE PRIORITY!

I WAS BORN IN CARIBOU, GREW UP IN NEW SWEDEN ON RTE. 161, SPENT 12 YEARS LIVING IN BOSTON (I KNOW ALL ABOUT THE "BIG DIG"), AND COULD HARDLY WAIT TO RETURN TO THE PEACEFUL COUNTRY SIDE OF NEW SWEDEN - NO 4-PLUS LANE HIGHWAYS, NO TRAFFIC NOISE - JUST BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY ROADS AND A SAFE, QUIET PLACE TO RAISE YOUR FAMILY. WHEN I LIVED IN BOSTON, I DREAMED ABOUT SOME DAY RETURNING TO "MY HERITAGE". NEW SWEDEN IS A HISTORICAL COMMUNITY, AND WE DO NOT DESERVE TO HAVE THIS BEAUTIFUL SPOT SPOILED. WE LIKE THE RURAL LIFE. IN FACT, WHEN LAFB WAS ACTIVE, MANY FAMILIES BOUGHT PROPERTY IN NEW SWEDEN TO RETIRE TO, TO GET AWAY FROM THE RAT-RACE.

DON'T BRING THE RAT-RACE TO US!

Name (Please Print)

DIANE M. WARD

23 JANTLAND RD.

Street

NEW SWEDEN

MAINE 04762

City - State - Zip

THIS IS MAINE - THE WAY LIFE SHOULD BE.

LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY!

Sincerely,

Diane M. Ward

Appendix C-2

Tier 1 FEIS Comment Letters

U. S. Environment
New F
1 Congr

of pages = 5
From: Timothy Timmermann
Phone: 622-8350 x108
Fax: 626-9133
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

OPTIONAL FORM 99 (7-99)
FAX TRANSMITTAL

TO: JUDY LINSEY
Dept. Agency: MARYLAND
Fax #: 624-3301
NSN 7540-01-311-7565

TO: Jonathan M.
Timmermann/OU:

FROM: CN=Timothy

FAX NUMBER: 1207

DATE: 01/25/2010

SUBJECT: EPA Commen.
Connector, Caribou

...ostook County Transportation Study FEIS, Tier 2 Route 1-161





UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 1
5 POST OFFICE SQUARE, SUITE 100
BOSTON, MA 02109-3912

January 25, 2010

OFFICE OF THE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

Jonathan McDade, Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614, Federal Building
Augusta, Maine 04330

RE: Final Environmental Impact Statement, Tier 1-Aroostook County Transportation Study, Tier 2-Route 1-161 Connector, Caribou (CEQ#20090439)

Dear Administrator McDade:

The Environmental Protection Agency-New England Region (EPA) has reviewed the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA)/Maine Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Tier 1-Aroostook County Transportation Study (ACTS), Tier 2-Route 1-161 Connector, in Caribou, Maine. The FEIS focuses mainly on the Caribou Connector and notes that decisions regarding ACTS's larger regional transportation initiatives, intended to improve mobility and catalyze economic growth within northeastern Aroostook County, are being deferred for an unspecified amount of time. We submit the following comments on the FEIS in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

As we stated in our 2002 comments on the DEIS, EPA typically reviews transportation projects proposed to remedy identified traffic problems related to capacity, congestion or safety, and we noted that the Aroostook study is not driven by any of these transportation problems. Instead, the study is intended to determine ways that transportation improvements could create economic opportunities for the region. EPA recognizes the tiered approach as an appropriate means to review specific smaller projects (such as the Caribou Connector and Presque Isle Bypass projects) within the 2760 square mile study area. According to the FEIS (page 1-9), "FHWA and MaineDOT have deferred the selection of an overall preferred north-south corridor." Decision-making is "deferred until funds or need are identified" and the FEIS notes that additional NEPA review will be required as part of future studies that will build upon the NEPA process to date.

We support this approach and in this letter we present our specific comments on the Caribou Connector. It is our understanding that a separate FEIS for the Presque Isle Bypass will be provided at a later date. We note that even though our comments on this FEIS focus on the Caribou Connector (and how the FEIS responded to comments we offered on the SDEIS for the overall project) we continue to believe that the larger

Attached please find our comments on the FEIS for the Aroostook County Transportation Study, Tier 2 Route 1-161 Connector, Caribou.

Please contact me with any questions.

Thanks

Tim

Timothy L. Timmermann
Environmental Scientist
Office of Environmental Review

EPA New England, Region 1
5 Post Office Square, Suite 100
Mall Code ORA 17-1
Boston, Massachusetts 02109-3912

Telephone: 617-918-1025
E-Fax: 617-918-0025

timmermann.timothy@epa.gov

corridor project(s) have great potential for significant impacts that could affect the environment and residents of Aroostook County in many ways. As we stated in 2002, future NEPA analyses will be critical to enable a determination as to whether any of the work within the alternative corridors is viable in an environmental, social and regulatory context.

Caribou Connector

Wetland Impacts and Mitigation

The proposed Caribou Connector is a 4.3-mile new connection between Route 1/High Street and Route 161 in Caribou. According to the FEIS the Connector would improve mobility, access, and safety to and around Caribou, remove trucks from downtown Caribou, and reduce travel time. MaineDOT evaluated the transportation benefit and environmental impacts of various alternatives for the Connector and identified Alignment Option 4B as the Preferred Alternative. Alignment Option 4B was found to have the least impact to wetlands, farmland, historic property, and structures. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), EPA and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) concurred with this finding and identified Alignment Option 4B as the Least Environmentally Damaging Practical Alternative (LEDPA) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. EPA has no objections to the Caribou Connector as proposed. Alignment Option 4B includes 3.7 miles of new-alignment highway and .58 miles of existing highway reconstruction. The new alignment extends roughly parallel to the MM&A Railway before crossing Route 89. North of Route 89 the alignment traverses farmlands and forest before intersecting with Route 161 near Ogren Road. The alignment directly impacts 3.4 acres of wetland and includes 1 stream crossing. The proposed design represents a significant improvement over options presented in the SDEIS which included up to 60 acres of direct wetland aquatic impacts.

The FEIS considers 15 wetland mitigation sites to address wetland impacts using criteria consistent with the Corps compensatory mitigation guidance as well as recommendations from EPA and other agencies. The evaluation of mitigation sites includes establishing new wetlands (wetland creation, wetland replacement), wetland restoration, wetland functional enhancement, and wetland preservation. The guidance also allows an applicant to purchase credits from a mitigation bank or pay a compensation fee in lieu of constructing compensatory wetlands. At an interagency meeting on January 12, 2010 the Corps, EPA, USFWS and Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife program identified four additional mitigation sites that appear to be more appropriate for compensation of the aquatic impacts than some of those considered in the FEIS. Even though the Corps has not received a complete permit application, interagency discussions concerning mitigation are ongoing and include the four new sites. EPA will continue to participate in the mitigation plan development process and will review and comment on the Section 404 permit application when it is filed with the Corps.

Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)

In addition to the reduction of environmental impacts of the Caribou Connector since it was first presented to the federal agencies for review, EPA also appreciates the MaineDOT commitment to "continue to consider TSM and TDM measures in combination with the Preferred Alternative to benefit the transportation system in Caribou." We continue to support this approach and believe specifics regarding the scope of this commitment should be provided in the Record of Decision.

General

Managing Road Salt

We reiterate our recommendation that MaineDOT and FHWA more fully address the potential for impacts to water quality from the application of road salt. We recommend that the Record of Decision describe how the project will comply with applicable Maine water quality criteria for chloride, sodium, and existing antidegradation statutes for surface water quality, or with national secondary drinking water standards. Ongoing investigations of highways in the New England Region since the publication of the SDEIS have shown that water quality issues associated new or expanded roadways can be challenging in those cases where roadway discharges will reach impaired waterbodies. We continue to urge FHWA and MaineDOT to work to fully address these issues and offer our technical assistance to help with that effort.

Economic Development

EPA's comments on the SDEIS acknowledged that funding for segments may not be available in the future and recommended that the EIS describe ongoing and planned activities that will achieve the stated goal of helping to maintain and expand Aroostook County's economy. The FEIS was not responsive on this point and we continue to believe that this is important given that funding for infrastructure improvements is limited. We recommend that this issue be addressed in the Record of Decision.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the FEIS. We are available to provide additional input, as necessary, to help FHWA and MaineDOT address these issues in the Record of Decision. Please feel free to contact Timothy Timmermann of the Office of Environmental Review at 617/918-1025 if you wish to discuss these comments further.

Sincerely,


H. Curtis Spalding
Regional Administrator

CARIBOU MANAGEMENT COMPANY LLC
171 Madison Avenue, Suite 1005
New York, NY 10016

January 21, 2010

Russell Charette
Maine Department of Transportation
State House 16
Augusta, ME 04333-0016
Phone: 207-624-3238

RE: Report # FHWA-ME-EIS-O2-1-F (FEIS - Segment 4 Caribou Bypass Section)

Dear Mr. Charette:

My company owns the Skyway Plaza shopping center in Caribou, ME. It is located at the intersection of US-1, Bennett Drive and Route 89. This intersection is the commercial heart of Caribou. Most retail shopping in Caribou occurs in the Skyway Plaza-Bennett Drive corridor surrounding this intersection.

Retail sales depend upon cars driving directly in front of commercial property. It is evident from the option 4B that maintaining the current amount of cars passing by this intersection was not a priority of the study.

In the report on the Caribou bypass, there is no mention of the negative impact on commercial retail business, especially the loss of impulse shopping that occurs when a car no longer passes by this intersection. The net result of the proposed plan will have a devastating effect on the retail shopping environment in Caribou.

I voice strong opposition to Option 4B. The only options that consider the needs of retail in the Skyway Plaza-Bennett Drive Corridor are options 1, 2, and 4C. I would also suggest that the no-action alternative would be the best alternative. Caribou is not downtown Portland. It is a rural community. There is no traffic problem. In these difficult times, government money should be spent on more essential services.

I would hope the final decision includes factoring in the commercial retail industry and thus the long-term employment and shopping needs of the citizens of Caribou.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Daniel Rosenberg
President
Caribou Management Company LLC

CARIBOU MANAGEMENT COMPANY LLC
171 Madison Avenue, Suite 1005
New York, NY 10016

January 21, 2010

Mark Hasselmann
Federal Highway Administration
Room 614, Federal Building
440 Western Avenue
Augusta, ME 04330
Phone: 207-622-8350

RE: Report # FHWA-ME-EIS-O2-1-F (FEIS - Segment 4 Caribou Bypass Section)

Dear Mr. Hasselmann:

My company owns the Skyway Plaza shopping center in Caribou, ME. It is located at the intersection of US-1, Bennett Drive and Route 89. This intersection is the commercial heart of Caribou. Most retail shopping in Caribou occurs in the Skyway Plaza-Bennett Drive corridor surrounding this intersection.

Retail sales depend upon cars driving directly in front of commercial property. It is evident from the option 4B that maintaining the current amount of cars passing by this intersection was not a priority of the study.

In the report, there is no mention of the negative impact on commercial retail business, especially the loss of impulse shopping that occurs when a car no longer passes by this intersection. The net result of the proposed plan will have a devastating effect on the retail shopping environment in Caribou.

I voice strong opposition to Option 4B. The only options that consider the needs of retail in the Skyway Plaza-Bennett Drive Corridor are options 1, 2, and 4C. I would also suggest that the no-action alternative would be the best alternative. Caribou is not downtown Portland. It is a rural community. There is no traffic problem. In these difficult times, government money should be spent on more essential services.

I would hope the final decision includes factoring in the commercial retail industry and thus the long-term employment and shopping needs of the citizens of Caribou.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Daniel Rosenberg
President
Caribou Management Company LLC



JOHN E. BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
INLAND FISHERIES & WILDLIFE
284 STATE STREET
41 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0041

ROLAND MARTIN
COMMISSIONER

December 29, 2009

PO Box 447
Ashland, ME 04732

Russell Charette
Maine DOT, BTSP
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

RE: Comments regarding mitigation measures for Caribou Bypass, Rt. #1 – 161 Connector

Dear Mr. Charette:

Potential impacts and mitigation for these impacts to the aquatic habitat of Longfellow Brook are adequately addressed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, December 2009. We would encourage the use of a bridge or open bottom culvert to maintain the integrity of the stream bottom under the crossing.

Alignment Option 4B has identified fisheries habitat as an impacted resource in Wetland system 4008 and 90003. None of the potential wetland mitigation sites listed in Table 5-13 on page 5-42 identify existing function values or potential function values to benefit fisheries habitat in adjacent wetland systems. Regional fisheries and wildlife staff have recommended alternative wetland mitigation to the 15 listed in the FEIS. We have identified IWWH #130276 on Rt. #205 (East Presque Isle Road) for acquisition and improvements that would preserve and enhance this wetland. Suggested improvements would enhance the wetland habitat for fisheries. We would urge you to consider our recommendation to acquire and improve IWWH #130276 as mitigation to address wetland impacts. These recommendations have been forwarded to IF&W Environmental Coordinator Steve Timpano.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this MDOT project.

Sincerely,

David J. Basley
Regional Fishery Biologist



JOHN E. BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
INLAND FISHERIES & WILDLIFE
284 STATE STREET
41 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0041

ROLAND MARTIN
COMMISSIONER

RECEIVED

DEC 22 2009

Wildlife Division
PO Box 447
Ashland, ME 04732

December 17, 2009

RECEIVED
DEC 22 2009

Russell Charette, P.E.
MaineDOT, BTSP
16 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0016

Re: Comments regarding mitigation measures for Caribou Bypass, Rt.#1 – 161 Connector

Dear Mr. Charette,

MDIFW has already sent-in comments regarding possible mitigation options for wetland impacts resulting from the Caribou bypass project. We are still very interested in having MDOT explore these mitigation options, particularly the wetland acquisition and improvements suggested for IWWH # 130276 on Rt #205 E. Presque Isle Road. However, we would like to add one additional mitigation option to the Final Environmental Impact Statement regarding impacts to wildlife habitats as discussed on pages 5-53 and 5-54 under section 5.4.3.1 Wildlife Habitat – Mitigation. In this section safety measures for reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions are briefly discussed, we would like MDOT to consider including beaver deceiver add-on culvert pipes to the list of wildlife mitigation measures.

Installation of this specialized equipment or pipes is not to prevent beaver-vehicle collisions but to prevent beaver from creating the roadside wetland habitat that attracts many other species of wildlife, such as moose, to these roadside areas. Private industrial landowners in the North Maine Woods have experimented with these culvert add-on devices and have found them very effective in preventing beaver from plugging road culverts. Putting these devices on small stream crossings or culverts would not only prevent beaver from plugging culverts and reducing subsequent road damage but also prevent beaver from creating the small roadside wetlands that are very attractive to moose (particularly in the late spring and early summer) often resulting in moose-vehicle collisions. Also, these same wetlands by design, capture run-off water from roads and adjacent fields which often results in high mineral nutrients in the sediments and aquatic plants making them very palatable to moose. If we allow beaver to plug these culverts these nutrients are trapped at these sites and we eventually create a “moose lick” or moose feeding site.

Given that this by-pass project is in an area that already has a very high number of moose-vehicle collisions plus a high number of beaver damage complaints we recommend that MDOT consider these beaver deceiver culvert add-ons in their road project design. They do add some additional cost to the initial project construction but appear to prevent future road damage and some moose-vehicle collisions which may save in the long term.

Respectfully,

Arlen Lovewell
Asst. Regional Wildlife Biologist
MDIFW Ashland Regional Office

Appendix D

ACTS SDEIS Re-evaluation

RECEIVED

APR 03 2009



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Maine Division

40 Western Avenue
Augusta, ME 04330

April 02, 2009

David A. Cole, Commissioner
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

In Reply Refer To:
HDA-ME

Dear Commissioner Cole:

We have reviewed the Aroostook County Transportation Study (ACTS) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Re-evaluation and Caribou and Presque Isle Logical Termini and Independent Utility Analysis (Analysis) submitted March 31, 2009. Based on our review of the Analysis we determine there is no need to supplement the ACTS. We also approve your request to advance two segments of the ACTS independently, specifically Caribou Segment 4 and Presque Isle Segment 7, as stand-alone NEPA projects.

Please contact Mark Hasselmann of my staff at 207-622-8350 Ext 103 if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

Jonathan McDade
Division Administrator

cc:

Raymond Faucher, MaineDOT ✓

**MOVING THE
AMERICAN
ECONOMY**





STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
16 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0016

JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

DAVID A. COLE
COMMISSIONER

March 31, 2009

Jonathan McDade, Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration, Maine Division
Room 614, Edmund Muskie Federal Building
40 Western Avenue
Augusta, Maine 04330

RE: Aroostook County Transportation Study – NH-HP-6462(10) – SDEIS Re-evaluation and Caribou and Presque Isle Logical Termini & Independent Utility Analysis

Dear Mr. McDade:

At the request of Governor Baldacci and Representative John Martin, MaineDOT is requesting FHWA approval to advance Segment 4, the Caribou connector, and Segment 7, the Presque Isle Bypass, as stand alone projects. In accordance with 23 CFR 771.129 – Re-evaluations, MaineDOT has prepared the attached re-evaluation and logical termini and independent utility analysis paper to document that the Caribou Connector and the Presque Isle Bypass can advance as separate and independent projects and that there is no need to prepare another Supplemental Draft EIS for either project.

FHWA approval of this request will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

David A. Cole
Commissioner

DAC/REF/

cc: Raymond Faucher, Planning
file



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

**AROOSTOOK COUNTY TRANSPORTATION STUDY
PROJECT NUMBER NH-HP-6462(10)
AROOSTOOK COUNTY, MAINE
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

RE-EVALUATION PAPER and

SEGMENT 4 (CARIBOU CONNECTOR)

And

SEGMENT 7 (PRESQUE ISLE BYPASS)

LOGICAL TERMINI AND INDEPENDENT UTILITY ANALYSIS

**Maine Department of Transportation
Bureau of Transportation System Planning**

INTRODUCTION

Concerns about project segmentation and cumulative effects have elevated the significance of defining the scope of a project, particularly when the project is in the vicinity of other proposed transportation improvements. Section 23 CFR 771.111(f) of the FHWA National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) outlines that projects cannot be “segmented” to avoid reviewing cumulative effects by dividing larger projects into smaller components of that project. Therefore, it is often necessary to clarify that each project:

- Connects logical termini and is of sufficient length to address environmental resources on a broad scope;
- Has independent utility and independent significance, i.e. is a usable and reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are accomplished;
- Will not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.

The purpose of this paper is to document the evaluation of Segment 4, the Caribou Connector, and Segment 7, the Presque Isle Bypass, as stand-alone projects with logical termini and independent utility and to re-evaluate the Aroostook County Transportation Study Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement dated June 2006 per 23 CFR 771.129

BACKGROUND

The Aroostook County Transportation Study has evaluated transportation options for improving north-south travel in northern Maine from I-95 in the Smyrna-Houlton area north to the Saint John Valley. The Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, dated June 2006, identified four potential north-south corridors that were divided into 11 segments that represent potential second phase or Tier 2 projects. Of the 11 segments, MaineDOT proposed that 2 segments, Segment 4 – the Caribou Connector and Segment 7 – the Presque Isle Bypass be advanced into the second phase and that the remaining nine segments be deferred until funding becomes available. The purpose of the Aroostook County Transportation Study is to evaluate transportation alternatives that would improve the region’s economy by improving transportation mobility.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Segment 4, the Caribou Connector, would address the need for traffic relief (particularly trucks) in downtown Caribou; would improve safety at one High Crash Location; would provide better access to the north side of Caribou's downtown, support the recommendations of the Route 1 Corridor Management Plan to concentrate Caribou's growth in the vicinity of Routes 1 and 89; and would improve network connectivity by linking Route 1 to the Route 161 corridor.

MaineDOT studied three different alignment options for the Caribou Connector (Segment 4) (see Figure 4 attached) in the Supplemental Draft EIS and identified and studied three additional alignment options subsequent to the Supplemental Draft EIS due to requests by the U.S. EPA and the City of Caribou. In general, environmental impacts from the three additional alignment options were equal or less than the environmental impacts from the 3 alignment options that were presented in the Supplemental Draft EIS. Segment 4 is envisioned to eventually be a 4-lane highway with a 300-foot wide right-of-way, and grade separated interchanges. The highway would, however, likely be built initially as a 2-lane facility with at-grade intersections at the proposed future interchange locations. All six alignment options would begin on U.S. Route 1 in Caribou at the U.S. Route 1/High Street intersection and end on Route 161.

In response to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Phase II Permit Application submitted by MaineDOT for the Caribou – Route 1 to Route 161 Connector in December 2007, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers identified Alignment Option 4B (see Figure 9 attached), the preferred alternative, as the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative in a letter to MaineDOT, dated September 18, 2008.

Segment 7, the Presque Isle Bypass, would evaluate the separation of the higher speed through-travelers from the local travelers destined for downtown Presque Isle, remove truck traffic coming from the north and west of Presque Isle and destined for the industrial areas in Easton, east of Presque Isle to bypass the downtown, and the minimization of through traffic through Presque Isle's downtown, especially large trucks, would improve air quality, reduce noise and provide a better opportunity for the community to become a true village center.

MaineDOT studied six potential alignment options east of downtown Presque Isle for Segment 7 (see Figures S-7a and S-7b attached) in the Supplemental Draft EIS and identified and studied 4 additional alignment options subsequent to the Supplemental Draft EIS due to requests by the U.S. EPA and the City of Presque Isle (see Figures 5A and 5B attached). In general, environmental impacts from the four additional alignment options were equal or less than the environmental impacts from the six alignment options that were presented in the Supplemental Draft EIS. Segment 7 is envisioned to eventually be a 4-lane highway with a 300 foot right-of-way, and grade separated interchanges. The highway would, however, likely be built initially as a 2 lane facility with at grade intersections at the proposed interchange locations. The Presque Isle Bypass alignment options begin south of the City of Presque Isle on U.S. Route 1 near the Westfield/Presque Isle townline and end north of the City of Presque Isle near the intersection of U.S. Route 1 and the Brewer Road.

MaineDOT submitted a Phase II Permit Application for the Presque Isle Bypass to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in June 2008 and are currently preparing responses to a February 12, 2009 letter from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers requesting additional information before they can make a LEDPA determination. It is anticipated that a LEDPA determination will be provided for the Presque Isle Bypass segment by early summer 2009 that will be followed by the preparation of a Final EIS for the Presque Isle Bypass Segment.

Logical Termini

The Caribou Connector has logical termini in that the proposed alignment option will provide a better connection between existing Route 161 north of the City of Caribou with U.S. Route 1 that currently bypasses downtown Caribou and provide the desired benefits as described above in the "Proposed Improvements" section. Alignment Option 4B includes 3.7 miles of new-alignment highway, and .58 miles of existing highway reconstruction. A 0.28-mile section of Route 161 would be upgraded to "tie-in" to the Caribou Connector, and 0.3 miles of Route 1 would be upgraded at the south end of the Connector. Alignment option 4B would tie into Route 161 approximately 1.5 miles south of Ogren Road and tie into Route 1 at the Route1/High Street intersection.

The proposed Presque Isle Bypasses have logical termini in that all the proposed alignment options connect to U.S. Route 1 north and south of the City of Presque Isle thereby providing improved mobility for north-south travelers for avoiding the most congested section of U.S. Route 1 in Aroostook County. The four Presque Isle Bypass Alignment Options being evaluated in the Phase II U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Permit Application range in length from 10.2 miles to 10.7 miles. All four of the proposed Presque Isle Bypass alignment options begin south of the City of Presque Isle on U.S. Route 1 near the Westfield/Presque Isle townline and end north of the City of Presque Isle near the intersection of U.S. Route 1 and the Brewer Road.

Independent Utility

The proposed Caribou Connector project will improve traffic flow through the City of Caribou, especially truck traffic, destined to and from Route 161 that will improve mobility and safety in downtown Caribou. This is a stand-alone project, is a reasonable expenditure, usable even if no other transportation improvements in the area are made.

The proposed Presque Isle Bypass project would improve traffic flow in the region, especially north south truck traffic, and would improve safety and air quality in downtown Presque Isle. The proposed Presque Isle Bypass is a stand-alone project, is a reasonable expenditure, and is usable even if no other transportation improvements in the area are made.

CONCLUSION

CARIBOU CONNECTOR

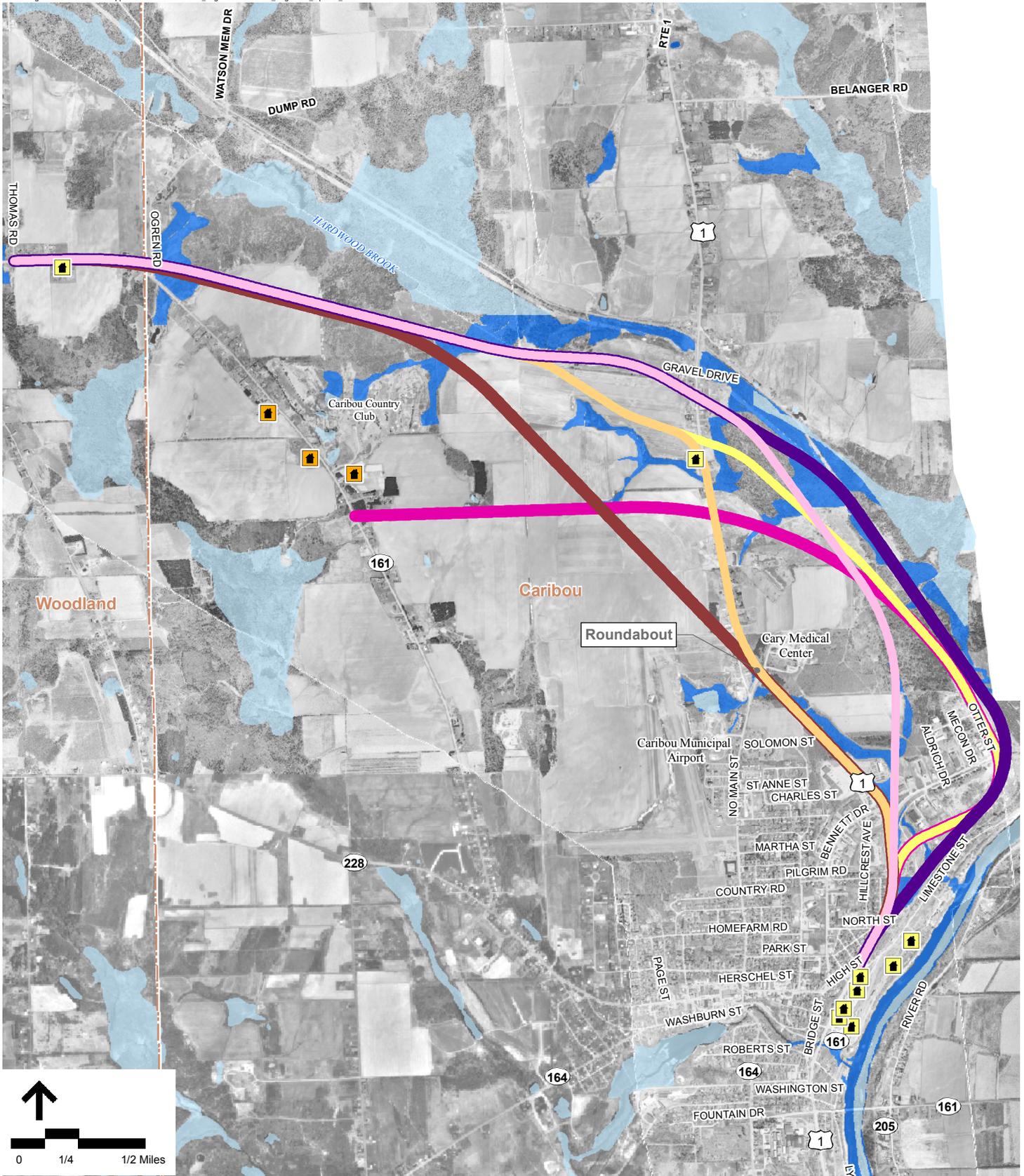
Alignment Option 4B is in the same general area as the three Alignment Options presented in the Supplemental Draft EIS. This option would impact similar resources as previously identified and

analyzed, however there is less environmental impact than the three Alignment Options presented in the Supplemental Draft EIS. Therefore, there is no need to prepare another Supplemental Draft EIS regarding the Caribou Connector. Final design activities may provide further opportunities to reduce potential project impacts. The segmentation and independent utility issues and criteria are satisfied in the analysis of the proposed Caribou Connector. The termini points of the Caribou Connector from a point approximately 1.5 miles south of the Ogren Road to Route 1 at the intersection of High Street and Route 1 are logical due to their travel benefits in reducing vehicle hours traveled (-310 vehicle-hours) and reducing truck traffic (-280 trucks per day) in downtown Caribou. Independent utility sufficiency is demonstrated with travel demand forecasts that indicate that improvements will serve a useful transportation purpose even if other actions are not implemented.

PRESQUE ISLE BYPASS

Of the four bypass alignment options being evaluated in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Phase II permit application, three were developed subsequent to the Supplement Draft EIS. These three bypass alignment options are all in the same general area of other bypass alignment options that were presented in the Supplemental Draft EIS. These three bypass alignment options would impact similar resources as previously identified and analyzed in the Supplemental Draft EIS. Therefore, there is no need to prepare another Supplemental Draft EIS regarding the proposed Presque Isle Bypass. Final design activities may provide further opportunities to reduce potential project impacts. The segmentation and independent utility issues and criteria are satisfied in the analysis of the proposed Presque Isle Bypass. The termini points of the Presque Isle Bypass from a point on U.S. Route 1 in the vicinity of the Westfield/Presque Isle townline to a point in the vicinity of U.S. Route 1/Brewer Road intersection north of the City of Presque Isle are logical due to their travel and safety benefits. Independent utility sufficiency is demonstrated with travel demand forecasts that indicate that improvements will serve a useful transportation purpose even if other actions are not implemented.

It is therefore concluded that the proposed improvements from the proposed Caribou Connector and the proposed Presque Isle Bypass do have logical termini, independent utility and do not force or preclude consideration of other transportation projects in the region.



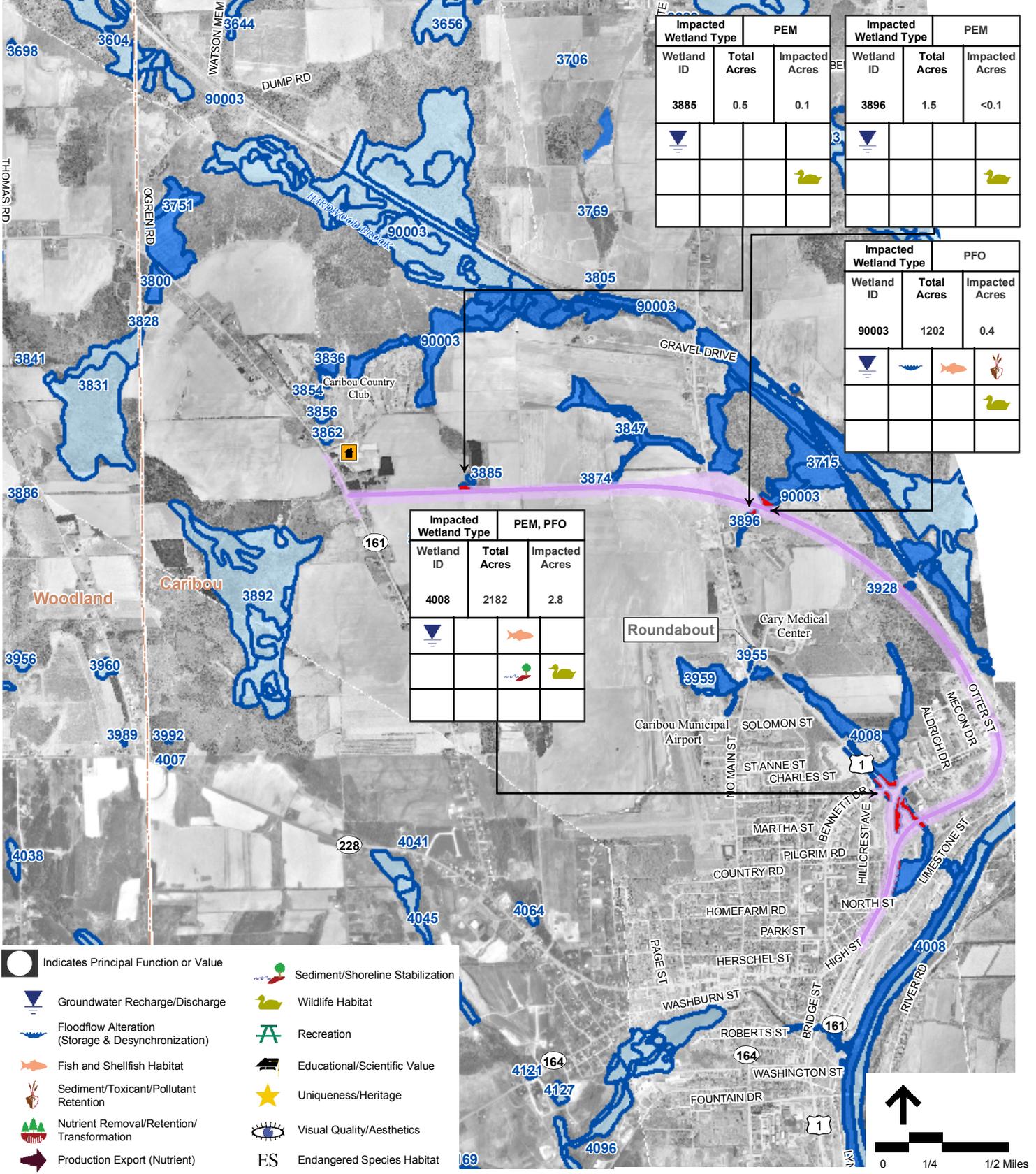
Legend

Segment 4 Alignment Options

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 2 3 4A 4B 4C | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aerial Photo Delineated Wetlands NWI Wetland National Register Listed Property National Register Eligible Property National Register Eligible Property (VHB - Recommended) |
|---|---|



Figure 4
Segment 4 Alignment Options



Legend

- Segment 4 Alignment Option**
- 4B
 - Impacted Wetland
 - Aerial Photo Delineated Wetlands
 - NWI Wetland
 - Wetland System
 - Impacted National Register Eligible Property (VHB - Recommended)

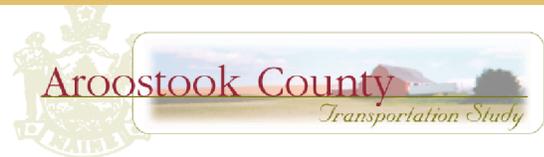
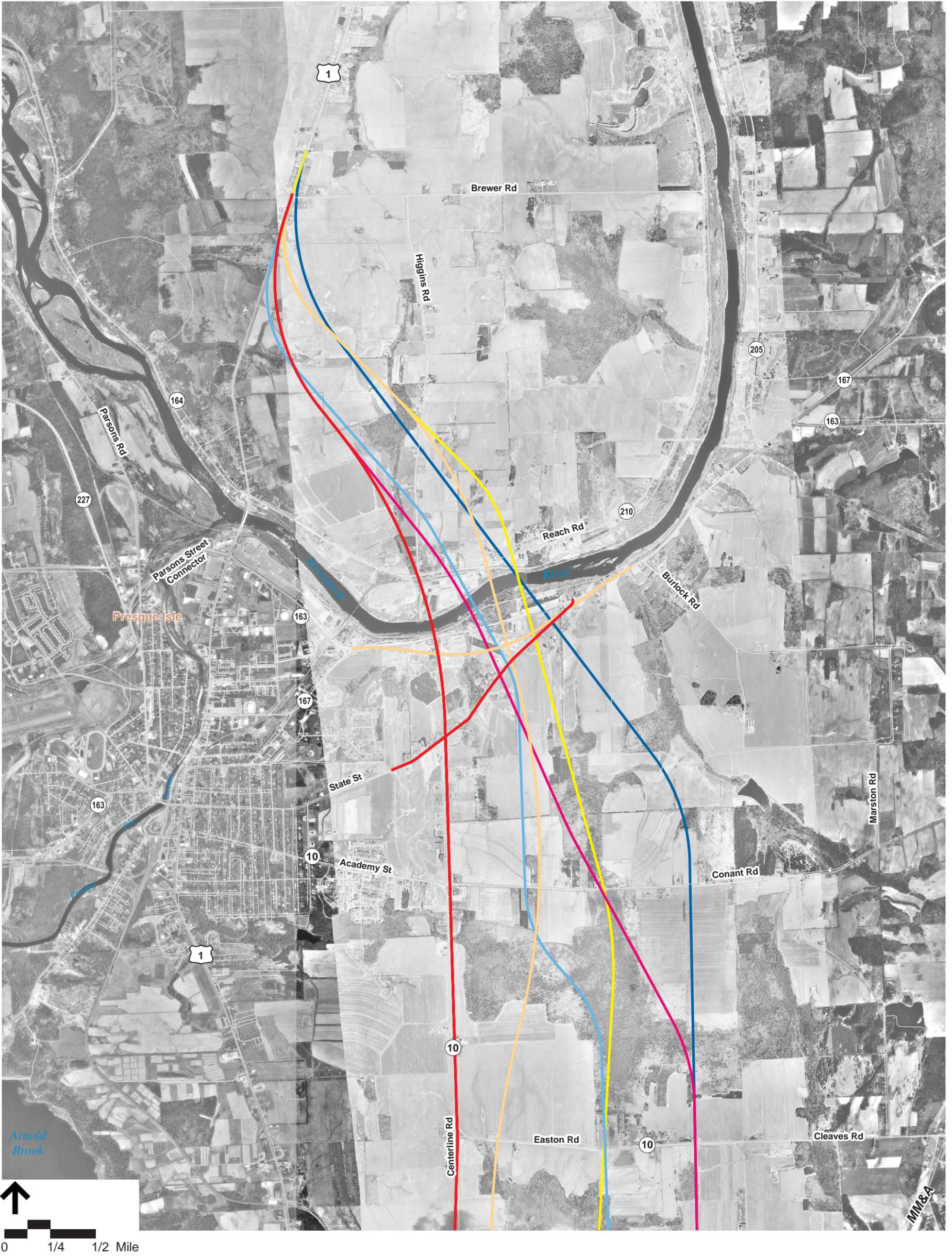


Figure 9
Alignment Option 4B



Presque Isle Options

- Alignment Option 1
- Alignment Option 2
- Alignment Option 3
- Alignment Option 4 - Centerline Road
- Alignment Option 5
- Alignment Option 6

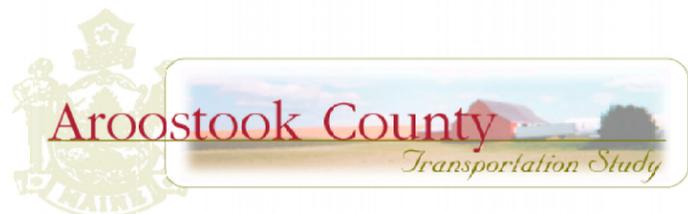
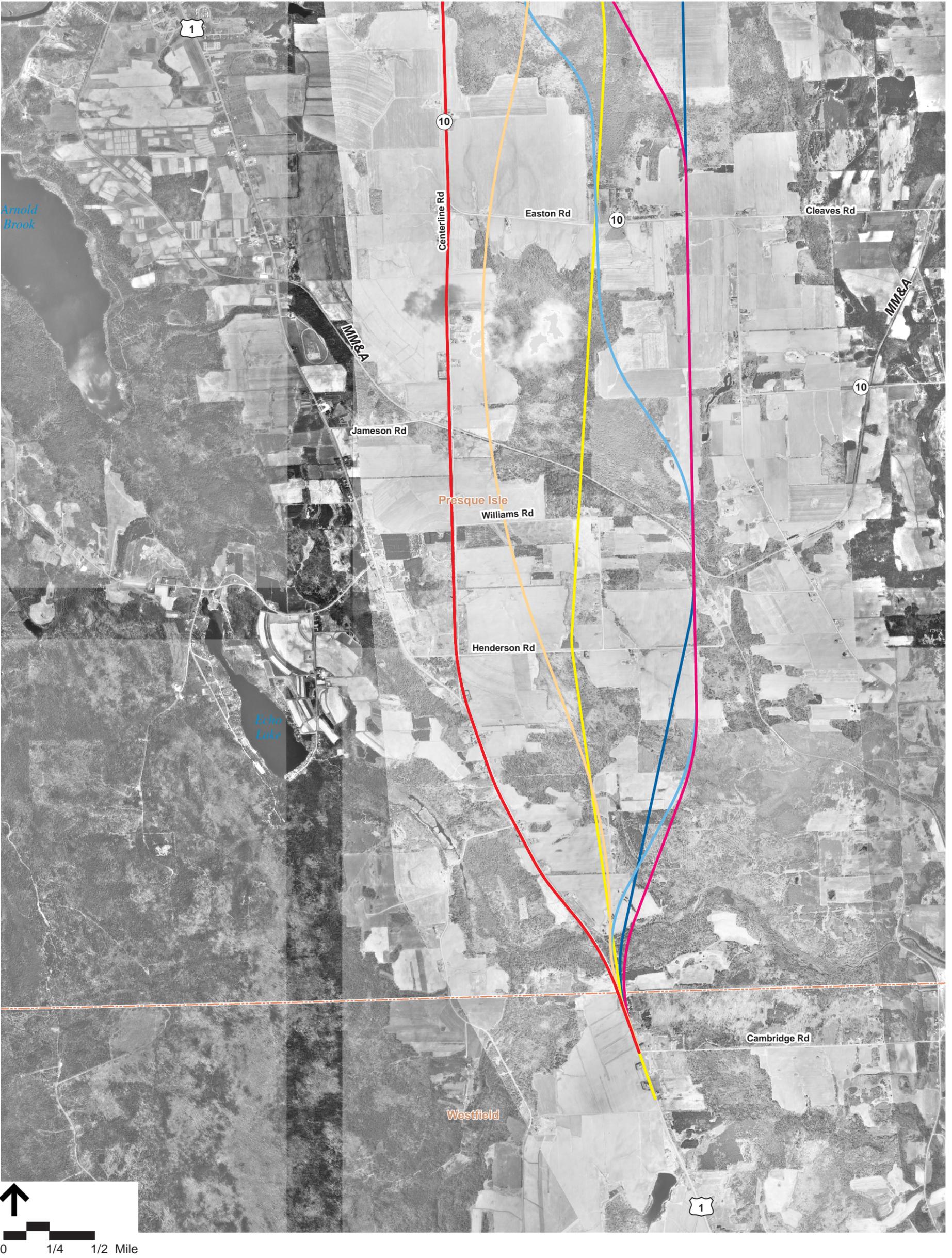


Figure S-7a
Segment 7 Alignment Options



Presque Isle Options

- Alignment Option 1
- Alignment Option 2
- Alignment Option 3
- Alignment Option 4 - Centerline Road
- Alignment Option 5
- Alignment Option 6

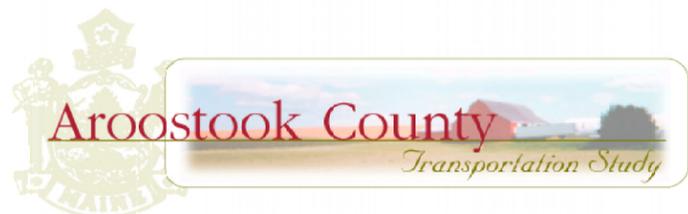
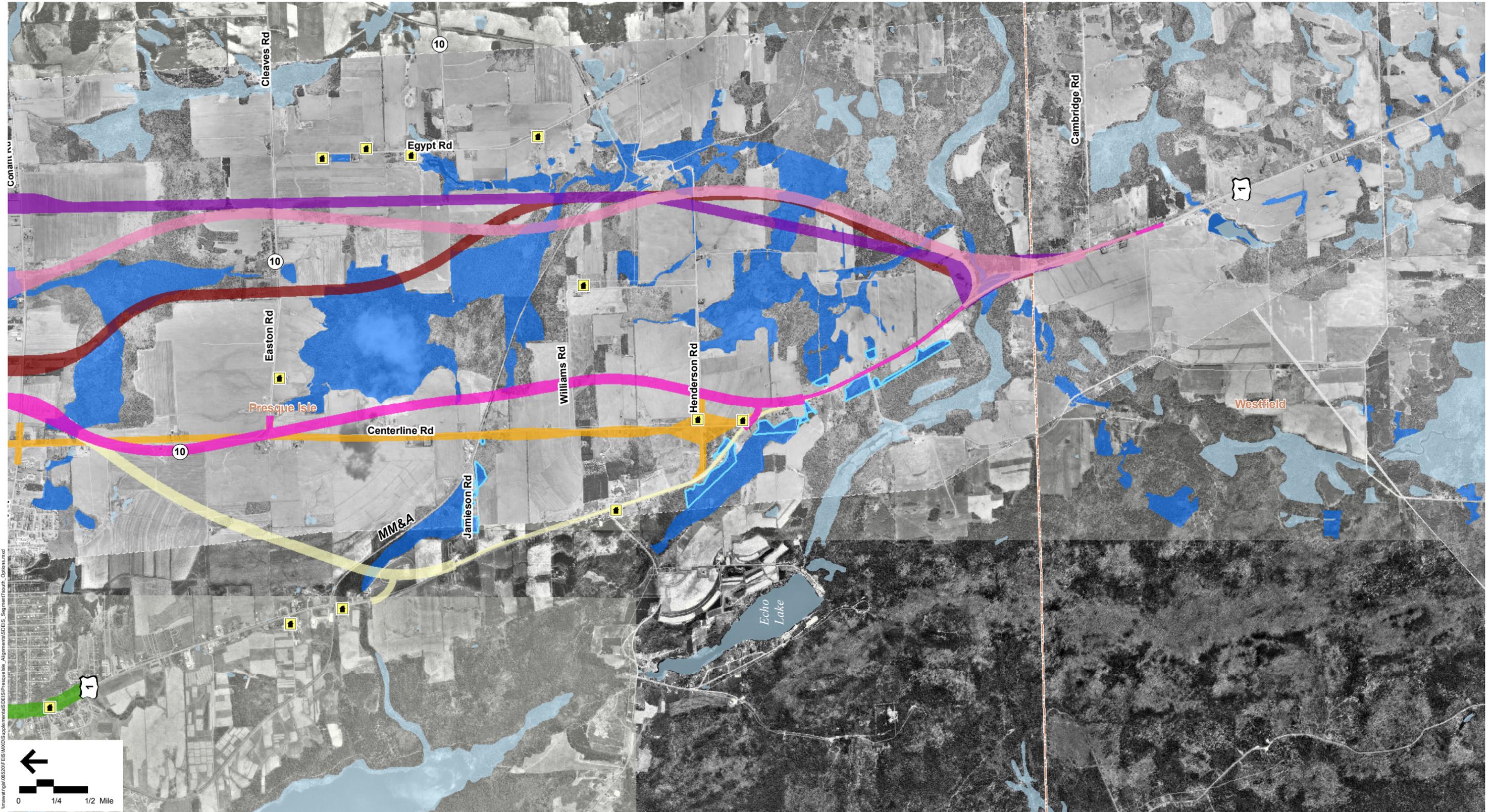


Figure S-7b
Segment 7 Alignment Options



I:\mawaf\fig06\520\FES\MXD\Supplemental\SDEIS\PresqueIsle_Algments\SDEIS_Segment7result_Options.mxd

Legend
Segment 7 Alignment Options

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 2X 4 4A 4B 6 Route 1 Upgrade | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VHB Field Delineated Wetlands (November 2006) Aerial Photo Delineated Wetlands NWI Wetland National Register Listed Property National Register Eligible Property (VHB - Recommended) |
|--|--|

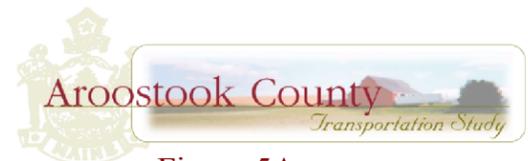
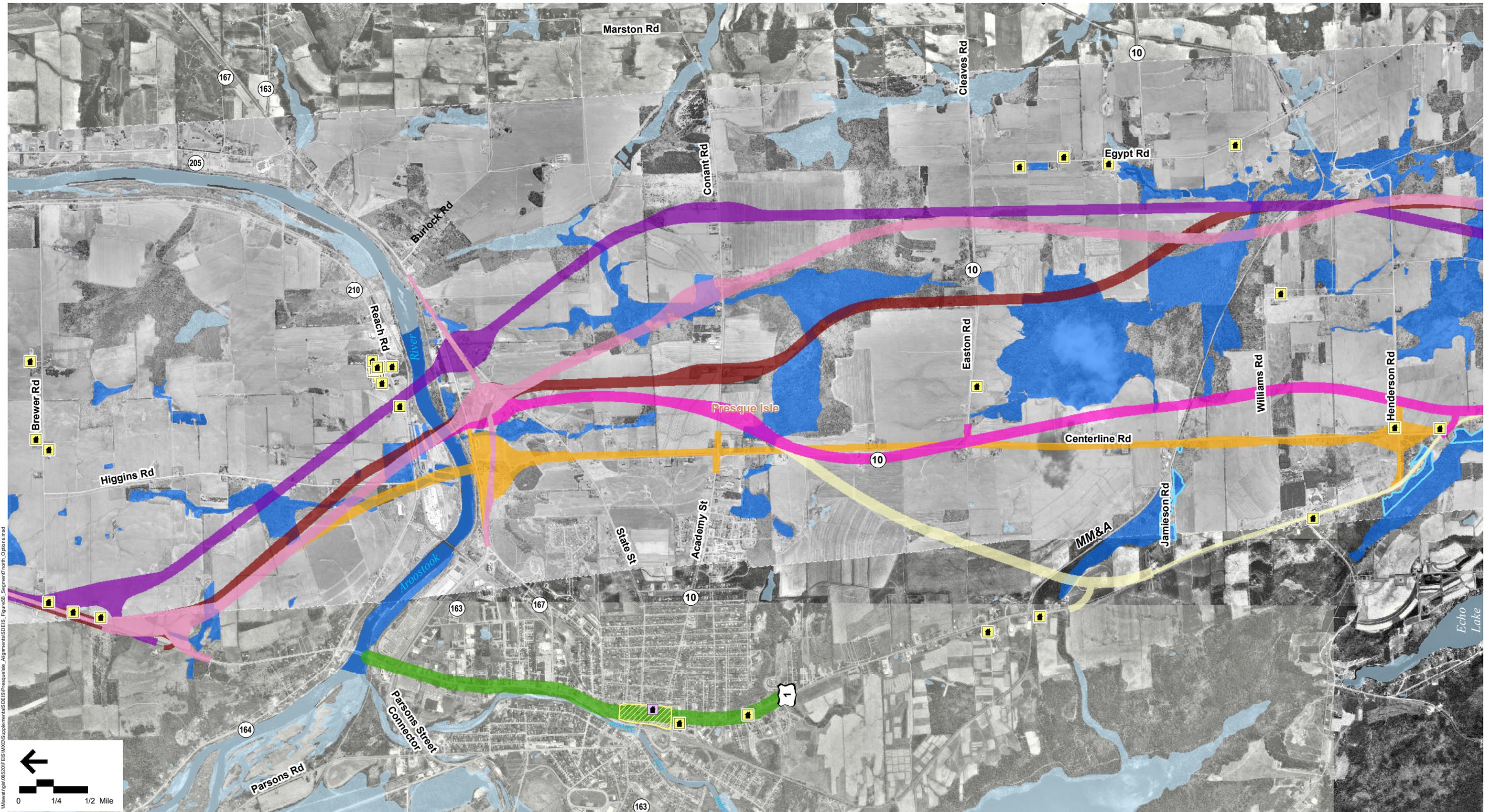


Figure 5A
Segment 7 Alignment Options (South)



Legend
Segment 7 Alignment Options

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 2X 4 4A 4B 6 Route 1 Upgrade | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VHB Field Delineated Wetlands (November 2006) Aerial Photo Delineated Wetlands NWI Wetland National Register Listed Property National Register Eligible Property (VHB - Recommended) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Register Eligible District (VHB - Recommended) |
|--|--|--|



Figure 5B
Segment 7 Alignment Options (North)

Appendix E

Noise and Traffic Appendix

- E-1 TNM Inputs
- E-2 TNM Results
- E-3 Traffic Memo – Revision 2030 to 2035 AADT

Appendix E-1 TNM Inputs

Segment 4 and 7 Vehicle Volumes

New Connector (Segment 4)
Year 2030

	Total Daily Volume ¹	Total Daily Truck Volume ¹	Total Daily						Peak Hour ²		
			Auto Volume	Auto %	Medium Truck Volume	Medium Truck %	Large Truck Volume	Large Truck %	Auto Volume	Medium Truck Volume	Large Truck Volume
C1M	4600	270	4330	94%	135	3%	135	3%	433	13.5	13.5
C2m	5000	400	4600	92%	200	4%	200	4%	460	20	20
C3	2900	70	2830	98%	35	1%	35	1%	283	3.5	3.5
Hm	3200	140	3060	96%	70	2%	70	2%	306	7	7

¹ Volumes from traffic study

² Estimated 10% of Daily Volume

PI Bypass (Segment 7)

Year 2030

	Total Daily Volume ¹	Total Daily Truck Volume ¹	Total Daily						Peak Hour ²		
			Auto Volume	Auto %	Medium Truck Volume	Medium Truck %	Large Truck Volume	Large Truck %	Auto Volume	Medium Truck Volume	Large Truck Volume
C1M	7500	1200	6300	84%	600	8%	600	8%	630	60	60
C2m	8500	1500	7000	82%	750	9%	750	9%	700	75	75
C3	7500	1200	6300	84%	600	8%	600	8%	630	60	60
Hm	8500	1500	7000	82%	750	9%	750	9%	700	75	75

¹ Volumes from traffic study

² Estimated 10% of Daily Volume

VHB
ayn

16 May 2006
TNM 2.5

INPUT: TRAFFIC FOR LAeq1h Volumes

PROJECT/CONTRACT: Aroostook County Transportation Study
RUN: Segment 7 - C1M Cooridor

Roadway Name	Points											
	Name	No.	Segment									
			Autos		MTrucks		HTrucks		Buses		Motorcycles	
			V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S
veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph			
Roadway1	point1	1	630	45	60	45	60	45	0	0	0	0
	point2	2										

vhb
ayn

16 May 2006
TNM 2.5

INPUT: TRAFFIC FOR LAeq1h Volumes

PROJECT/CONTRACT: Aroostook County Transportation Study
RUN: Segment 7 - C2M Cooridor

Roadway Name	Points											
	Name	No.	Segment									
			Autos		MTrucks		HTrucks		Buses		Motorcycles	
			V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S
veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph			
Roadway1	point1	1	700	55	75	55	75	55	0	0	0	0
	point2	2										

vhb
ayn

16 May 2006
TNM 2.5

INPUT: TRAFFIC FOR LAeq1h Volumes

PROJECT/CONTRACT: Aroostook County Transportation Study
 RUN: Segment 7 - C3 Cooridor

Roadway Name	Points											
	Name	No.	Segment									
			Autos		MTrucks		HTrucks		Buses		Motorcycles	
			V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S
veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph			
Roadway1	point1	1	630	55	60	55	60	55	0	0	0	0
	point2	2										

vhb
ayn

16 May 2006
TNM 2.5

INPUT: TRAFFIC FOR LAeq1h Volumes

PROJECT/CONTRACT: Aroostook County Transportation Study

RUN: Segment 7 - Hm Cooridor

Roadway	Points											
Name	Name	No.	Segment									
			Autos		MTrucks		HTrucks		Buses		Motorcycles	
			V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S	V	S
			veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph	veh/hr	mph
Roadway1	point1	1	700	55	75	55	75	55	0	0	0	0
	point2	2										

Appendix E-2 TNM Results

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

Aroostook County Transportation Study

VHB
ayn

16 May 2006
TNM 2.5
Calculated with TNM 2.5

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

PROJECT/CONTRACT:

Aroostook County Transportation Study

RUN:

Segment 7 - C1M Corridor

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				Type		With Barrier		Noise Reduction		
				LAeq1h		Increase over existing		Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal		
				Calculated	Crit'n	Calculated	Crit'n						Sub'l Inc	
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB		
25	1	1	0.0	71.8	66	71.8	10	Snd Lvl	71.8	0.0	8	-8.0		
50	2	1	0.0	68.1	66	68.1	10	Snd Lvl	68.1	0.0	8	-8.0		
75	3	1	0.0	64.3	66	64.3	10	----	64.3	0.0	8	-8.0		
100	4	1	0.0	61.6	66	61.6	10	----	61.6	0.0	8	-8.0		
125	5	1	0.0	59.6	66	59.6	10	----	59.6	0.0	8	-8.0		
150	6	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	10	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0		
175	7	1	0.0	56.5	66	56.5	10	----	56.5	0.0	8	-8.0		
200	8	1	0.0	55.3	66	55.3	10	----	55.3	0.0	8	-8.0		
225	10	1	0.0	54.1	66	54.1	10	----	54.1	0.0	8	-8.0		
250	11	1	0.0	53.1	66	53.1	10	----	53.1	0.0	8	-8.0		
275	12	1	0.0	52.1	66	52.1	10	----	52.1	0.0	8	-8.0		
300	13	1	0.0	51.2	66	51.2	10	----	51.2	0.0	8	-8.0		
325	15	1	0.0	50.4	66	50.4	10	----	50.4	0.0	8	-8.0		
350	16	1	0.0	49.6	66	49.6	10	----	49.6	0.0	8	-8.0		
375	17	1	0.0	48.9	66	48.9	10	----	48.9	0.0	8	-8.0		
400	18	1	0.0	48.2	66	48.2	10	----	48.2	0.0	8	-8.0		
425	19	1	0.0	47.6	66	47.6	10	----	47.6	0.0	8	-8.0		
450	20	1	0.0	47.0	66	47.0	10	----	47.0	0.0	8	-8.0		
475	21	1	0.0	46.4	66	46.4	10	----	46.4	0.0	8	-8.0		
500	22	1	0.0	45.8	66	45.8	10	----	45.8	0.0	8	-8.0		
Dwelling Units		# DUs	Noise Reduction											
			Min	Avg	Max									
			dB	dB	dB									

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

All Selected	20	0.0	0.0	0.0
All Impacted	2	0.0	0.0	0.0
All that meet NR Goal	0	0.0	0.0	0.0

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

Aroostook County Transportation Study

vhb
ayn

16 May 2006
TNM 2.5
Calculated with TNM 2.5

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

PROJECT/CONTRACT: Aroostook County Transportation Study
RUN: Segment 7 - C2M Corridor
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				Type Impact	With Barrier				
				LAeq1h		Increase over existing			Calculated LAeq1h	Noise Reduction			
				Calculated	Crit'n	Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc			Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal	
			dB	dB	dB	dB		dB	dB	dB	dB		
25	1	1	0.0	74.8	66	74.8	10	Snd Lvl	74.8	0.0	8	-8.0	
50	2	1	0.0	71.1	66	71.1	10	Snd Lvl	71.1	0.0	8	-8.0	
75	3	1	0.0	67.2	66	67.2	10	Snd Lvl	67.2	0.0	8	-8.0	
100	4	1	0.0	64.5	66	64.5	10	----	64.5	0.0	8	-8.0	
125	5	1	0.0	62.4	66	62.4	10	----	62.4	0.0	8	-8.0	
150	6	1	0.0	60.7	66	60.7	10	----	60.7	0.0	8	-8.0	
175	7	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	10	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0	
200	8	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	10	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0	
225	10	1	0.0	56.7	66	56.7	10	----	56.7	0.0	8	-8.0	
250	11	1	0.0	55.6	66	55.6	10	----	55.6	0.0	8	-8.0	
275	12	1	0.0	54.6	66	54.6	10	----	54.6	0.0	8	-8.0	
300	13	1	0.0	53.7	66	53.7	10	----	53.7	0.0	8	-8.0	
325	15	1	0.0	52.9	66	52.9	10	----	52.9	0.0	8	-8.0	
350	16	1	0.0	52.0	66	52.0	10	----	52.0	0.0	8	-8.0	
375	17	1	0.0	51.3	66	51.3	10	----	51.3	0.0	8	-8.0	
400	18	1	0.0	50.6	66	50.6	10	----	50.6	0.0	8	-8.0	
425	19	1	0.0	49.9	66	49.9	10	----	49.9	0.0	8	-8.0	
450	20	1	0.0	49.3	66	49.3	10	----	49.3	0.0	8	-8.0	
475	21	1	0.0	48.7	66	48.7	10	----	48.7	0.0	8	-8.0	
500	22	1	0.0	48.1	66	48.1	10	----	48.1	0.0	8	-8.0	
Dwelling Units		# DUs	Noise Reduction										
			Min	Avg	Max								
			dB	dB	dB								

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

Aroostook County Transportation Study

All Selected	20	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

Aroostook County Transportation Study

vhb
ayn

16 May 2006
TNM 2.5
Calculated with TNM 2.5

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

PROJECT/CONTRACT: Aroostook County Transportation Study
 RUN: Segment 7 - C3 Corridor
 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 dBA	No Barrier				With Barrier		Noise Reduction		
				LAeq1h		Increase over existing		Type	Calculated LAeq1h dBA	Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal dB
				Calculated	Crit'n	Calculated	Crit'n	Impact				
25	1	1	0.0	74.1	66	74.1	10	Snd Lvl	74.1	0.0	8	-8.0
50	2	1	0.0	70.4	66	70.4	10	Snd Lvl	70.4	0.0	8	-8.0
75	3	1	0.0	66.4	66	66.4	10	Snd Lvl	66.4	0.0	8	-8.0
100	4	1	0.0	63.7	66	63.7	10	----	63.7	0.0	8	-8.0
125	5	1	0.0	61.6	66	61.6	10	----	61.6	0.0	8	-8.0
150	6	1	0.0	59.9	66	59.9	10	----	59.9	0.0	8	-8.0
175	7	1	0.0	58.4	66	58.4	10	----	58.4	0.0	8	-8.0
200	8	1	0.0	57.1	66	57.1	10	----	57.1	0.0	8	-8.0
225	10	1	0.0	55.9	66	55.9	10	----	55.9	0.0	8	-8.0
250	11	1	0.0	54.8	66	54.8	10	----	54.8	0.0	8	-8.0
275	12	1	0.0	53.8	66	53.8	10	----	53.8	0.0	8	-8.0
300	13	1	0.0	52.9	66	52.9	10	----	52.9	0.0	8	-8.0
325	15	1	0.0	52.0	66	52.0	10	----	52.0	0.0	8	-8.0
350	16	1	0.0	51.2	66	51.2	10	----	51.2	0.0	8	-8.0
375	17	1	0.0	50.4	66	50.4	10	----	50.4	0.0	8	-8.0
400	18	1	0.0	49.7	66	49.7	10	----	49.7	0.0	8	-8.0
425	19	1	0.0	49.1	66	49.1	10	----	49.1	0.0	8	-8.0
450	20	1	0.0	48.4	66	48.4	10	----	48.4	0.0	8	-8.0
475	21	1	0.0	47.8	66	47.8	10	----	47.8	0.0	8	-8.0
500	22	1	0.0	47.2	66	47.2	10	----	47.2	0.0	8	-8.0
Dwelling Units		# DUs	Noise Reduction									
			Min	Avg	Max							
			dB	dB	dB							

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

All Selected	20	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

Aroostook County Transportation Study

vhb
ayn

16 May 2006
TNM 2.5
Calculated with TNM 2.5

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

PROJECT/CONTRACT:

Aroostook County Transportation Study

RUN:

Segment 7 - Hm Cooridor

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		Noise Reduction		
				LAeq1h		Increase over existing		Type Impact	Calculated LAeq1h	Calculated	Goal	Calculated minus Goal
				Calculated	Crit'n	Calculated	Crit'n Sub'l Inc					
			dBA	dBA	dBA	dB	dB		dBA	dB	dB	dB
25	1	1	0.0	74.8	66	74.8	10	Snd Lvl	74.8	0.0	8	-8.0
50	2	1	0.0	71.1	66	71.1	10	Snd Lvl	71.1	0.0	8	-8.0
75	3	1	0.0	67.2	66	67.2	10	Snd Lvl	67.2	0.0	8	-8.0
100	4	1	0.0	64.5	66	64.5	10	----	64.5	0.0	8	-8.0
125	5	1	0.0	62.4	66	62.4	10	----	62.4	0.0	8	-8.0
150	6	1	0.0	60.7	66	60.7	10	----	60.7	0.0	8	-8.0
175	7	1	0.0	59.2	66	59.2	10	----	59.2	0.0	8	-8.0
200	8	1	0.0	57.9	66	57.9	10	----	57.9	0.0	8	-8.0
225	10	1	0.0	56.7	66	56.7	10	----	56.7	0.0	8	-8.0
250	11	1	0.0	55.6	66	55.6	10	----	55.6	0.0	8	-8.0
275	12	1	0.0	54.6	66	54.6	10	----	54.6	0.0	8	-8.0
300	13	1	0.0	53.7	66	53.7	10	----	53.7	0.0	8	-8.0
325	15	1	0.0	52.9	66	52.9	10	----	52.9	0.0	8	-8.0
350	16	1	0.0	52.0	66	52.0	10	----	52.0	0.0	8	-8.0
375	17	1	0.0	51.3	66	51.3	10	----	51.3	0.0	8	-8.0
400	18	1	0.0	50.6	66	50.6	10	----	50.6	0.0	8	-8.0
425	19	1	0.0	49.9	66	49.9	10	----	49.9	0.0	8	-8.0
450	20	1	0.0	49.3	66	49.3	10	----	49.3	0.0	8	-8.0
475	21	1	0.0	48.7	66	48.7	10	----	48.7	0.0	8	-8.0
500	22	1	0.0	48.1	66	48.1	10	----	48.1	0.0	8	-8.0
Dwelling Units		# DUs	Noise Reduction									
			Min	Avg	Max							
			dB	dB	dB							

RESULTS: SOUND LEVELS

All Selected	20	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

Noise Impact Distances

Results Segment 4

Corridor	Distance (ft)	
	54 dBA	66 dBA
C1m	175	50
C2m	175	75
C3	125	50
Hm	150	50

Results Segment 7

Corridor	Distance (ft)	
	60 dBA	66 dBA
C1m	150	100
C2m	175	100
C3	150	100
Hm	175	100

Appendix E-3

Traffic Memo – Revision 2030 to 2035

AADT



Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

101 Walnut Street
P. O. Box 9151
Watertown, MA 02471-9151
617 924 1770
FAX 617 924 2286

Memorandum

To: Michael Paiewonsky
Project Manager

Date: October 17, 2012

Project No.: 06520.02

From: Laura Castelli, P.E.
Traffic Engineer

Re: Aroostook County Transportation Study -
Presque Isle Bypass

VHB has been asked to review whether the Presque Isle Segment 7 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) traffic volumes projected for the 2030 design year would still be adequate if the design year were revised to 2035. Typically, an EIS-level transportation analysis provides a minimum 20 year planning horizon to ensure that improvements emerging from the study have a useful life of at least 20 years and to adequately assess future transportation impacts of a proposed project. Given the change in schedule for the project and that construction is likely to occur between 2013 and 2015; a 2035 design year would be consistent with a 20-year design for the project. A 2030 design year, which was appropriate at the time filed, was used in the FEIS.

A review of historic traffic growth on Route 1 and other study area roadways within Presque Isle indicates that the volumes currently projected for 2030 would accurately represent conditions in 2035. (See figure below.) There has been a distinct reduction in traffic volumes on study area roadways throughout Presque Isle since 2004. Since the expected growth has not been realized, the forecasted traffic volume for the future at key locations is much closer to the trend line at 2035 than at 2030. Additionally, a review of known land use projections for 2030 and 2035 show no changes that would suggest that volumes would increase due to development that was not foreseen when the FEIS was completed. The trend line illustrated in the figure represents an annual growth rate of 0.87 percent per year, which is based on the growth calculated from the Aroostook County Transportation Model along the Route 1 corridor.

Therefore, for the purpose of the Presque Isle Segment 7 FEIS, VHB concurs that the year of the future conditions traffic forecasts and analyses of the study remain valid for the 2035 design year and can be revised from 2030 to 2035.

