



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

July 10, 2018

LADOTD STATE PROJECT NO.: H.000425
FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO.: H000425
LA 12/TX 12 SABINE RIVER BRIDGE
CALCASIEU PARISH, LA AND NEWTON COUNTY, TX

SUBJECT: Solicitation of Views
Request for Consulting Parties for Initiation of Section 106 Process
Notice of Open House Public Meeting

Solicitation of Views

Early in the planning stages of a transportation facility, views from federal, state, and local agencies, organizations, and individuals are solicited. The special expertise of these groups can assist the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) and Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) with the early identification of possible adverse economic, social, or environmental effects or concerns. Your assistance in this regard will be appreciated.

As we are in the beginning stages of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, very limited data concerning the proposed project exists. We have, however, attached a map showing the general location of the project, along with a preliminary project description.

We request that you review the attached project information and furnish us with your views and comments in writing to the address below by **August 15, 2018**.

Request for Consulting Parties for Initiation of Section 106 Process

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) calls for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in consultation with the Louisiana and Texas State Historic Preservation Officers, to identify consulting parties and invite them to participate in the Section 106 process for the proposed captioned project.

This consultation is being initiated to identify and assess effects on properties that are listed or may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) that may be impacted by the proposed project, including the LA 12/TX 12 Sabine River Bridge listed on the NRHP.

To request to be a consulting party for this project, please send a written request to the address below or email to kreg.ellzey@la.gov. Please include your reasons for requesting to be a consulting party. Responses would be appreciated by **August 15, 2018**.

Notice of Open House Public Meeting

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD), in conjunction with Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will conduct an Open House Public Meeting for the proposed captioned project from **4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 31, 2018**. The meeting will be held at Deweyville High School, in the Cafetorium, 171 TX-12, Orange, TX 77632. The purpose of the meeting is to provide information about the proposed project and obtain input from interest parties.

Five build alternatives and one no build alternative from LADOTD's Feasibility Study dated January 2017 will be presented, which include rehabilitation of the existing bridge and construction of a new bridge. The preliminary purpose of the project is to provide a structurally sound river crossing that improves the functionality of and vehicular mobility on the structure carrying LA 12/TX 12 over the Sabine River in Calcasieu Parish/Newton County.

A continuous multi-media presentation will be shown at the meeting. Additional project information will be available. LADOTD and TxDOT staff will be available to answer questions and discuss issues related to the project. Verbal and written comments on the project can be submitted at the meeting or mailed to the LADOTD address shown below. Comments submitted at the meeting or postmarked by **August 15, 2018**, will be included in the meeting summary.

Should you need to request special accommodations to participate in this public meeting, please contact LADOTD by mail, email or telephone at the addresses shown below at least five working days prior to the meeting.

A notice with this information will be published in the *Newton County News* and the *Lake Charles American Press* to inform the public.

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Submitting Comments and/or Requests

Please submit written views and comments to LADOTD; Environmental Engineer Administrator; P.O. Box 94245; Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245, or via e-mail to Kreg.Ellzey@la.gov. Questions can be directed to (225) 242-4503. Please reference the captioned project in all correspondence.

Sincerely,



for Noel Ardoin
Environmental Engineer Administrator

Attachments (SOV preliminary project description & vicinity map)

NA/ke

cc: LADOTD District 07 Administrator
LADOTD District 07 Traffic Operations Engineer

PRELIMINARY PROJECT DESCRIPTION
LADOTD STATE PROJECT NO.: H.000425
FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO.: H000425
LA 12/TX 12 SABINE RIVER BRIDGE
CALCASIEU PARISH, LA/NEWTON COUNTY, TX

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) (lead state agency), in conjunction with Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is proposing improvements to the existing Louisiana Highway 12 (LA 12) and Texas Highway 12 (TX 12) Sabine River Bridge located between Deweyville, Texas (Newton County) and Starks, Louisiana (Calcasieu Parish) at the Texas/Louisiana state line at Lat: 30.303643, Long: -93.744063, Decimal Degrees [DD].

Depending upon the specific alternative, the maximum project limits for the proposed alternatives begin at approximately Lat: 30.297219, Long: -93.756209, DD, just west of TX 4156 in Deweyville, Texas (about 0.90 mile west of the Sabine River Bridge), and extend to approximately Lat: 30.306232, Long: -93.732496, DD, about 0.7 mile east of the Sabine River Bridge.

The preliminary purpose of the project is to provide a structurally sound river crossing that improves the functionality of and vehicular mobility on the structure carrying LA 12/TX 12 over the Sabine River in Calcasieu Parish/Newton County. The need for the project is to address the structural deficiencies of the existing bridge, maintain connectivity between Texas and Louisiana highway systems, and to improve the functionality and geometry of the existing bridge for safety purposes.

The Sabine River Bridge, a center pivot swing span bridge, was constructed in 1938. The bridge was built during the Depression using federal relief funds and as part of a joint program between the Texas Highway Department and Louisiana Highway Commission to construct bi-state bridges across the Sabine River. In 2011, the bridge was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), by nomination of the Texas Historical Commission, under the name Deweyville-Starks Swing Bridge. The bridge was listed under NRHP Criteria A and C. Criterion A eligibility is satisfied in the area of transportation at the local level of significance for its association with the Evangeline Highway and the Good Roads Movement. Criterion C eligibility is satisfied at the state level of significance for being one of three remaining highway swing bridges that are fifty years old or older in Texas and is the oldest extant moveable span highway bridge in Texas.

In terms of connectivity, the Bridge provides the only regional bridge crossing of the Sabine River for approximately 50 miles upstream and 20 miles downstream. Additionally, the existing bridge requires geometric and functional improvements because the bridge has a 24 foot clear roadway width, while the roadways on both the Texas and Louisiana sides of the structure have 12 foot wide travel lanes with 12 foot and 8 foot wide shoulders, respectively.

Five (5) build alternatives and one (1) no build alternative from the Feasibility Study prepared by LADOTD dated January 2017 are currently being considered:

Alternative 1 Bridge Rehabilitation/Widening by 4 feet is 0.416 miles in total length and begins just west of the Sabine River Relief Bridge and terminates approximately 700 feet east of the existing Sabine River Bridge. A majority of the roadway within the construction limits would remain with minimal overlay necessary to tie into the proposed crossing improvements. The approach to the Sabine River Bridge maintains the existing LA 12 vertical grade of 2.53% west of the bridge and -2.00% east of the bridge.

The proposed bridge would provide two 12-foot lanes and two-foot outside shoulders increasing the clear roadway width from 24 feet to 28 feet. The existing profile of the bridge is maintained. Crossing improvements in this alternative include replacing the approach slab, guardrail, approach spans, main span deck, and bridge rail. Alternative 1 represents the minimal effort necessary to reuse the bridge and would require exceptions to the design guidelines due to inadequate shoulders on the bridge. Due to this, Alternative 1 does not fulfill all of the project's preliminary need to address the geometric deficiency of the existing structure.

Alternative 2 Bridge Rehabilitation/Widening by 16 feet is 0.568 miles in total length and begins just west of the Sabine River Relief Bridge and terminates approximately 1600 feet east of the existing Sabine River Bridge. A majority of the roadway within the construction limits would be milled and overlaid with minimal widening to achieve a 5 foot centerline shift to tie into the widened structure. A design exception would be needed for the two, short curves needed for the shift between the Texas Bridge and the Sabine River Bridge. The approach to the Sabine River Bridge maintains the existing LA 12 vertical grade of 2.53% west of the bridge and -2.00% east of the bridge.

The proposed bridge would provide two 12-foot lanes and eight-foot outside shoulders increasing the clear roadway width from 24 feet to 40 feet. The existing vertical grades of the bridge are maintained. Crossing improvements in this alternative would include replacing the approach slab, guardrail, approach spans, main span deck, and bridge rail. The bridge would be widened to the north to avoid impacts to the Deweyville Boat Launch.

Alternative 3 Couplet with construction of an adjacent new bridge is 1.326 miles in total length and begins just west of County Road 4156 and terminates approximately 2100 feet east of the existing Sabine River Bridge. The proposed roadway would be a two-lane divided roadway with 12-foot lanes, eight-foot shoulders, 42-foot median, and open ditch drainage. The existing LA 12 would be converted to one-way eastbound traffic only. The new 42-foot median and the westbound roadway would be constructed at full depth north of the existing roadway.

Full access median openings are provided at minor roads to maintain access along LA 12. Drivers will be able to make U-turns at these median openings in order to access businesses and residences along TX 12. Minor roads where full access median openings are provided would be realigned to minimize skew at the intersection and provide a perpendicular connection at LA 12 in accordance with LADOTD local road (RL-1) design guidelines. A majority of the roadway in the eastbound direction would be mill and overlay. The eastbound approach to the Sabine River Bridge would maintain the existing LA 12 vertical grade of 2.53% west of the bridge and -2.00% east of the bridge. The new westbound approach would provide a vertical grade of 2.06% west of

the new bridge and -2.81% east of the new bridge.

A new one-way bridge would be constructed parallel to the north of the existing bridge to form a couplet and accommodate the westbound traffic. The new bridge would provide a 12-foot lane, 12-foot outside shoulder, four-foot inside shoulder, and steel crash rated rail. The new bridge features a finished grade elevation of 36.5'. Crossing improvements in this alternative include replacing the approach slab, guardrail, approach spans, main span deck, and bridge rail. Additionally, Alternative 3 requires the addition of a parallel bridge structure at the Sabine River Relief Canal on the Texas side.

The existing bridge would be rehabilitated and converted to one-way eastbound traffic only and provide a 12-foot lane, 12-foot outside shoulder, and four-foot inside shoulder increasing the clear roadway width from 24 feet to 28 feet. The existing profile of the bridge would be maintained.

Alternative 4 Bridge Replacement is 0.391 miles in total length and begins just west of the Sabine River Relief Bridge and terminates approximately 1100 feet east of the existing Sabine River Bridge. The proposed roadway is a two-lane undivided roadway with 12-foot lanes, eight-foot shoulders, and open ditch drainage. A majority of the roadway within the construction limits would remain and would be milled and overlaid. Near the bridge, full depth construction will be utilized for approach slab replacement and to raise the finished grade to the necessary elevation for the main span bridge replacement. The approach to the Sabine River Bridge does not maintain the existing grade of LA 12, featuring a 3.5% grade on the Texas side and a 3% grade on the Louisiana side.

Alternative 5 Construct bridge on new alignment proposes to provide a new bridge to tie in to LA 12/TX 12 with new curvature and parallel to the north of the existing Sabine River Bridge that would no longer be used for vehicular traffic. The existing bridge could remain in place by transfer to another entity for alternative use.

During the environmental process for this project, a public meeting will be held. Other public involvement activities may include agency meeting(s) and an additional public meeting. It is currently anticipated that the project will be processed as a Categorical Exclusion.

Legend

 Proposed Project Corridor



Project End
-93.732496, 30.306232

Sabine River Bridge
-93.744063, 30.303643

Deweyville, Texas

Project Begin
-93.756209, 30.297219

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

0 0.1 0.2
 Miles

LOCATION MAP

NEWTON CO./CALCASIEU PAR. IMAGERY

STATE PROJECT NO. H.000425
FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO. H000425
LA12/TX12 SABINE RIVER BRIDGE
NEWTON COUNTY, TX /
CALCASIEU PARISH, LA



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION & DEVELOPMENT

